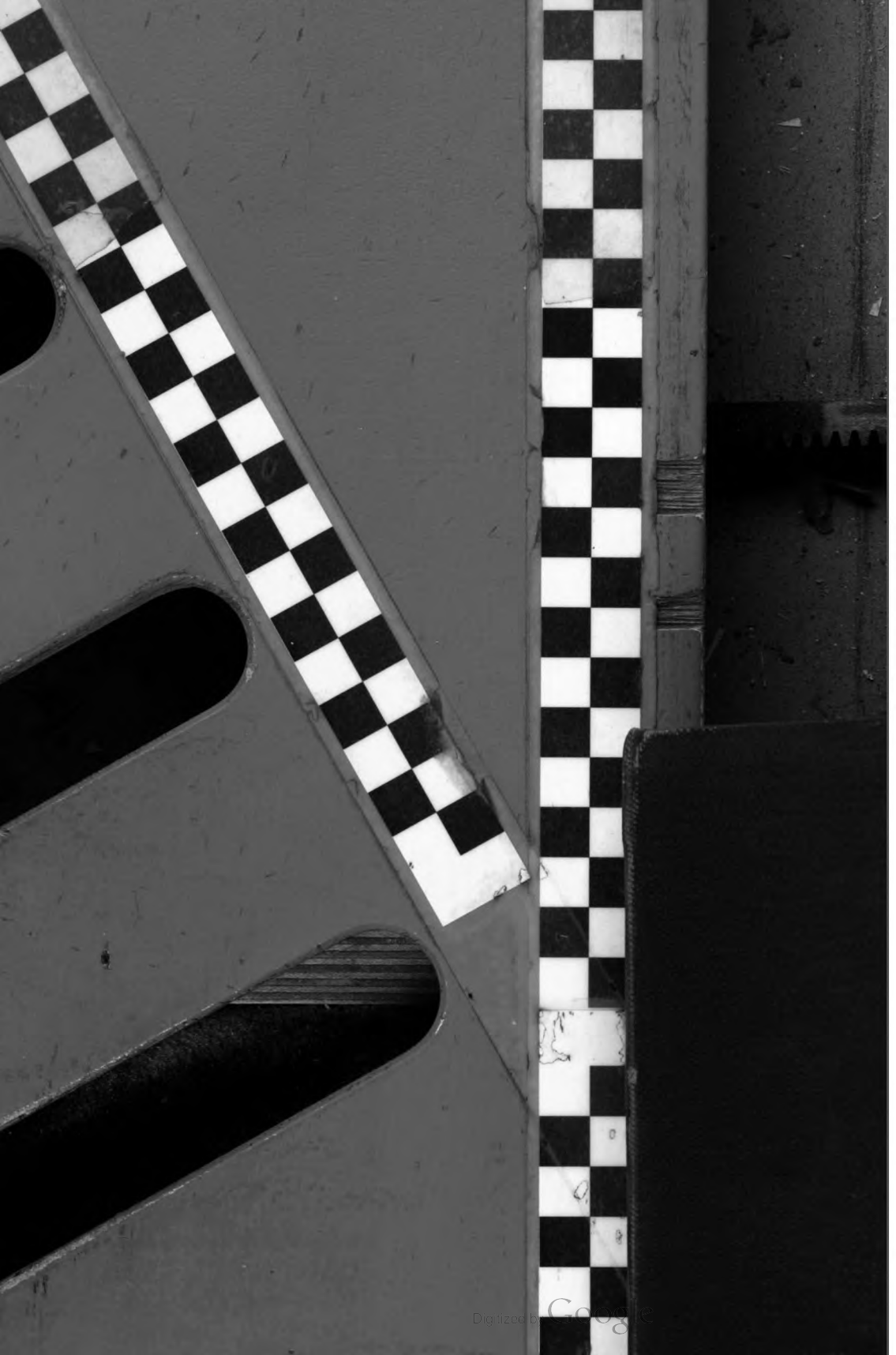

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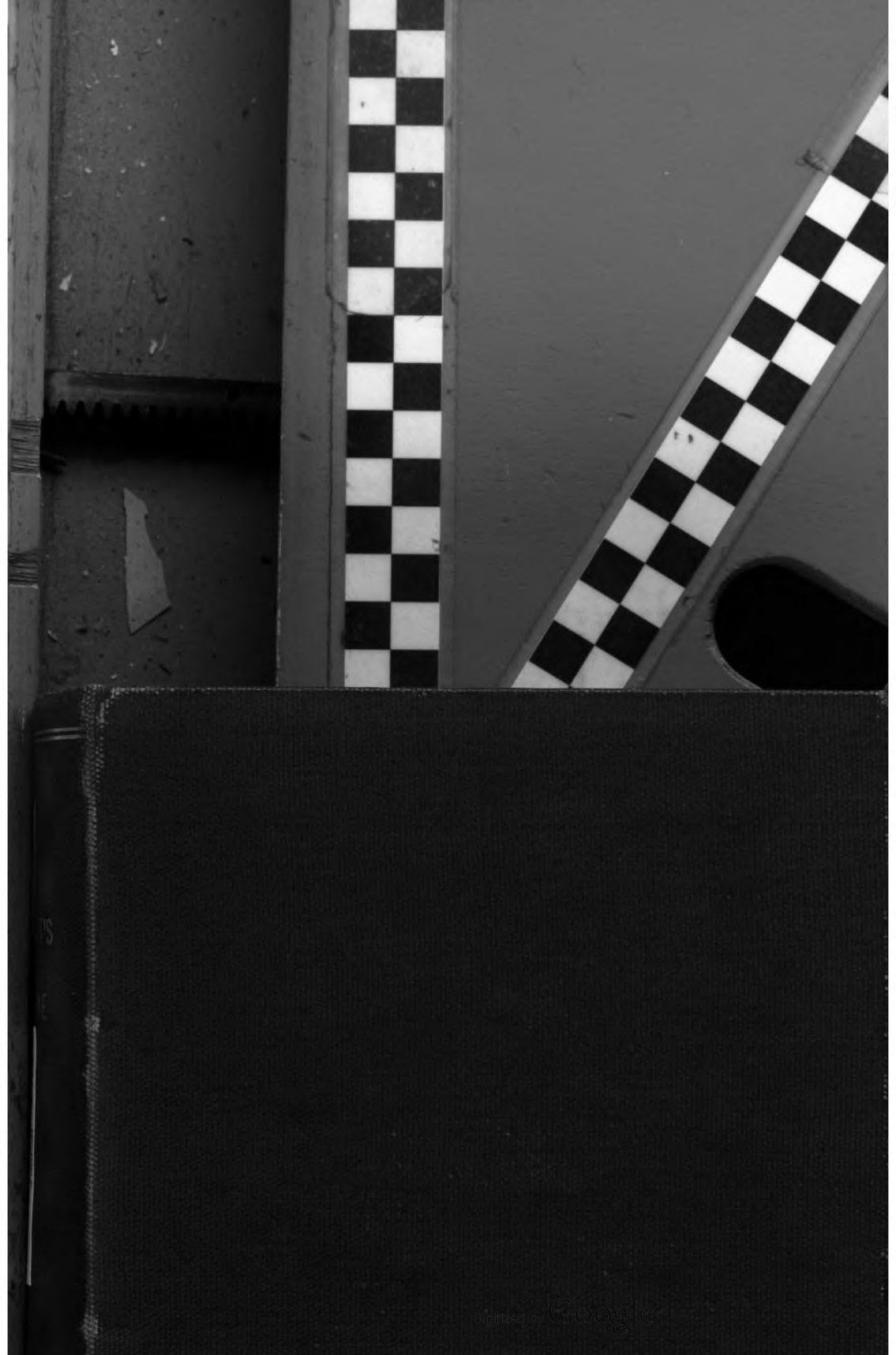


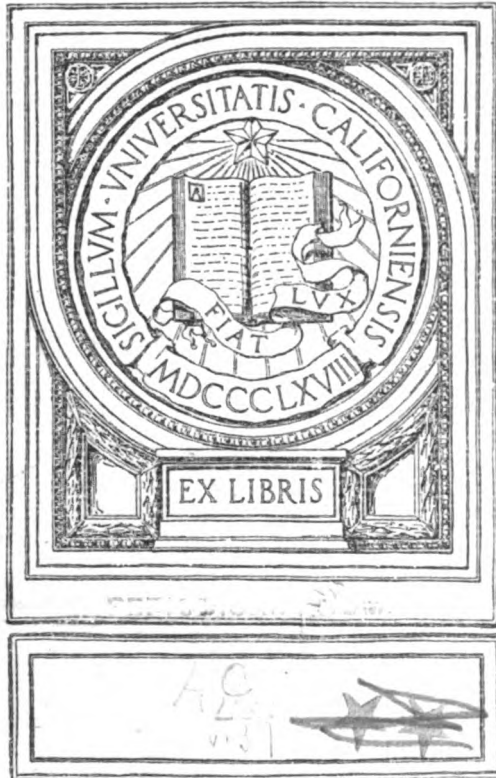












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LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JANUARY

1886

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POPULAR JOURNAL

OF

GENERAL LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND POLITICS.

VOL. XXXVII.—JANUARY TO JUNE, 1886.

UNIV. OF
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LIPPINCOTT'S
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JANUARY, 1886.

TAKEN BY SIEGE.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Rush Hurlstone was five years old, he played with children of seven or eight; when he was ten, boys and girls of twelve and fifteen were his companions; and when he reached the mature age of fifteen, his friends were young men and maidens of eighteen and twenty. It was not surprising, therefore, to those who knew him best, to find him at twenty in love with a woman of twenty-five. Yet, with all his fondness for older people, Rush Hurlstone was not a particularly serious young man. No one enjoyed life more than he; and he enjoyed the gayeties of life, too,—so well, in fact, that at one time his family had fears that he might fall into fast ways and not realize the brilliant expectations they had formed for him. His father dying at the close of the civil war, and neither of his brothers seeming to realize the situation, though both of them were older than he, he left college and went to work at once to settle up his father's affairs. Captain Hurlstone had nothing but his pay to live upon, and when he died that source of revenue was cut off. The mother owned the house she lived in at Farmsted, an old-fashioned New York village; but there were five children, including Rush,—two older boys, John and Philip, and two girls, who were younger than he, Marion and Rosalind. John was in the army with his father as a volunteer. He was an amiable, popular, selfish fellow, who found his lieutenant's pay hardly sufficient to cover his own expenses and quite inadequate to do anything towards meeting those of the family. John came home with a negro servant and two horses after he was mustered out of

service, and settled down to wait for something to turn up. Philip was studying law in Judge Gunn's office in Farmsted, and he intended to finish his course let come what would. There were still two years before him, and some one must pay his expenses,—he didn't know who, and he didn't care, so long as they were paid. The girls, twelve and fifteen years of age respectively, had their education yet to get. If Rush remained at college (he was in the Junior class), he realized that he would not only be putting no money in the family purse, but would be depleting that small treasury: so he came home, fully determined to take advantage of the first opportunity that should offer itself. Of all professions in the world, he preferred that of journalism, and, the Farmsted *Free Lance* being in want of a general utility man,—one who could do all the necessary reporting for a weekly paper, write the minor editorials and the New York letter, and think himself well paid on a salary of five hundred dollars a year,—he applied for the situation and got it. There was no competition to speak of. A crack-brained auctioneer with a weakness for Shakespeare made a formal application for the post, but editor Dwyer said that the love of poetry was the root of all evil, and he didn't want any one spouting Shakespeare about his establishment. So the auctioneer returned to his block, and Rush Hurlstone entered upon the discharge of his duties in the office of the *Free Lance* with energy and enthusiasm. The journalistic sense—the news sense—was fully developed in him at an early age, and he easily filled the columns of his journal with original accounts of the sayings and doings of the good people of Farmsted. Before long his local stories began to be largely copied by the State papers, and the *Free Lance* got a reputation that it had never had before: the column of "Glittering Generalities" glittered for the first time in its history. As for the New York letter, it would have astonished the New Yorkers had they read it.

At the end of a year Rush thought he had learned all of his profession that was to be learned on the *Free Lance*. There was not a department of the paper to which he had not contributed; and he had even learned to "stick type," that he might say that he had done as much in the way of newspaper work as Franklin did. Benjamin Franklin was his hero, and he sincerely wished that his father had named him Franklin, instead of after that other distinguished Philadelphian, Benjamin Rush.

New York was the goal towards which his thought turned, and he determined to try his luck at getting on a paper in that city. He had made up his mind to succeed in his profession, and he could see nothing to prevent success. How to get his foot on the first step was

the serious question. That once accomplished, he feared nothing, for he had a sublime faith in the efficacy of hard work supported by enthusiasm.

Judge Gunn, who for a country lawyer had quite an extensive acquaintance in New York, knew a man on one of the great dailies, *The Dawn*, and gave Rush a letter of introduction to him. He didn't know in exactly what department his friend belonged, but was sure that he was an editor of some sort. This surmise proved correct. Mr. James Spar was the shipping-news editor, and had about as much idea of the wants and management of the other departments as Judge Gunn himself. However, he was a kind-hearted man, and, being struck by the handsome young face of Rush Hurlstone, he determined to put himself out, if necessary, to aid him. In the first place, he talked over the chances of journalism with the young man, and did his best to discourage him. "A journalist's life is a dog's life," said he. "You are always somebody's slave: you must go where you are bid and do as you are told. You must turn night into day and work fourteen hours out of the twenty-four. You may do your best and get no thanks for it, and though what you write may make people talk, they will never know who it was that wrote it. All the credit goes to the paper, or to John Gasper Plummett, the proprietor. And what are the rewards of journalism? Perhaps you will make twenty dollars a week after a while, if you are clever; and you may hope some time, when you are a middle-aged man, to work up to an editorial position at sixty dollars a week. I have been here five-and-twenty years, and my salary is thirty-five dollars a week. I have a wife and four children, three of whom take care of themselves, for which I thank heaven, as it's not much that I could do for them. The youngest, poor girl, is home with two fatherless little ones; but she is welcome: I don't complain. I only tell you what this profession is that looks so attractive to you and to other young fellows."

"But look at Horace Greeley, James Gordon Bennett, Henry J. Raymond, and half a dozen others: what of them? They have found better rewards than those you mention," replied Rush, still undaunted.

"To be sure, journalism rewarded them well; but they are the exceptions."

"And why shouldn't I be an exception? At any rate, I am eager for the fray, and willing to take the chances."

"I see you are not to be discouraged. I suppose you know that there is no royal road to journalistic success,—that you will have to begin at the bottom?"

"There is no royal road to any success, that I have ever heard of.

I am ready to break the ground, as better men have done before me." And Rush buttoned his coat and straightened himself up to his full height, as though it were manual labor with a crow-bar and pickaxe that lay before him, rather than brain-work with a pen as his tool.

"Come along, then," said kind old Mr. Spar: "I will introduce you to the city editor. Every one has to go through his mill. It is like that of the gods: it grinds slowly, but it grinds exceedingly small."

"I follow," said Rush. "Show me the miller."

The place in which this conversation was held was a gloomy ante-room at the head of a flight of winding iron stairs. There were half a dozen people sitting there, some writing at a rickety round table; others looking over the files of newspapers on the racks; others still coming and going on errands of various sorts; telegraph-boys, people with grievances they wanted to air, cranks with patent flying-machines they insisted upon exhibiting, and indignant politicians who wanted to know if the managing editor was in. To all of these the old door-keeper was most polite. He never for a moment lost his temper, though he was sorely tried at times. He seemed to know his business thoroughly, yet he was always in doubt as to whether the person asked for was in or not. He was quite willing, however, to go and see, if the gentleman would only be good enough to tell him his name and business. Fifty times an hour he had to unlock the glass door that led to the mysteries inside and closed with a spring behind him; and as often when he returned he had to extract the keys from the depths of his pocket (an operation which he always performed with the air of a discoverer) and unlock the portal. There was a sort of pitying expression in his eyes as he ushered Mr. Spar and Rush through that little door; and he shook his head doubtfully and spit a mouthful of tobacco-juice on the mat as the door clicked behind them. The narrow way was lighted through glass partitions, but it was only a step to the city editor's room,—the city editor's den would best describe it. The place was only big enough to hold a desk, a chair, and a reporter. It was lighted with gas, though the time was high noon. The editor sat at his desk and was busily engaged talking with somebody at the other end of a rubber tube: "All the Great Jones Street fire copy has gone up," he shouted. "Put a display head over it, and send down galley-proof. Be sure and kill the Widow Mulligan's baby." Then, after a moment's silence, "All right; good-by." Turning round, he exclaimed, "Well, Mr. Spar, what can I do for you? Anything wrong at quarantine?"

"No, Mr. Musgrave; it's all quiet down there at present, though there ought to be some news. The Catalopia is over-due. But I came

here on other business this morning. I want to introduce my young friend Mr. Rush Hurlstone, of Farmsted, who wishes to enter the ranks of New York journalists."

"Another victim," said Mr. Musgrave, laughing good-naturedly. "I'm afraid you'll lose that healthy coloring before you have been at this work long."

Rush looked at the slight figure and pale face of the city editor, made paler by a dark beard and moustache, and then at the whiter rims around his eyes, and wondered whether journalism would have that effect upon his robust constitution.

"I'm pretty tough. It would take something harder than reporting to knock me out," he replied, with the confidence of youth.

"I'm pretty tough myself, or I shouldn't be alive to-day. So you want to be a journalist, and you are a friend of Mr. Spar? We're pretty full just now, and there doesn't seem to be much going on. The best I can do is to give you a chance if one occurs. You may report here to-morrow at half-past eleven. Send in your card, and if there is anything I can give you to do, I will do so with pleasure. Hope you'll like your new profession. Good-morning, Mr. Hurlstone; Mr. Spar, adieu.—Now, O'Brien, what is it? You couldn't see Senator Miggins? Nonsense! You must see Senator Miggins and make him talk. If the man at the door won't let you in, go in through the area; but see him you must."

"That was soon settled, thanks to you, Mr. Spar," said Rush, as they passed out. "And now for work. I wish Mr. Musgrave had said to begin to-day. I am so eager to begin that it seems like an eternity till to-morrow. In the mean time I'll look for lodgings. The Astor House is rather expensive for a reporter. I thank you very much for your kindness, and hope you'll never have reason to repent it."

"I'm sure I never shall," said Mr. Spar, shaking the young man by the hand. "Let me know how you are getting along. Good luck to you."

The old door-keeper fumbled for his keys, and let Rush out into the anteroom again; and again he shook his head deprecatingly as the young man ran lightly down the winding stairs. Before dinner-time he had found a very comfortable room with a French family in West Eleventh Street. Everything about the place was neat as wax; and he bargained for a third-story room looking out into a pretty front yard,—one of the few in New York. The landlady, who was pleased with his frank manner and amused by his broken French, made a good arrangement with him, which included a cup of *café au lait* and a roll

in the morning. His lunch and dinner he would get wherever he happened to be. A newspaper man's lunch is virtually his breakfast, for if he does not get to bed before half-past two or three in the morning he is not likely to be up and out much before noon.

After writing a few lines home to tell his mother of his good luck, Rush strolled out into the street, crossed over to Union Square, and sat down upon one of the benches there to think over the situation. To be sure, he had been at college for two years, and had worked as an independent man on the Farmsted *Free Lance*, but he had never felt the perfect emancipation from all restraint that he realized at this moment. At college he was little more than a school-boy, while on the *Free Lance* he had lived at home; but now he had cut adrift and was about to set up for himself. With all his elation, a touch of homesickness came over him, and for a moment he felt a wild desire to take a late train and surprise the folks at Farmsted. Not, of course, that he wanted to see them so much, but they would be so delighted to see him. However, he gave up that idea, and became interested in looking at the people around him, until his country appetite warned him that it was time to get something to eat.

He knew the principal streets and hotels of New York, but he had only a general idea of the plan of the city, and of anything off the beaten track he knew absolutely nothing. Setting out in quest of a restaurant, he walked down Fourth Avenue from Fourteenth Street until he came to a place where a sign at the door announced "French and Italian Restaurant. Table-d'hôte dinner, with wine, 75 cents. Macaroni a specialty." Going up a flight of stairs, he entered a room at one end of which sat at a desk a black-eyed, curly-haired Italian making change. On either side were rows of little tables, between which dexterous waiters bearing aloft dishes of smoking viands hurried to and fro. Rush Hurlstone was not a man to be daunted by a new experience. When he was unfamiliar with the ways of a place, he took in the habit of its frequenters at a glance, and did as they did. It troubled him for a moment to know whether any language except Italian was spoken, but, remembering that many Italians speak French, he was just about to hail a waiter in the latter language, when the man called out to him, in excellent English,—

"This way, sir, if you please."

Rush seated himself at one of the little tables, and took up a bill of fare, still firmly believing that he should have to give his orders in French; but before he had made up his mind what he would have, a dish of steaming soup was laid before him. This was followed by fish and meat, and then a heaped-up plate of macaroni with its savory

sauce, topped with Parmesan cheese. The only macaroni Rush had ever eaten before was the sort best known in American country towns, which is covered with slices of cheese and baked in an oven. The English call it "cheese-pudding," and serve it after the salad. The Italian spaghetti was new to him; but he saw an Italian eating it at an opposite table, and followed his example with something of the sensations of Sir Walter Raleigh when he first lighted a pipe of tobacco. He wound the slippery ropes around his fork, and finally ate them with as much enjoyment as if seventy-five-cent dinners in Italian restaurants had made a part of his every-day life. Birds, salad, cheese, fruit, and coffee followed, in easy succession. Everything tasted good except the wine, which was of the watered California variety; and when he lighted his cigar—young men did not smoke cigarettes in those days, as they do now—he felt that he had dined well.

Having plenty of time on his hands, he called for *The Evening Post*, and when he had read all the news he looked at his watch and found that it was half-past seven. He had thought it must be at least nine. What could he do to kill time? Go to the theatre, or, better, to the opera, if it was an opera night; for if there was one thing he loved above another it was music. Turning to the advertising columns of the *Post*, he found that it was evidently a gala night, for he read,—

ENGAGEMENT EXTRAORDINARY!

Mr. Max Maxmann has the honor to announce that he has secured the services of the distinguished American prima donna

MISS HELEN KNOWLTON,

for a few nights only, previous to her departure for Europe. This, Wednesday evening, "La Traviata." Miss Knowlton in her great rôle of *Violetta*. Seats may be secured at the box-office.

"'Traviata,' the story of Dumas' 'Dame aux Camellias,'" said Rush to himself, "and Miss Knowlton as Violetta. Just the thing! I have never heard her, and they say she is fine." So he walked around to the Academy, bought a good seat for two dollars, and settled down for an evening of solid pleasure. Every note of the overture was a treat to him. He knew enough of music to appreciate the beauties of that now-despised opera, and he wondered how the people who had the boxes could find it in their hearts to come so late. But he enjoyed seeing them come in, and he was quite enchanted with the pretty girls who graced the front rows. The scene is beautiful enough even to old opera-goers, for there is no theatre in the country that shows off an audience as does the Academy of Music, and it must have been simply

dazzling to an impressionable young man to whom it was all new. The last notes of the overture died away, and the great curtain rolled up, showing the room in Violetta's house. It is not necessary to follow the story of the opera: enough to say that Rush Hurlstone could scarcely believe his eyes and ears. The music entranced him, and the prima donna turned his brain. Before the opera was over he was madly in love. He had been more or less susceptible to the charms of the gentler sex ever since he left off petticoats, but this was something new. He had never felt this sensation before. He wanted to kill the tenor—a mild-eyed Signor Messalini—and tear the divine Violetta from his arms. Altogether, he was beside himself. It was an extreme case of love at first sight. If you believe that such a fire is certain to die out as quickly as it is kindled, read the following pages and you will know better.

If the departing audience had not begun to walk over his feet and to express itself rather vigorously at the stupid manner in which he sat in his seat after the curtain was rung down, Rush Hurlstone would probably have remained in the Academy of Music till morning. After having nearly upset a tall, near-sighted young man, and having held a stout elderly lady on his instep for half a minute, Rush collected his scattered wits, and soon found himself under the calm evening sky that hung over Irving Place. The one thought uppermost in his mind was the prima donna he had just seen, and whom he must see again before he could return to his lodgings in West Eleventh Street. But how was he to see a person so hedged about? The stage door! She must come through that passage to take her carriage, and as she passed him he could catch one more glance of the bewitching face.

A few words of inquiry brought him to the spot. A coach was drawn up by the sidewalk,—her coach! He knew it instinctively, and there was a large street-lamp burning right at its door. He would make believe that he was getting a light for his cigar, and would be standing in front of the coach as she put her dainty foot upon the step. Leaning against the iron fence at the entrance to the stage door were two dark-browed men conversing in Italian. A couple of fashionably-dressed young fellows stood on the opposite side. Half a dozen passers-by stopped when they saw the coach. "Knowlton will be coming out in a minute," said one of them: "let us wait." "Knowlton" they called her, without any Miss or Mademoiselle. Rush's fingers closed over his walking-stick: he had half a mind to rap the speaker across the face for his insolence. There was a creaking of the stage door, and by the wind-blown light a female figure was seen emerging. The heart of the country boy stood still. But the figure stopped, and, after exchanging

a few words in Italian with the two dark-browed men, took the arm of one of them and set off in the direction of Third Avenue. It was only one of the chorus-girls going home with her husband, who kept a little cigar-store around the corner. More chorus-girls, with little bags in their hands, came through the door and disappeared in the same direction, some with chorus-men by their sides, others alone. After standing out in the chilly night air for three-quarters of an hour, Rush was rewarded by seeing the stage door flung wide open. The fashionably-dressed young men straightened their neckties; the others leaned eagerly forward; the remaining dark-browed Italian cuffed a street Arab who stood in the way; there was a sudden perfume of roses, a handsome young man in evening dress, with a light overcoat hanging gracefully over his arm, and two enormous bouquets in his hand, stepped out into Fourteenth Street, immediately followed by something completely enveloped in white fur and lace, which hurried to the carriage, followed by an elderly lady in black, attended by a French maid carrying a black bag in her hand. The stage door-keeper ran after them, hat in hand.

"What shall be done with the flowers, the baskets, and the stands?" he inquired of the elderly lady.

"Send them around to the house in a cart: we can't take them with us."

Bang! slam! What was that loud report? Nothing,—only the quick shutting of the carriage door. The coachman snapped his whip, the horses sprang forward, and in a second the carriage had disappeared around the corner of Irving Place; and Rush had not caught as much as a glimpse of the beautiful face. His first impulse was to run after it at full speed; but he remembered that he was in New York, and not in Farmsted, and that he might be arrested as a lunatic at the very outset of his career.

"By Jove, Harry," said one of the well-dressed young men to the other, "she didn't see us at all."

"I didn't suppose she would, Bob," said the other; "but I thought we might have seen her."

"That isn't the worst of it: our flowers are going round to the house in a cart with the rest of them. What fools we are! Well, come along, old boy; let's go to Del's and be happy." And Bob took Harry's arm, and the two sauntered off in the direction of Union Square.

"I'm one of the fools," said Rush to himself, and he, too, turned his face in the same direction.

There was a sharp wind blowing up Fourteenth Street, and he raised his hat that it might cool his throbbing brow. The very thought

of the room in West Eleventh Street stifled him. He must move about out under the stars : perhaps he could walk off his excitement. Around and around Union Square he went, at a rate that would have astonished a professional walker. His legs were trying to keep pace with his thoughts, and it put their agility to the test. After he had circumnavigated the square for nearly two hours, a policeman hailed him with, "I say, young feller, you must have walked 'em off by this time. Don't you think you'd better move on?" The sound of a voice speaking directly to him aroused Rush from the spell that seemed to be upon him. He looked at his watch by the light of the moon, and saw that it was just half-past two.

"You're quite right," said he to the policeman : "I think it's about time for me to turn in." And then he added to himself, "Well, I have begun to keep newspaper hours with a vengeance!" In a few moments he was at his lodgings, and by four o'clock was sleeping as soundly and sweetly as a child.

CHAPTER II.

PUNCTUALLY on the stroke of half-past eleven Rush was climbing the iron stairs at the office of *The Dawn*. The old door-keeper recognized him, and gave him a pleasant "Good-morning, sir," as Rush handed him his card to take in to Mr. Musgrave. In a moment the old man returned.

"Will you please be seated, sir, Mr. Musgrave says."

So Rush sat down at the round table and toyed with one of the red-handled pen-holders that lay there, impatient to get his first assignment. He was so sure that he would hear from Mr. Musgrave immediately that he would not sit full back on the chair, but hovered on the edge of it, ready to jump the moment he heard his name called. Half an hour passed by, and the edge of the hard chair began to feel uncomfortable, so he seated himself well against the back. Another half-hour, and he thought, "There are probably a number ahead of me: my turn is sure to come before long." So he took a copy of *The Dawn* from his pocket and began to read all the long local stories. He had been in such a hurry to get to the office in time that he had read only the head-lines before. After reading several columns carefully through, he began to fidget and to wonder what it all meant. He looked at his watch. It was half-past one. Calling the door-keeper to him, he asked him if he would be kind enough to remind Mr. Musgrave that he was

there. The old man told him that Mr. Musgrave had just gone to lunch and would not return before half-past two.

Rush had eaten a late breakfast, so he was not hungry ; but he was very nervous and tired. He had been unusually excited the night before, and had slept but a few hours, and this waiting was very tedious. However, he was there, and there he meant to stay till he got some word from Mr. Musgrave. He read all the editorials, and was half through the advertising columns by half-past two. Still no word from inside. Every stroke of the bell on the city editor's desk made him start, and he could not believe that he did not hear his name mentioned. Finally, nearly stifled by the bad air, and worn out by sitting so long, Rush made a bold push and sent in word again, to which the reply came that there was "nothing for Mr. Hurlstone to-day." It was then about five o'clock, and raining hard : so Rush may be pardoned if he felt rather blue. He thought of the dear ones at home, and knew that just at that time they were sitting around a crackling wood fire in the library, waiting for Sarah to announce that tea was served. This reminded him that he had not broken his fast in several long hours : so he jumped on the front platform of a Fourth Avenue car, where he could get the fresh air (he did not mind the rain), and rode up to the Italian restaurant where he had dined the night before. Like many a man before him, he felt better after he had dined, and he thought he would go to the opera again. To his disgust, he found that opera was given only every other night. If he could not go to the opera, he could at least go around to Irving Place and look at the building which only the night before had been so glorified in his eyes. So he walked around to that historic pile of yellow brick, and sat down under the portico and smoked his after-dinner cigar in the cool night air, out of the rain. He derived a great deal of satisfaction from this indulgence, but thought that a visit to the stage door would not be without its attractions. Through that mysterious portal he saw a light gleaming. "How very jolly it would be to see inside of that place! I wonder how I could manage it," he thought, and stood for a moment looking at the door. To his surprise, it opened with a start, and a man shouted at him, "What are you standing out there for? Why don't you come in?" This seemed like fate : so, somewhat mystified, he walked boldly inside. The place was dimly lighted, and the man was not to be seen. "Small loss," thought Rush, as he felt his way cautiously among the scenery.

The first thing he knew, his hat was knocked off.

"Halloo!" he exclaimed. "Who threw that brick?"

Before he had time to look for his hat, a young lady in very scanty clothing picked it up and handed it to him.

"I knocked it off with the toe of my slipper. I'm very sorry. I did not see you," said she.

Rush took the hat, thanked her, and told her it was all right, and at the same time he wondered if the Academy stage was given over to a "Jardin Mabille" performance on the nights when there was no opera.

"Might I ask what is going on?" he said to the scantily-dressed young woman, who he had discovered was a very pretty Italian ballet-girl.

"It is the rehearsal for the new ballet," she answered, in slightly broken English, "and I was just practising my new *pas* when your hat got in my way. It is a very pretty ballet,—'The Water-Sprite.' Have you been to the rehearsals before?"

"No; I have not had that pleasure. Are you rehearsing alone?"

"No, indeed! don't you hear them on the stage? The music hasn't begun yet: they are just exercising. Do you dance?"

"I might pull through a Virginia reel with a good partner," answered Rush.

"I don't know that dance. Is it for the ballet?" said she, passing her foot over her head just for practice.

"No; it's not a ballet. Take care! you'll fall," said Rush, who had never seen a woman stand on one leg so long, putting out his hand to steady her.

She poked him playfully in the ribs with her slipped toe. "You don't know much about the ballet, or you would not think that anything. I can put my leg straight up in the air and come down the stage on one foot. I get a call for that every night. Haven't you ever seen me do it?"

"That is a pleasure still in store for me," answered Rush, with a gallant bow.

"Hark!" said the dancer, leaning forward. "Didn't you hear old Narini rap on his violin? I must fly."

"Before you go, pray let me know the name of the charming young lady whose agility was the occasion of this pleasant acquaintance."

"You don't know me? What a strange fellow! I am Leoni. Come, follow me, if you want to see the rehearsal." And, taking his hand, she led him in and out among the dusty scenes, and finally stationed him in the wings in full view of the stage, which was dimly lighted by two large gas-jets in the centre. A queer-looking old man, in a swallow-tail coat buttoned up to the chin, stood ready with his violin under his arm. By his side was an eminently respectable-looking woman in a plain stuff gown and bonnet.

"Now, ladies, are you ready?" said she; and, touching the old man

gently, "Signor Narini, begin, if you please." Then, beating time vigorously with her foot, she sang, "One, two, three." A row of legs was lifted towards Rush, who began to feel very much as though he were playing the rôle of Peeping Tom. "See-saw" went the violin in the most marked time, followed by the voice of the woman and the sharp beating of her foot on the bare boards. Rush had seen ballet-dancing before, but never in such queer costumes. There were no two alike. All the dancers wore short skirts, but from the waist up they were covered with dressing-sacques of every conceivable style, except one who had on an ordinary black waist and a black bonnet with a long crêpe veil, which floated out behind her as she came tripping down the stage. Some had on old tights, others their usual stockings. The woman who was rehearsing them was the most energetic person Rush had ever seen. She not only sang all the music, but she beat time with her hands and feet, and whenever a particularly difficult step occurred she picked up her petticoats and danced it with the girls,—“ladies” she called them. If they showed the slightest hesitation, they had to dance it all over again. Rush had never had such a treat in his life. He enjoyed every note of Signor Narini's music, and every step of the coryphées. But where was his agile friend? Ah, there she stood in the opposite wings, watching the trainer intently. The coryphées made a backward movement, Signor Narini played a flourish, and Leoni bounded to the front of the stage. Away flew Signor Narini's fingers over the strings, and away flew Leoni around the stage; then the music slowed up, and the dancer came down the stage in a series of courtesies; then she pirouetted around on her toes, and finally drew up in the centre, and, placing one foot as high over her head as she could get it, wriggled down to the foot-lights on the toe of the other slipper. It was a difficult task well done. Narini rapped on the back of his violin with his bow, and Mme. Kathi Lanner—for it was no less a personage training the ballet—clapped her hands delightedly, while Rush joined in the applause from the wings. Leoni made him a graceful bow, and then, walking over to him with the ungraceful walk of the ballet-dancer, said, "I told you I could do it. I never did it so well at a rehearsal before; but I wanted to show you what I could do."

"Thank you very much," said Rush. "You did beautifully. You are as graceful as a swan, and as light as a fairy. I never saw anything more exquisite: that last bit was the very poetry of motion."

Leoni looked at him as though she had heard that expression before; but she did not say so.

"Ladies of the demon ballet!" shouted Mme. Lanner; and in a moment the air was filled with the clanging of cymbals.

"Do you dance again?" said Rush, amid the din.

"Oh, yes; I lead the demons."

"As an angel of light?"

"Oh, no; I'm the head devil. Wait till you see me in my red tights, with my face covered with phosphorus, and a gold pitchfork in my hand. We give the ballet on Friday night. Will you be here?"

There was no coquetry in the girl's manner: she was proud of her performance, and she wanted every one to see it.

"I shall certainly try to get here," said Rush.

"It will be grand," she continued. "We give 'The Water-Sprite' first; then comes the new opera, 'Helen of Troy,' composed by M. Gounod expressly for Mlle. Knowlton, who will appear as Helen for the first time. You had better come."

"I shall do so, or perish in the attempt," answered Rush, with an emphasis that rather surprised the girl, who began to think that she had made an impression on the young man's heart. "You spoke of Miss Knowlton: does she come to rehearsals?" he inquired. "Will she be here to-night?"

"Of course she comes to rehearsals,—what a stupid question! but she doesn't come to ballet-rehearsals. She was here all the morning rehearsing 'Helen.' Mlle. Knowlton works hard, and she is just as anxious for the singer of the smallest part to make a hit as to make one herself; but she always does that, and she is going to have a grand triumph as Helen. You ought to see her costumes. They are lovely. She let her dresser show them to all of us ladies of the ballet and the chorus the other day."

"She must be very amiable and good. You can tell that by looking at her," said Rush.

"Good? I should think she was good! She is not like some *prime donne* I have danced with. People talk about ballet-girls,"—with a shrug: "I could tell them something about *prime donne* if I would, but I'm not a gossip. I have enough to do to look after my own affairs, without troubling myself about other people's. If you come to know us, you will find that we are not as black as we are painted. Some of the hardest-working and best women I have ever known have been ballet-dancers. Because some one has given us a bad name, we are the target for all the simple-headed fops and bald-headed rakes in the country; but these wicked men find themselves mistaken sometimes, and learn that a ballet-dancer can take care of herself, and that she has others to take care of her. You should have heard my father tell how he thrashed Lord Bellflower on the stage at Covent Garden one night for chucking my mother under the chin. My mother was a dancer,—

one of the most famous fairies in the pantomime, though you wouldn't think so to see her now,—and very beautiful. Old Bellflower admired her across the foot-lights, and thought the only thing he need do to make her acquaintance was to speak to her. He was well known behind the scenes of the theatre; my mother was not,—she had just come from Italy; and he sauntered across the stage to the wings where she was standing, and, with an insolent leer, put out his big be-ringed hand and caught her by the chin. Oh, dear me! I have to laugh whenever I think of it. My mother drew back in affright as my father stepped up. My father was a famous athlete,—the champion cannon-ball-tosser of Europe. He took his lordship by the seat of his trousers and the collar of his coat and ran him the length of the stage, the entire company looking on and trying not to laugh; and when he got him to the drop-curtain he kicked it aside and fired my lord Bellflower clear over the orchestra into the pit. You can imagine what a sensation this made. My mother had to leave the theatre, as his lordship was a large stockholder and one of the directors; but both she and my father got a splendid engagement at another house. If my father had intended doing something to make himself popular, he could not have hit upon a better device; and I can tell you that ballet-dancers were better treated by the swells for some time after that." And Leoni raised herself on her toes and laughed.

"A capital story, capitally told," said Rush; "and I shall have a care in future not to chuck ballet-girls under the chin until I find out if there are any athletes in the family."

"I don't believe you are that sort of a man," said Leoni. "If I did, I would not have stood here talking to you; but there is something about you that tells me that you are an honest young fellow and have not been in the city long enough to be spoiled by its wicked ways. Ah! there is my cue."

Rush was young enough not to feel altogether flattered by Leoni's estimate of him, but he took it as it was meant. He was very much pleased with the girl: she was very handsome, her manner was as attractive as it was frank, and she danced like a sylph. He made up his mind that he would ask permission to call upon her, and when she pirouetted around his way again, he said, "Mlle. Leoni, since you have been kind enough to express such a good opinion of my character, perhaps you would not mind proving what you say by allowing me to call upon you at your home." And he smiled a most winning smile.

Leoni looked him straight in the eyes; then she said, "If you would really care to call at my humble apartment, you are quite welcome; but first give me your name, that I may introduce you to my mother: she is

here waiting for me. She comes for me every night, and we go home together."

"My name is Rush Hurlstone, and I am a journalist,—fresh from the country, too, as you surmised. I shall be most happy to meet the mother of so charming a daughter, if you will take me to her," said Rush, in his most convincing manner.

"This way, then, please."

Rush followed her across the back of the stage, and there in a remote corner sat a very thin Italian woman, with a wrinkled, sallow skin, large nose, sharp-pointed chin (the very chin Lord Bellflower had touched to his cost), and coal-black eyes with heavy lids. They must have been handsome eyes when she was young,—not so many years ago, either; but Italian women fade rapidly.

"Mother, I want to introduce Mr. Rush Hurlstone, from the country, who would like to call on us some day," said Leoni.

The way she pronounced his name amused Rush very much, but he was too well bred to smile. He bowed politely to the mother, and shook her hand so heartily that he knocked her knitting out of her lap as she attempted to rise. "I am very glad to meet you, Signora Leoni," said he, "and I hope for a better acquaintance with both you and your daughter."

"Thank you," said she, in English more broken than that of her daughter. "But my name is Cella."

"Leoni is my stage-name, you know," added the daughter. "You have to have a fancy name in the ballet. At home I am Lisa Cella; here I am Leoni,—'the only Leoni,' as they say on the bills."

While they were talking there were loud cries for "Meester White," the gas-man. Mme. Lanner wanted to try some of the colored-light effects, and Mr. White could not be found. "It's very funny," said the back-door man. "I saw White standing out in the rain over an hour ago, and called him in. What's more, I saw him come in; but I haven't seen him since. He couldn't have gone out, for I haven't left the door for a moment." Rush felt a guilty flush steal up to his cheeks; but, as it would not help matters for him to explain that it was he, and not the gas-man, who had been called to enter the Academy, he said nothing. It being impossible to try the colored lights without Mr. White, Mme. Lanner said that she would expect to meet them all the next morning at nine. Leoni and her mother got ready for the street, and Rush asked if he might not accompany them to their door, as it was rather late for unprotected women to be out.

They smiled at the idea of the lateness of the hour; it was then not more than half-past ten, and often they had gone home alone as late as one o'clock; but if Mr. Hurlstone was going in their direction they

would be pleased to have his company. They lived in East Tenth Street, which was quite convenient for him. The rain had ceased, and the moon was shining brightly, as the three stepped out into Fourteenth Street. Rush thought of the one he had seen coming through that door-way the night before, as he gave his arm to Signora Cella. The conversation turned from the stars of heaven to the stars of the stage, as they walked down to East Tenth Street ; and when they reached the modest house where the ballet-dancer and her mother lived, Signora Cella insisted that he should come in.

“ We always have a little supper after the theatre,” said she, “ and it would please us very much to have you eat a bit of bread and drink a glass of wine with us. Giuseppe will be glad to see you, too : he sees very little company, poor man.”

Leoni added her invitation. Rush looked at her handsome eyes glistening in the moonlight, and accepted. Signora Cella’s night-key admitted them, and they were soon in a comfortably-furnished room in the second story. A table spread with a snowy cloth stood in the middle of the floor, and, by the mellow light of an oil lamp, Rush saw that it was set for the late supper of which all people connected with the stage are so fond, and which is really necessary to their health, as they can eat very little before the performance. After the performance is over their minds are at rest, and they can sit down quietly and enjoy a tolerably hearty meal. A stick of French bread, a cut of that delightful Italian sausage, salami, and a bottle of Chianti wine stood upon the table. Rush noticed this at a glance, and at the same time he saw a large man, with a face showing signs of great suffering, propped up with pillows in a big chair by the fire. Leoni ran lightly across the room, kissed the invalid’s hand, and laid it gently upon her brown curls, as though its touch carried a blessing with it. The man leaned over and kissed her on the forehead, saying something in Italian that Rush did not hear, and would not have understood if he had. Then Leoni arose and introduced Rush to her father. This poor sufferer was the famous cannon-ball-tosser. He had tossed one ball too many, for the last time he appeared in public the biggest and heaviest one hit him on a tender point of the spine, and this had been his condition ever since. He would never get well ; he knew it ; and the knowledge added to his suffering. “ Here I sit, a great, useless hulk, dependent on my poor little Lisa for support,” was the burden of his thoughts. “ If I could only work, I could bear the pain ; but I must sit here calmly as I may, with mind and body both on the rack.” There had been more or less of the animal in Cella’s appearance when he was a young man, but he was always good-looking, and, now that suffering had refined his

face and whitened his hair, he was really aristocratic-looking. He shook Rush cordially by the hand, but he said only a few words, as his English was very imperfect. Signora Cella disappeared in another room, and left Leoni to entertain Rush. In a few moments she returned with a bowl of smoking soup and a golden-hued omelet. They wheeled the ex-cannon-ball-tosser up to the table. He opened the bottle dexterously, took the oil out of the neck by pouring a little water in, and then all drank the health of the guest. So merry a meal Rush had seldom sat down to. The old man was not in as much pain as usual, and he told some amusing anecdotes of his athletic days. Leoni was all excitement, owing to the new ballet, and good humor reigned. When the clock struck twelve, Rush bade his kind entertainers good-night, and thanked them for one of the pleasantest evenings of his life. It was all so unconventional; Leoni was so beautiful and had so much common sense; and he was astonished at the refinement of the family. He had always imagined that ballet-dancers were a rather ignorant lot, and fast withal; yet here was a girl who, while she appeared before the public in skirts above her knees and earned a larger salary than her companions because she could kick her legs higher, was yet as modest and refined by nature as most ladies, though the associations of her life made her freer in her manner with strangers than if she had been born in more exclusive circles. There was nothing coarse about either of her parents, though her father had been a professional athlete and her mother a dancer; and they were evidently very careful of their daughter. As Rush walked across town to his lodgings, he wondered if he was the same Rush Hurlstone who three days ago was an unfledged country boy. Only two nights had passed, and here he was in love with a prima donna and supping with a ballet-dancer!

(To be continued.)

MODERATION.

I ASK not, O my God, for worldly fame,
 For love, for fortune, for the thousand things
 My neighbor's restless prayers forever claim,
 Vexing thine ear with vain importunings:
 All these may pass, nor will they pass lamented;
 Give me the moon and I will rest contented.

L. A. W.

GEORGE ELIOT'S CRITICISMS ON HER CONTEMPORARIES.

[GEORGE ELIOT, it will be remembered, began her literary career as one of the editors of the *Westminster Review*. To the main body of that periodical she contributed a number of miscellaneous essays, which have been gathered into book-form since her death, and she also wrote many short reviews in the "Contemporary Literature" department which forms the end of every number. It is only since the appearance of Cross's "Life" that her articles in the latter department have been authoritatively recognized, although no great critical insight would have been needed to identify them from the internal evidences of style. According to Mr. Cross, the *Belles-Lettres* portion of "Contemporary Literature" was entirely contributed by George Eliot from July, 1855, to October, 1856, inclusive. Along with articles of inferior, because more ephemeral, interest, there appeared in those numbers some notable criticisms of Tennyson, Browning, Kingsley, Dickens, and other eminent literary men of the day. They are cast, to be sure, in the form of reviews of certain works which had recently appeared, but they deal quite as much with the general characteristics of the authors themselves as with the particular work in hand. They are notable, therefore, aside from any question of their intrinsic merit, as the carefully-weighed judgments of one of the greatest authors of the century upon some of her most famous contemporaries. A great mind is not always, indeed is rarely, a symmetrical one. Its greatness is usually gained by a concentration of all the powers upon some one faculty at the expense of the other faculties. This is why we find a great writer, even (in some special departments) a great critic, like Carlyle, unable to estimate at their proper value the attainments of Newman, Lamb, Shelley, or Keats. But in George Eliot we have the rare spectacle of an intellect which had mastered one of the most difficult departments of literary art and yet retained the power of appreciating excellence in every form of human achievement. She seldom misplaced either praise or censure: her judgments were in line with the final judgments of the world. These short essays are notable also for the sidelights they throw upon her own habits of thought, her intellectual creeds, her criticism of life. In her admirable summary (in the review of Dickens) of the relative difficulty of portraying individuals in different ranks of life, she has rightly given the palm to that form of fiction in which she was eventually to win her highest fame. In her impatience at the impatience of Tennyson with those whom Gigadibs might style the vulgar mob, she has shown the large generosity of her intellect. Like Shakespeare and Goethe, who in sanity of mind and breadth of sympathy were hardly her superiors, she saw that even the Philistine is a man, entitled to the respect which is every honest man's due, and engaged in an important part of the world's work, which perhaps were he no Philistine he would be unwilling or unable to perform; that Wagner has his uses as well as Faust; that cakes and ale need not be abolished, even though virtue be triumphant. "He will find me a very commonplace person," she says, in one of her letters, in rebuke of some person who had expected to find a self-conscious genius holding herself aloof from the masses. And, lastly, in her strictures on Kingsley's fiery partisanship she shows her disaffection for the

prejudices bred by race and creed, her freedom from the provincial insularity which so deeply marks the average Briton.]

ALFRED TENNYSON: "MAUD."

IF we were asked who among contemporary authors is likely to live in the next century, the name that would first and most unhesitatingly rise to our lips is that of Alfred Tennyson. He, at least, while belonging emphatically to his own age, while giving a voice to the struggles and the far-reaching thoughts of this nineteenth century, has those supreme artistic qualities which must make him a poet for all ages. As long as the English language is spoken, the word-music of Tennyson must charm the ear; and when English has become a dead language, his wonderful concentration of thought into luminous speech, the exquisite pictures in which he has blended all the hues of reflection, feeling, and fancy, will cause him to be read as we read Homer, Pindar, and Horace. Thought and feeling, like carbon, will always be finding new forms for themselves, but once condense them into the diamonds of poetry, and the form, as well as the element, will be lasting. This is the sublime privilege of the artist,—to be present with future generations, not merely through the indirect results of his work, but through his immediate creations; and of all artists the one whose works are least in peril from the changing conditions of humanity is the highest order of poet, who has received

Aus Morgenduft gewebt und Sonnenklarheit
Der Dichtung Schleier aus der Hand der Wahrheit.

Such a poet, by the suffrage of all competent judges among his countrymen, is Tennyson. His "Ulysses" is a pure little ingot of the same gold that runs through the ore of the *Odyssey*. It has the "large utterance" of the early epic, with that rich fruit of moral experience which it has required thousands of years to ripen. The "Morte d'Arthur" breathes the intensest spirit of chivalry in the pure and serene air of unselfish piety; and it falls on the ear with the rich, soothing melody of a *Dona nobis* swelling through the aisles of a cathedral. "Locksley Hall" has become, like Milton's minor poems, so familiar that we dare not quote it: it is the object of a sort of family affection which we all cherish, but think it is not good taste to mention. Then there are his idyls, such as the "Gardener's Daughter,"—works which in their kind have no rival, either in the past or present. But the time would fail us to tell of all we owe to Tennyson, for, with two or three exceptions, every poem in his two volumes is a favorite. The "Princess," too, with all that criticism has to say against it, has passages of

inspiration and lyrical gems embedded in it which make it a fresh claim on our gratitude. But last and greatest came "In Memoriam," which to us enshrines the highest tendency of this age, as the Apollo Belvedere expressed the presence of a free and vigorous human spirit amidst a decaying civilization. Whatever was the immediate prompting of "In Memoriam," whatever the form under which the author represented his aim to himself, the deepest significance of the poem is the sanctification of human love as a religion. If, then, the voice that sang all these undying strains had remained for ever after mute, we should have had no reason to reproach Tennyson with gifts inadequately used: we should rather have rejoiced in the thought that one who has sown for his fellow-men so much

generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

should at length be finding rest for his wings in a soft nest of home affections, and be living idyls, instead of writing them.

We could not prevail on ourselves to say what we think of "Maud" without thus expressing our love and admiration of Tennyson. For that optical law by which an insignificant object, if near, excludes very great and glorious things that lie in the distance, has its moral parallel in the judgments of the public: men's speech is too apt to be exclusively determined by the unsuccessful deed or book of to-day, the successful doings and writings of past years being for the moment lost sight of. And, even seen in the light of the most reverential criticism, the effect of "Maud" cannot be favorable to Tennyson's fame. Here and there only it contains a few lines in which he does not fall below himself. With these slight exceptions, he is everywhere saying, if not something that would be better left unsaid, something that he had already said better; and the finest sentiments that animate his other poems are entirely absent. We have in "Maud" scarcely more than a residuum of Alfred Tennyson: the wide-sweeping intellect, the mild philosophy, the healthy pathos, the wondrous melody, have almost all vanished, and left little more than a narrow scorn which piques itself on its scorn of narrowness, and a passion which clothes itself in exaggerated conceits. While to his other poems we turn incessantly with new distress that we cannot carry them all in our memory, of "Maud" we must say, if we say the truth, that, excepting only a few passages, we wish to forget it as we should wish to forget a bad opera. And this not only because it wants the charms of mind and music which belong to his other poetry, but because its tone is throughout morbid: it opens to us the self-revelations of a morbid mind, and what it presents as the

cure for this mental disease is itself only a morbid conception of human relations. [Here follows a synopsis of the story of the poem, with extracts, and the review concludes:]

It is possible, no doubt, to allegorize all this into a variety of edifying meanings; but it remains true that the ground-notes of the poem are nothing more than hatred of peace and the Peace Society, hatred of commerce and coal-mines, hatred of young gentlemen with flourishing whiskers and padded coats, adoration of a clear-cut face, and faith in War as the unique social regenerator. Such are the sentiments and such is the philosophy embodied in "Maud,"—at least, for plain people not given to allegorizing; and it perhaps speaks well for Tennyson's genius that it has refused to aid him much on themes so little worthy of his greatest self. Of the smaller poems, which, with the well-known "Ode," make up the volume, "The Brook" is rather a pretty idyl, and "The Daisy" a graceful, unaffected recollection of Italy; but no one of them is remarkable enough to be ranked with the author's best poems of the same class.

CHARLES DICKENS: "HARD TIMES."

When it was announced, amid the strikes and consequent derangements of commerce, that Mr. Dickens was about to write a tale in *Household Words* to be called "Hard Times," the general attention was instantly arrested. It was imagined the main topic of the story would be drawn from the fearful struggle which was being then enacted in the north, in which loss of money on the one side and the pangs of hunger on the other were the weapons at command. The inner life of those great movements would, it was thought, be exhibited, and we should see the results of the wrongs and the delusions of the workman, and the alternations of hope and fear which must from day to day have agitated him at the various crises of the conflict, delineated in many a moving scene. Mr. Dickens,—if any one,—it was considered, could be intrusted with this delicate task, and would give us a true idea of the relations of master and workman, both as they are and as they might be. Some of this is done in the book now before us, only this purpose is subordinated and made incidental to another, which is to exhibit the evil effects of an exclusive education of the intellect without a due cultivation of the finer feelings of the heart and the fancy. We suppose it is in anticipation of some change of the present educational system for one that shall attempt to kill "outright the robber Fancy" that Mr. Dickens launches forth his protest, for we are not aware of such a system being in operation anywhere in England. On the contrary, it is the opinion of various Continental professors, very competent to form

a judgment on this subject, that more play is given to the imagination and will by the English system of instruction than by any other. If we look to our public schools and universities, we find great part—too great part, we think—of the period of youth and adolescence devoted to the study of the mythology, literature, and history of the most poetic people of all time. The “gorgeous tragedies” of Athens,—

Presenting Thebes' or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,—

under the name of Greek Play, have produced no slight consumption of birch rod in this country. In almost every school in the kingdom, passages of our finest poets are learned by heart; and Shakespeare and Walter Scott are among the Penates of every decent family. If there are Gradgrind schools, they are not sufficiently numerous to be generally known. Now, at the very commencement of “Hard Times” we find ourselves introduced to a set of hard uncouth personages, of whose existence as a class no one is aware, who are engaged in cutting and paring young souls after their own ugly pattern and refusing them all other nourishment but facts and figures. The unpleasant impression caused by being thus suddenly introduced into this cold and uncongenial atmosphere is never effaced by the subsequent charm of narrative and well-painted characters of the tale. One can have no more pleasure in being present at this compression and disfigurement than in witnessing the application of the boot, nor in following these poor souls, thus intellectually halt and maimed, through life, than in seeing Chinese ladies hobbling through a race. It is not, then, with the truth Mr. Dickens wishes to enforce, but with the manner in which it is enforced, that we find fault. It was possible to have done this in a less forbidding form, with actors whom we should have recognized as more natural and less repulsive than the Gradgrinds, Bounderbys, and Chokemchilds; to have placed in contrast persons educated after an ordinary and *practicable* plan, and persons of higher æsthetic training; but, at the same time, the task would have required a deeper acquaintance with human nature. The most successful characters in “Hard Times,” as is usual with Mr. Dickens, are those which are the *simplest* and least cultivated. Stephen Blackpool, Rachel and Sissy, Mr. Thleary of the “horth-riding,” and his single-hearted troupe, all act and talk with such simplicity of heart and nobleness of mind that their appearance on the stage is a most welcome relief from the Gradgrinds, Bounderbys, Spar-sits, etc., who are all odd characters portrayed in a quaint style; and we regret that more of the story is not devoted to objects who are so much more within Mr. Dickens's power of representation. Stephen

Blackpool, with his rugged steadfastness, sturdy truth, upright bearing, and fine Northern English dialect, smacking strongly of the old Saxon, is a noble addition to the gallery which already contained the bluff John Browdie, the Yarmouth boatmen, and so many other fine portraits. The gentle lowly grace of Rachel, and her undeviating instinct of what is right and good, make her a fit companion to the worn and much-wronged Stephen. The story of their unfulfilled love and its sad catastrophe is a truly pathetic episode of humble life. But when Mr. Dickens leaves his lowly-born heroes and heroines and weaves personages of more cultivated natures into his plots, the difference of execution is very marked. In humble life, different occupations, different localities, produce marked and distinct hues of character: these differences are made more apparent by the absence of those equalizing influences which a long-continued and uniform education, and social intercourse subject to invariable rules of etiquette, produce upon the cultivated classes. Original and picturesque characters are therefore much more common among the poorer orders: their actions are simpler, proceeding from simpler motives, and they are principally to be studied from without. On the other hand, the characters of more cultivated persons, though more uniform in appearance, are in reality much more complex and various; and both these circumstances tend to render their study, for the purposes of representation, more difficult. Beneath the apparent uniformity lurk thousandfold shades of difference, indicative of the mind within. And what an infinity of fresh motives are introduced to act upon the will, in the various conjunctures of life, by education and elevated rank! These are so conflicting that it is very often only by a subtile inference that we can determine why a person has acted in a given manner, and they render a cultivated nature, for the most part, an unfathomable enigma to an uncultivated one. Consequently, both observation and the interpretation of the results of observation are far more difficult in the latter case than in the former. And when one considers the classification, and the subsequent reconstruction by synthesis, in order to form the type of a class, which class may have close resemblances to some other class, it will be seen that the qualifications required to paint finer natures, so as to give them individuality and truth at the same time, are infinitely higher than those required to paint ruder ones. The fact that Mr. Thackeray has succeeded so well in drawing Rebecca Sharpe and Blanche Amory, the representatives of two classes, so like and yet so different, without exaggerating the peculiarities of either, would alone prove him to have the most intimate acquaintance with human nature of any novel-writer of the day. Mr. Dickens generally solves the problem in a different way: his characters,

even when they are only of the *bourgeois* class, are nearly always furnished with some peculiarity, which, like the weight of a Dutch clock, is their ever-gravitating principle of action. The consequence is, they have, most of them, the appearance of puppets which Mr. Dickens has constructed expressly for his present purpose. Mr. Bounderby, for example, is a most outrageous character: who can believe in the possibility of such a man? Brought up carefully and pushed on in the world by a poor and devoted mother, he not only pensions her off on a miserable pittance and denies her all approach to him in his full-blown prosperity, but he is never introduced on the scene without being made to traduce her character and that of others of his relatives, and invent lies about the way in which he lived when he was, as he ever gave out, thrown helpless on the world. He is made to entertain his guests with the flavor of the stewed eels he purchased in the streets at eight years old, and with calculations that he had eaten in his youth at least three horses, under the guise of polonies and saveloys. Such things may excite a laugh, perhaps, in a farce spoken at the Victoria, but will hardly do so with any reader of taste. The whole of the Gradgrind family are unpleasant enough, but especially we might have been spared the melancholy spectacle of Mrs. Gradgrind's decease. The death-bed of an inoffensive, weak-minded woman should not have been made ridiculous, especially as it does not in any way assist the plot. The principal charm of the story is the style, which, aided by his delicate perception, enables Mr. Dickens to take off the fleeting peculiarities of time and place in the manner which has gained great part of his literary reputation. We doubt, however, whether his descriptions will be so intelligible fifty years hence: it is a language which speaks especially to the present generation. It has, however, frequent extravagances, which are indulged in by Mr. Dickens and his followers to a degree that becomes not unfrequently insupportable.

CHARLES KINGSLEY: "WESTWARD HO!"

Every one who was so happy as to go mushrooming in his early days remembers his delight when, after picking up and throwing away heaps of dubious fungi, dear to naturalists but abhorred of cooks, he pounced on an unmistakable mushroom, with its delicate fragrance and pink lining tempting him to devour it there and then, to the prejudice of the promised dish for breakfast. We speak in parables, after the fashion of the wise, amongst whom reviewers are always to be reckoned. The plentiful dubious fungi are the ordinary quarter's crop of novels, not all poisonous, but generally not appetizing, and certainly not nourishing; and the unmistakable mushroom is a new novel by

Charles Kingsley. It seemed too long since we had any of that genuine description of external nature, not done after the poet's or the novelist's recipe, but flowing from spontaneous observation and enjoyment, any of that close, vigorous painting of out-door life which serves as myrrh and rich spices to embalm much perishable theorizing and offensive objurgation,—too long since we had a taste of that exquisite lyrical inspiration to which we owe

Oh, Mary, go and call the cattle home
Along the sands of Dee.

After courses of "psychological" novels (very excellent things in their way), where life seems made up of talking and journalizing and men are judged almost entirely on "carpet consideration," we are ready to welcome a stirring historical romance by a writer who, poet and scholar and social reformer as he is, evidently knows the points of a horse and has followed the hounds, who betrays a fancy for pigs and becomes dithyrambic on the virtues of tobacco. After a surfeit of Hebes and Psyches, or Madonnas and Magdalens, it is a refreshment to turn to Kiss's Amazon. But this ruddy and, now and then, rather ferocious barbarism, which is singularly compounded in Mr. Kingsley with the susceptibility of the poet and the warm sympathy of the philanthropist, while it gives his writings one of their principal charms, is also the source of their gravest fault. The battle and the chase seem necessary to his existence; and this Red Man's nature, planted in a pleasant rectory among corn-fields and pastures, takes, in default of better game, to riding down capitalists and Jesuits and fighting with that Protean personage "the devil." If, however, Mother Nature has made Mr. Kingsley very much of a poet and philanthropist and a little of a savage, her dry-nurse Habit has made him superlatively a preacher: he drops into the homily as readily as if he had been "to the manner born;" and, while by his artistic faculty he can transplant you into whatever scene he will, he can never trust to the impression that scene itself will make on you, but, true to his cloth, must always "improve the occasion." In these two points—his fierce antagonism and his perpetual hortative tendency—lie, to our thinking, the grand mistakes which enfeeble the effect of all Mr. Kingsley's works and are too likely to impede his production of what his high powers would otherwise promise,—a fiction which might be numbered among our classics. Poet and artist in a rare degree, his passionate impetuosity and theological prepossessions inexorably forbid that he should ever be a philosopher: he sees, feels, and paints vividly, but he theorizes illogically and moralizes absurdly. If he would confine himself to his true sphere, he might be a teacher in the sense in which every great artist is a teacher,—namely, by giving

us his higher sensibility as a medium, a delicate acoustic or optical instrument, bringing home to our coarser senses what would otherwise be unperceived by us. But Mr. Kingsley, unhappily, like so many other gifted men, has two steeds,—his Pegasus and his hobby: the one he rides with a graceful *abandon*, to the admiration of all beholders; but no sooner does he get astride the other than he becomes a feeble imitator of Carlyle's *manège*, and attempts to put his wooden toy through all the wonderful paces of the great Scotchman's fiery Tartar horse. This imitation is probably not a conscious one, but arises simply from the fact that Mr. Kingsley's impetuosity and Boanerges vein give him an affinity for Carlyle's faults,—his one-sided judgment of character and his indiscriminating fulminations against the men of the present as tried by some imaginary standard in the past. Carlyle's great merits Mr. Kingsley's powers are not fitted to achieve: his genius lies in another direction. He has not that piercing insight which every now and then flashes to the depth of things, and, alternating as it does with the most obstinate one-sidedness, makes Carlyle a wonderful paradox of wisdom and wilfulness; he has not that awful sense of the mystery of existence which continually checks and chastens the denunciations of Teufelsdröckh; still less has he the rich humor, the keen satire, and the tremendous word-missiles which Carlyle hurls about as Milton's angels hurl the rocks. But Mr. Kingsley *can* scold; he *can* select one character for unmixed eulogy and another for unmitigated vituperation; he *can* undertake to depict a past age and try to make out that it was the pattern of all heroisms now utterly extinct; he *can* sneer at actual doings which are only a new form of the sentiments he vaunts as the peculiar possession of his pet period; *can* call his own opinion God, and the opposite opinion the Devil. Carlyle's love of the concrete makes him prefer any proper name rather than an abstraction, and we are accustomed to smile at this in him, knowing it to be mere Carlylian rhetoric; but with Mr. Kingsley, who has publicly made a vehement disclaimer of all heterodoxy, and wishes to be understood as believing "all the doctrines of the Catholic Church," we must interpret such phraseology more literally. But enough of general remarks. Let us turn to the particular work before us, where we shall find all the writer's merits and faults in full blow. We abstain on principle from telling the story of novels, which seems to us something like stealing geraniums from your friend's flower-pot to stick in your own button-hole: you spoil the effect of his plant, and you secure only a questionable ornament for yourself. We shall therefore be careful to give the reader no hint of the domestic story around which Mr. Kingsley has grouped the historical scenes and characters of "Westward Ho!"

Hardly any period could furnish a happier subject for an historical fiction than the one Mr. Kingsley has here chosen. It is unhackneyed, and it is unsurpassed in the grandeur of its moral elements and the picturesqueness and romance of its manners and events. Mr. Kingsley has not only brought genius but much labor to its illustration. He has fed his strong imagination with all accessible material, and given care not only to the grand figures and incidents but to small details. One sees that he knows and loves his Devonshire at first hand, and he has evidently lingered over the description of the forests and savannas and rivers of the New World until they have become as vividly present to him as if they were part of his own experience. We dare not pronounce on the merit of his naval descriptions, but to us, landlubbers as we are, they seem wonderfully real, and not to smack at all of technicalities learned by rote over the desk. He has given a careful and loving study to the history and literature of the period, and whatever misrepresentation there is in the book is clearly not due to ignorance but to prepossession: if he misrepresents, it is not because he has omitted to examine, but because he has examined through peculiar spectacles. In the construction of a story Mr. Kingsley has never been felicitous; and the febleness of his *dénouements* has been matter of amazement even to his admirers. In this respect "Westward Ho!" though by no means criticism-proof, is rather an advance on his former works, especially in the winding-up. It is true, this winding-up reminds us a little of "Jane Eyre," but we prefer a partially-borrowed beauty to an original bathos, which was what Mr. Kingsley achieved in the later chapters of "Alton Locke" and "Yeast." Neither is humor his forte. His Jack Brimblecome is too much like a piece of fun *obligato*, after the manner of Walter Scott, who remains the unequalled model of historical romancists, however they may criticise him. Mr. Kingsley's necessity for strong loves and strong hatreds, and his determination to hold up certain persons as models, is an obstacle to his successful delineation of character, in which he might otherwise excel. As it is, we can no more believe in and love his men and women than we could believe in and love the pattern-boy at school, always cited as a rebuke to our aberrations. Amyas Leigh would be a real, lovable fellow enough if he were a little less exemplary, and if Mr. Kingsley would not make him a text to preach from, as we suppose he is accustomed to do with Joshua, Gideon, and David. Until he shakes off this parsonic habit he will not be able to create truly human characters or to write a genuine historical romance. Where his prepossessions do not come into play, where he is not dealing with his model heroes, or where the drama turns on a single passion or motive, he can scarcely be rivalled in truthfulness and

beauty of presentation ; for in clothing passion with action and language, and in the conception of all that gives local coloring, he has his best gifts to aid him. Beautiful is that episode of Mr. Oxenham's love, told by Salvation Yeo. Very admirable, too, is the felicity with which Mr. Kingsley has seized the style and spirit of the Elizabethan writers and reproduced them in the poetry and supposed quotations scattered through his story. But above all other charms in his writings, at least to us, is his scene-painting. Who does not remember the scene by the wood in "Alton Locke," or that of the hunt at the beginning of "Yeast"? And "Westward Ho!" is wealthy in still greater beauties of the same kind. . . .

It is pleasanter to linger over beauties such as these than to point out faults ; but, unhappily, Mr. Kingsley's faults are likely to do harm in other ways than in subtracting from the lustre of his fame, and a faithful reviewer must lift up his voice against them, whether men "will hear or whether they will forbear." Who that has any knowledge of our history and literature—that has felt his heart beat high at the idea of great crises and great deeds—that has any true recognition of the greatest poetry and some of the greatest thoughts enshrined in our language, is not ready to pay the tribute of enthusiastic reverence to the Elizabethan age? In his glowing picture of that age, Mr. Kingsley would have carried with him all minds in which there is a spark of nobleness, if he could have freed himself from the spirit of the partisan and been content to admit that in the Elizabethan age, as in every other, human beings, human parties, and human deeds are made up of the mostly subtly intermixed good and evil. The battle of Armageddon, in which all the saints are to fight on one side, has never yet come. It is perfectly true that, at certain epochs, the relations and tendencies of ideas and events are so clearly made out to minds of any superiority that the best and ablest men are for the most part ranged under one banner : there was a point at which it must have become disgraceful to a cultivated mind not to accept the Copernican system, and in these days we are unable to draw any favorable inference concerning the intellect or morals of a man who advocates capital punishment for sheep-stealing or forgery. But things have never come to this pass with regard to Catholicism and Protestantism ; and, even supposing they had, Mr. Kingsley's ethics seem to resemble too closely those of his bugbears the Dominicans, when he implies that it is a holy work for the "Ayes" to hunt down the "Noes" like so many beasts of prey. His view of history seems not essentially to differ from that we have all held in our childish days, when it seemed perfectly easy to us to divide mankind into the sheep and the goats, when we devoutly believed that our favorite

heroes, Wallace and Bruce, and all who fought on their side, were "good," while Edward and his soldiers were all "wicked;" that all the champions of the Reformation were of unexceptionable private character, and all the adherents of Popery consciously vicious and base. Doubtless the Elizabethan age bore its peculiar fruit of excellence, as every age has done which forms a nodus, a ganglion, in the historical development of humanity,—as the age of Pericles produced the divinest sculptures, or the age of the Roman Republic the severe grandeur of Roman law and Roman patriotism, or as the core of the Middle Ages held the germ of chivalrous honor and reverential love. Doubtless the conquest of the Spanish Armada was virtually the triumph of light and freedom over darkness and bondage. What then? Is this a reason why Mr. Kingsley should seem almost angry with us for not believing with the men of that day in the golden city of Manoa and the Gulf Stream, or scold by anticipation any one who shall dare to congratulate himself on being undeceived in these matters? Doubtless Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, and the rest were brave, energetic men,—men of great will and in some sort of great faculty; but, like all other human agents, they "builed better than they knew;" and it would be as rational to suppose that the bee is an entomological Euclid, interested only in the solution of a problem, as to suppose that the motives of these mariners were as grand as the results of their work.

JOHN RUSKIN: "MODERN PAINTERS."

Of course this treatise "of many things" presents certain old characteristics and paradoxes which will furnish a fresh text to antagonistic critics; but, happily for us, and happily for our readers, who probably care more to know what Mr. Ruskin says than what other people think he *ought* to say, we are not among those who are more irritated by his faults than charmed and subdued by his merits. When he announces to the world, in his Preface, that he is incapable of falling into an illogical deduction,—that, whatever other mistakes he may commit, he cannot possibly draw an inconsequent conclusion,—we are not indignant, but amused, and do not in the least feel ourselves under the necessity of picking holes in his arguments in order to prove that he is not a logical Pope. We value a writer not in proportion to his freedom from faults, but in proportion to his positive excellences,—to the variety of thought he contributes and suggests, to the amount of gladdening and energizing emotions he excites. Of what comparative importance is it that Mr. Ruskin undervalues this painter or overvalues the other, that he sometimes glides from a just argument into a fallacious one, that he is a little absurd here and not a little arrogant there,

if, with all these collateral mistakes, he teaches truth of infinite value, and so teaches it that men will listen? The truth of infinite value that he teaches is *realism*,—the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature, and not by substituting vague forms, bred by imagination on the mists of feeling, in place of definite, substantial reality. The thorough acceptance of this doctrine would remould our life; and he who teaches its application to any one department of human activity with such power as Mr. Ruskin's is a prophet for his generation. It is not enough simply to teach truth; that may be done, as we all know, to empty walls and within the covers of unsalable books: we want it to be so taught as to compel men's attention and sympathy. Very correct singing of very fine music will avail little without a *voice* that can thrill the audience and take possession of their souls. Now, Mr. Ruskin has a voice, and one of such power that, whatever error he may mix with his truth, he will make more converts to that truth than less erring advocates who are hoarse and feeble. Considered merely as a writer, he is in the very highest rank of English stylists. The vigor and splendor of his eloquence are not more remarkable than its precision and the delicate truthfulness of his epithets. The fine *largo* of his sentences reminds us more of De Quincey than of any other writer, and his tendency to digressiveness is another and less admirable point of resemblance to the English Opium-Eater. Yet we are not surprised to find that he does not mention De Quincey among the favorite writers who have influenced him, for Mr. Ruskin's style is evidently due far more to innate faculty than to modifying influences; and though he himself thinks that his constant study of Carlyle must have impressed itself on his language as well as his thought, we rarely detect this. In the point of view from which he looks at a subject, in the correctness of his descriptions, and in a certain rough flavor of humor, he constantly reminds us of Carlyle, but in the mere tissue of his style scarcely ever.

ROBERT BROWNING: "MEN AND WOMEN."

We never read Heinsius,—a great admission for a reviewer,—but we learn from M. Arago that that formidably erudite writer pronounces Aristotle's works to be characterized by a *majestic obscurity which repels the ignorant*. We borrow these words to indicate what is likely to be the first impression of a reader who, without any previous familiarity with Browning, glances through his two new volumes of poems. The less acute he is, the more easily will he arrive at the undeniable criticism that these poems have a "majestic obscurity" which repels not only the ignorant but the idle. To read poems is often a substitute for

thought: fine-sounding conventional phrases and the sing-song of verse demand no co-operation in the reader; they glide over his mind with the agreeable unmeaningness of "the compliments of the season" or a speaker's exordium on "feelings too deep for expression." But let him expect no such drowsy passivity in reading Browning. Here he will find no conventionality, no melodious commonplace, but freshness, originality, sometimes eccentricity of expression; no didactic laying-out of a subject, but dramatic indication, which requires the reader to trace by his own mental activity the underground stream of thought that jets out in elliptical and pithy verse. To read Browning he must exert himself, but he will exert himself to some purpose. If he finds the meaning difficult of access, it is always worth his effort: if he has to dive deep, "he rises with his pearl." Indeed, in Browning's best poems he makes us feel that what we took for obscurity in him was superficiality in ourselves. We are far from meaning that all his obscurity is like the obscurity of the stars, dependent simply on the feebleness of men's vision. On the contrary, our admiration for his genius only makes us feel the more acutely that its inspirations are too often straitened by the garb of whimsical mannerism with which he clothes them. This mannerism is even irritating sometimes, and should at least be kept under restraint in *printed* poems, where the writer is not merely indulging his own vein, but is avowedly appealing to the mind of his reader.

Turning from the ordinary literature of the day to such a writer as Browning is like turning from Flotow's music, made up of well-pieced shreds and patches, to the distinct individuality of Chopin's Studies or Schubert's Songs. Here, at least, is a man who has something of his own to tell us, and who can tell it impressively, if not with faultless art. There is nothing sickly or dreamy in him: he has a clear eye, a vigorous grasp, and courage to utter what he sees and handles. His robust energy is informed by a subtile, penetrating spirit, and this blending of opposite qualities gives his mind a rough piquancy that reminds one of a russet apple. His keen glance pierces into all the secrets of human character, but, being as thoroughly alive to the outward as to the inward, he reveals those secrets, not by a process of dissection, but by dramatic painting. We fancy his own description of a poet applies to himself:

He stood and watched the cobbler at his trade,
The man who slices lemons into drink,
The coffee-roaster's brazier, and the boys
That volunteer to help him at the winch.
He glanced o'er books on stalls with half an eye,

And fly-leaf ballads on the vender's string,
 And broad-edge bold-print posters by the wall.
*He took such cognizance of men and things,
 If any beat a horse, you felt he saw ;
 If any cursed a woman, he took note ;
 Yet stared at nobody,—they stared at him,
 And found, less to their pleasure than surprise,
 He seemed to know them and expect as much.*

Browning has no soothing strains, no chants, no lullabies ; he rarely gives voice to our melancholy, still less to our gayety ; he sets our thoughts at work rather than our emotions. But, though eminently a thinker, he is as far as possible from prosaic : his mode of presentation is always concrete, artistic, and, where it is most felicitous, dramatic. . . Generally, the greatest deficiency we feel in his poetry is its want of music. The worst poems in his new volumes are, in our opinion, his lyrical efforts ; for in these, where he engrosses us less by his thought, we are more sensible of his obscurity and his want of melody. His lyrics, instead of tripping along with easy grace or rolling with a torrent-like grandeur, seem to be struggling painfully under a burden too heavy for them ; and many of them have the disagreeable puzzling effect of a charade, rather than the touching or animating influence of song. We have said that he is never prosaic ; and it is remarkable that in his blank verse, though it is often colloquial, we are never shocked by the sense of a sudden lapse into prose. Wordsworth is, on the whole, a far more musical poet than Browning, yet we remember no line in Browning so prosaic as many of Wordsworth's, which in some of his finest poems have the effect of bricks built into a rock. But we must also say that, though Browning never flounders helplessly on the plain, he rarely soars above a certain table-land,—a footing between the level of prose and the topmost heights of poetry. He does not take possession of our souls and set them aglow, as the greatest poets, the greatest artists, do. We admire his power, we are not subdued by it. Language with him does not seem spontaneously to link itself into song, as sounds link themselves into melody in the mind of the creative musician : he rather seems by his commanding powers to compel language into verse. He has *chosen* verse as his medium ; but of our greatest poets we feel that they had no choice : Verse chose them. Still, we are grateful that Browning chose this medium : we would rather have "Fra Lippo Lippi" than an essay on Realism in Art ; we would rather have "The Statue and the Bust" than a three-volumed novel with the same moral ; we would rather have "Holy-Cross Day" than "Strictures on the Society for the Emancipation of the Jews."

MATTHEW ARNOLD : " POEMS, SECOND SERIES."

The name of Matthew Arnold on a volume of poems is a sufficient recommendation to the notice of all those who are careful to supply themselves with poetry of a new vintage, so we need not regret, except on our own account, that we have made rather a late acquaintance with his *Second Series of Poems*, published last quarter. If we had written of these poems after reading them only once, we should have given them a tepid kind of praise, but after reading them again and again we have become their partisan, and are tempted to be intolerant of those who will not admit their beauty. Our first impression from a poem of Mr. Arnold's—and with some persons this is the sole impression—generally is that it is rather tame and prosaic. The thought is always refined and unhackneyed, sometimes new and sublime, but he seems not to have found the winged word which carries the thought at once to the mind of the reader ; his poems do not come to us like original melodies which are beautiful facts that one never thinks of altering any more than a pine-tree or a river : we are haunted by the feeling that he might have said the same thing much better. But when, simply for the sake of converse with a nature so gifted and cultivated as Mr. Arnold's, we linger over a poem which contains some deep and fresh thought, we begin to perceive poetic beauties—felicities of expression and description—which are too quiet and subdued to be seized at the first glance. You must become familiar with his poems before you can appreciate them as poetry, just as in the early spring you must come very near to the woods before you can discern the delicate glossy or downy buds which distinguish their April from their winter clothing. He never attains the wonderful word-music of Tennyson, which lives with you like an *Adelaide* of Beethoven or a *Preghiera* of Rossini ; but his combinations and phrases are never common, they are fresh from the fountain, and call the reader's mind into new activity. Mr. Arnold's grand defect is a want of rhythm,—we mean of that rhythm which is music to an English ear. His imitations of the classical metres can no more win a place in our lasting national poetry than orange- and olive-trees can flourish in our common English gardens ; and his persistence in these imitations is, we think, a proof that he lacks that fine sense of word-music, that direct inspiration of song, as distinguished from speech, which is the crowning gift of the poet.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER I.

MISS LEFROY, THE HEIRESS.

“HOPE? How pretty! Is that your real name, or are you only called so by your people?”

“I was called so by my godfathers and godmothers in my baptism. Have you any objection?”

“None. I think it is a charming name, like everything else about you; only, as one baby is so very much like another, you know, it seems odd that anybody should have been clever enough to hit upon exactly the right name to call you by. I presume that when you were a baby you had a little round mouth, a little round nose, and little round eyes, like the rest of the species. No one could have foreseen that you would grow up to—to——”

“To the possession of my present perfect set of features? Possibly not; but why do you say that Hope is exactly the right name for me?”

“I don't know. Something about the curve of the lips, perhaps, or about your eyes, which are always rather wide open and look as if they said something pleasant, or—or—well, I am not a very good hand at explaining myself, but I dare say you understand what I mean.”

It is not unlikely that she did. At any rate, she must have understood that he meant to express admiration, and with that degree of comprehension on her part he would probably have been satisfied. This was the first time in her life that she had been addressed with such soft flattery: it was also her first introduction to a London ball-room. The glitter of the great crystal chandeliers, the amazing profusion of flowers which loaded the air with faint odors, the sparkle of innumerable diamonds, the steady, ceaseless hum of a multitude of voices, the rhythmic strains of the Hungarian band, to which her little feet kept unconsciously beating time upon the polished floor,—all these things excited her unaccustomed brain and filled her with that intoxication of joy in existence which belongs to youth alone. If it added something to her happiness to be seated beside an exceedingly handsome young guardsman and to listen to the nonsense which it pleased him to talk, she assuredly did not differ very much in that particular from other persons of greater age and experience.

But Captain Cunningham did not suppose himself to be talking non-

sense at all. "The goddess of hope," he went on presently, "must have been the very image of you. That is, if there ever was such a being. I've forgotten my gods and goddesses since I left school."

"You must have a remarkably short memory."

"Ah, you say that because you think I'm so young: that is what everybody thinks. But you're wrong; I'm quite old in reality,—twenty-four the very next 3d of August as ever is, little as you might imagine it. I suppose," he added, turning up his face towards her with a sort of innocent gravity, "I do look awfully young, don't I?"

She scrutinized his small, refined features, his dark-blue eyes with their long lashes, his close-cut black hair, and the smiling mouth, above which there was but the faintest indication of a moustache, and answered, "Well, yes, you do. But I don't think I should mind that much, if I were you. We shall none of us either look young or be young for more than a few years."

"Let us make the most of our time while it lasts, then. Shall we take another turn?"

She nodded; he gave her back her fan (upon which the monogram of H.L. had afforded him an excuse for asking her what H. stood for), and soon they were gliding swiftly round the room with the other dancers.

After all, the best moments of life are more connected with trivialities than we care to admit, and happiness, which we are told not to expect in this world, and which certainly is a very different thing from placid contentment, comes and goes in flashes, seldom leaving behind it any rational explanation of its visits. It is doubtful whether, even in communing with her own heart, Hope Lefroy ever made such an admission as this: "I was happy once. It was on a summer evening in a big London house; I was waltzing with the handsomest man and the best dancer in the room; the lights and the colors and the voices went swimming round us like things in a dream; I almost forgot my identity, and the music seemed to be part of us,—or else we were a part of the music. Somebody said, 'What a lovely girl!' and somebody else said, 'That is Miss Lefroy,—the great heiress, you know.'" Nevertheless she had to wait a long time before another quarter of an hour such as that came to her. The above fragments of conversation were the only words which reached her ears, and these, fortunately, were not acute enough to catch the remarks made by a good-natured person seated near the door to a lady with a hook nose and double eye-glasses and somewhat anxious expression of countenance.

"My dear Lady Jane," the good-natured person was saying, "do you know that this is the fourth time running that your niece has danced with Bertie Cunningham? Isn't that just a little bit dangerous?"

The lady with the hook nose said, "I trust not."

"Really I think it is. Bertie has three hundred a year from his father, and debts, and the face of an angel. He is always in love with somebody, and what is worse is that somebody is always in love with him. One can't check these things too soon."

"One can't dash into the middle of a ball-room and drag one's niece out of danger by the hair of her head. I will speak to her when I get an opportunity. The truth is that she knows no more about—about everything than a child in arms. Charles has kept her down in the country half her life, and I doubt whether she would ever have had a season in London at all if I had not come to the rescue."

"How good of you!"

"I suppose you mean how foolish. Very likely it was, only it did seem such a pity that she should remain buried in the depths of the Midlands and perhaps end by marrying the curate. Still, people ought to look after their own daughters: I am sure I have enough to do to look after mine. Of course, if anything interesting happens I shall get no credit, and if there is a catastrophe I shall be blamed. I wonder why younger sons are always so good-looking, while their elder brothers are invariably ugly, or go in for eccentric fads, or have fits, or something horrid!"

"Because there is a good deal of rough justice in human affairs. The elder brothers don't need personal advantages; the younger ones are given handsome faces in order that they may get on in the world and marry rich Miss Lefroys."

"You never would say such things if you knew how uncomfortable it makes me to hear them. Please take me to the supper-room, and let us think about something more pleasant."

A tall, loosely-built man, neither young nor old, with a long moustache and no other hair about his face, turned to a brisk elderly gentleman who was standing beside him and asked, abruptly, "Is that your niece, Lefroy?"

The elderly gentleman replied, "Yes, that is my niece. A handsome girl, isn't she?"

"Very. To whom are you and Lady Jane going to marry her?"

"To nobody that I know of. We have brought her up to London to give her a little amusement: she hasn't had too much of that, poor girl!"

"You don't intend her to marry Cunningham, do you?"

"Cunningham? What Cunningham? That boy in the Scots Guards, do you mean? Hardly! All the same I should be glad if she would marry somebody."

"Why?"

"Because my brother Charles has heart-disease. You needn't mention this, you know, but the doctors tell him he may go off suddenly at any moment; and of course when poor Charles dies——"

"Oh, I see: you would find her confoundedly in the way then. You're good-natured sort of people, but there is nothing you hate like being made uncomfortable. Don't mind my saying so, do you?"

"Nobody ever minds what you say, Herbert, and I confess I don't like being made uncomfortable. For the matter of that, I don't know who does. I tell you what: I wish you'd marry the girl yourself."

"No use, Lefroy: the mothers gave me up long ago. Ask any dowager you like. I've had an asterisk before my name for the last ten years. No, I can't help you in that way, but I'll give you a bit of gratuitous advice: don't let her see too much of Cunningham. Not that there's any particular harm in him, only she ought to do better, I should think."

Meanwhile, the subject of so much free discussion was happily unaware of having made herself in any way conspicuous. When the waltz was over she very properly requested her partner to take her back to her aunt; but, as Lady Jane was not to be found,—being indeed at that moment busily engaged with aspic and champagne elsewhere,—she readily assented to Captain Cunningham's suggestion that they should "go and sit down somewhere."

It may be that Captain Cunningham's mental gifts were not quite upon a par with his physical ones; at any rate, his stock of conversational topics seemed to lack variety. "Hope!" he murmured, as he sank down upon a sofa beside his companion; "I think it's the prettiest name I ever heard."

Something in the manner of his intonation certainly made it sound pretty, and the girl answered, simply, "I never thought of it as being especially so before, but now that you mention it perhaps it is rather pretty. It doesn't mean anything, though. I was called after my mother, who, I believe, was called after an old Mr. Hope who left her people some money. So, you see, if my parents wished to express any sentiment at all in giving me my name, it must have been gratitude."

It is doubtful, however, whether that sentiment had had any place in her parents' mind at the time of her birth. If they had called her Disappointment it would more nearly have expressed their feelings. To own a large entailed estate, to have remained a considerable number of years childless and then to be presented by heaven with a daughter, is not among the experiences which evoke prompt thanksgiving; nor was Mr. Lefroy the kind of man to take comfort from thinking that

his daughter's advent might in due season be followed by that of a son or sons. "I know what it will be," he said, resignedly, when he was told the news: "I shall have twelve little girls now." But outrageous Fortune did not deal with him quite so hardly as that, for he never had another child of either sex, and when he lost his wife he was too advanced in years to think of marrying again.

Thus Hope became a great heiress, Mr. Lefroy being a rich man independently of his acres. For generations past, as various collateral branches of the family had withered away, money had poured in upon the successive heads of the house, sometimes in dribblets, sometimes in considerable streams, as it has a way of doing upon those who do not require it; and over this accumulation Hope's father had, of course, undisputed control. During his lifetime the hoard had increased greatly. At first neither he nor his wife had been able quite to forgive their little daughter for not being a boy. Without being in the least unkind to her, they had not cared to see much of her, and had willingly committed her to the care of the best nurses and governesses that money could procure. They had spent a large portion of their time in London and in foreign wanderings, while the child was left in the pure country air of her home, which, as they said, was so much better for her. The sight of her reminded them of their disappointment, and to Mrs. Lefroy in particular conveyed something in the nature of a tacit reproach. To her dying day the good lady did not altogether get over this feeling, and, conscientiously though she strove to conceal it, never succeeded in so doing; but when Hope was about ten years old her father's point of view underwent a sudden and complete change. Either because the child was so pretty and so winning in her ways, or because his own nature was an affectionate and his wife's a somewhat cold one, he began to worship the little heiress to whom he could bequeath neither house nor lands. It occurred to him that, so far from his having a grievance against her, it was she who had the best right to complain of her sex being what it was. He at least would live and die in the old place; but she must, some day or other, give up the home that she loved to the heir of entail; and what might have seemed no hardship at all if she had had a brother assumed a very different aspect when it was a case of retiring in favor of an uncle or cousin. So Mr. Lefroy set himself to save money, and accomplished with little effort a task which to most people is both difficult and painful. Since Hope could never be Miss Lefroy of Helston Abbey, she should at any rate be Miss Lefroy the heiress,—an heiress so great that she would be able, if it should so please her, to raise a second Helston elsewhere, as Helenus founded a new Troy on the shores of Epirus. This saving process did not bring

about any curtailment of daily luxuries, but it made it necessary—or so Mr. Lefroy declared—that he should live quietly at home and give up his London house, and to that plan Mrs. Lefroy, who during the last years of her life was a confirmed invalid, offered no opposition.

When Hope was between fifteen and sixteen, her mother died; and after that she and her father became closer companions than ever. Their companionship, indeed, was somewhat too close; for each found the other's society all-sufficient, and they mixed less with their friends and neighbors than was good for either of them. During the hunting-season they were occasionally seen,—a spare, melancholy-looking man, very well turned-out, and a fair-haired girl whose sunny face developed into greater beauty year by year,—but nobody got much beyond bare civilities with this couple, and the vast house in which they lived was rarely enlivened by visitors. From time to time relations were asked down to stay; but the relations found it so intolerably dull that they were generally telegraphed for on the second or third day and had to leave precipitately. Sometimes, too, a stray artist would be invited to partake of Mr. Lefroy's hospitality; and the artist, as a rule, enjoyed himself. He could not but be glad of the opportunity of studying the Helston Abbey picture-gallery, which was not open to the public, and he was sure of being treated with the utmost consideration and respect by his host, who was himself an amateur painter of no mean ability, and whose love for art of every kind was second only to his love for his daughter. When Mr. Lefroy took Hope up to London for a few days—as he did every now and then—it was almost always in order to attend a sale at Christie's. The old man was well known in the King Street rooms, where in former years he had been a frequent purchaser. He no longer bought much, having another use for his money now; but it pleased him to examine the treasures exposed for sale, and nobody knew better than he did whether these fetched more or less than their value. There is every reason to believe that he would have gone on taking his daughter to art sales and imagining that by so doing he was giving her the greatest of possible treats, had he not chanced, on his way back from one of these entertainments, to encounter his sister-in-law Lady Jane.

Lady Jane stared very hard, not at him, but at his companion, and muttered under her breath, "Really, it is too bad!" What she saw was a tall, well-grown girl with a slightly-aquiline nose, a quantity of golden hair very unfashionably arranged, and a pair of large, wide-open gray eyes. Nobody ever beheld whiter or more even teeth than this girl displayed presently when something made her laugh, nor could there be anywhere, in London or out of it, a more exquisite complexion. It really was too bad; and there was nothing for an aunt of proper

feeling to do but to promise her niece a London season and disappoint her not, though it should be to her own hinderance (for she herself had two unmarried daughters, whose beauty was of a less striking order).

The next day Lady Jane called on her brother-in-law, and pointed out to him that the time had come for Hope to be presented at court and to assume her place in society. "If you won't take her about, we must," she said; and Mr. Lefroy assented with a sigh,—the more willingly, perhaps, because he had just returned with a rather graver face than usual from consulting his doctor.

"It must come some day, I suppose," he remarked. "It is a pity. Hope is perfect as she is, and you will do your best to spoil her among you. Still, I suppose it would have had to come some day. I wish I knew how it would end!"

"I dare say I can tell you," his sister-in-law replied, laughing a little: "it will end in the natural way."

What Lady Jane considered natural was that the girl should ere long become engaged to some unexceptionable person, chosen for her by her thoughtful relatives; but perhaps it was even more natural that at Hope's first ball she should be sitting in a retired corner with an attractive young guardsman and communicating to him the greater part of the personal history set forth above.

Her auditor appeared to take a lively interest in all that she told him. He was a young man with many connections and more friends: from the day on which he was gazetted to his battalion society of every sort and kind had been open to him, and, as he himself would have said, "he knew his way about pretty well." If he had not studied feminine nature very exhaustively, he had at any rate had sufficient opportunities of doing so, and not long before this time he had gravely confided to a brother officer, as the result of his observation, that one woman was uncommonly like another. However, he had never met any one quite like Miss Lefroy before; and it is perfectly possible that, even if she had not happened to be the prettiest girl in the room, he would have been captivated by her manner, which had the kind of self-possession that children have before they grow old enough to be shy, besides an amusing little touch of condescension every now and then, due, no doubt, to the circumstance that Miss Lefroy had hitherto been thrown more among social inferiors than among equals.

"Are you fond of shooting?" she asked. "If you are, you might run down to Helston some time in the autumn and pay us a visit."

The young man passed his hand across his lips to smooth away a smile. "You are very kind," he answered, gravely; "but hadn't I perhaps better wait until Mr. Lefroy asks me?"

"You would have to wait a long time, I am afraid. It very seldom occurs to my father to invite people to stay; although when they come he is generally the better for it, I think. Probably, if there was anybody else in the house, he would hardly notice whether you were there or not. And I should like you to see Helston."

"I should like to see it very much. It must be rather an odd sort of place in some ways."

"Odd! What do you mean?"

"Well, it seems to produce things that don't generally grow in the country,—young ladies, for instance, who dance as beautifully as if they had been doing nothing else all their lives, and who can snub a humble acquaintance without any difficulty."

"Is that because I said my father wouldn't notice you? I should not have supposed that you would mind; but perhaps you are not so humble as you make yourself out. Unfortunately, my father is rather absent-minded, and there is only one way of attracting his attention that I know of. Have you ever painted a picture?"

"Can't say that I ever have; but I dare say I might manage it if I tried."

"Oh, you think so? Decidedly humility is not one of your failings. Now, I, who have been patiently learning to draw and paint ever since I could hold a brush or a pencil, never ventured to submit a composition of my own to my father until about a month ago. And how do you suppose he received it?"

"With tears of joy, I should think."

"No: if he had shed tears they would not have been tears of that kind, I am afraid. He screwed up his eyes and stroked his chin and looked very much inclined to run away; and then he said, 'My dear, I can see that you have taken great pains over this.' Farther than that he couldn't go, much as he would have liked to go farther. It only shows——"

"That Mr. Lefroy ought to be deprived of his daughter until he learns to appreciate her," broke in a voice from the background, at the sound of which the girl turned round with a little cry of pleasure.

"You at a ball!" she exclaimed. "After this nothing will ever surprise me again."

The intruder advanced, holding out a long, lean, gloveless hand. His clothes hung loosely upon a massive frame; his shirt-front was crumpled; the white tie knotted round his throat looked more like a huge pocket-handkerchief than anything else; and these trifles, quite as much as a certain rugged grandeur about his square head, with its grizzled beard and its mane flung back from the brow, made him a

conspicuous figure among that crowd of men who, old and young alike, were turned out after an identical neat pattern.

"Why may I not have a treat every now and then, like other people?" he asked, smiling. "When we parted, Miss Hope, I should have said that nothing was more unlikely than that our next meeting should take place in a ball-room; yet here we both are, you see. The difference between us is that you take to it as a duckling takes to water, whereas I am altogether out of my element,—the difference between age and youth, in short."

Hope laughed. "Are you not enjoying yourself?" she asked.

"Do I look as if I were enjoying myself? Still, I have enjoyed watching you. It's a new character, and I can't deny that it's a becoming one, though I think I like the other best. Honestly, now, which do you prefer, dancing or painting?"

"Will you wither me with scorn if I say dancing?"

"Not I! I only wish I were of an age to agree with you. Dance away, Miss Hope: there's a time for all things. Only thank heaven and your father that you have a pursuit to fall back upon. Sooner or later the day comes when we all need that. Work and tobacco have been my two best friends in life. I shouldn't like to see you with a pipe in your mouth; but I shall always be glad to see you standing before an easel."

"You think I have the makings of an artist in me, then?" asked the girl, with some eagerness.

"That is not the question," returned the other, and strode away unceremoniously.

"Who is that very—abrupt old party?" inquired the guardsman.

"Don't you know?" exclaimed Hope. "Why, that is Mr. Tristram."

"The thought of my ignorance makes me blush all over, but I am obliged to confess that I am not much the wiser."

"Oh, you *must* be! Surely you must have heard of Tristram, the great artist?"

"Oh, *that* Tristram! Yes; I've heard of him, of course; seen his pictures, too. They're a little beyond me, I think, though I've no doubt they are magnificent, as everybody says so. I never met him before: he doesn't look exactly the kind of person whom one would be likely to meet, does he?"

"That would depend upon what company you keep, I suppose. He is the kind of person who knows every one that is worth knowing."

"So much for an unlucky beggar whom he doesn't know!—Lady Jane, I wish you would come and take my part: I'm catching it like

anything because I'm not on terms of intimacy with all the Royal Academicians."

But Lady Jane, who had just borne down upon the couple, did not seem at all disposed to take the part of this impecunious and rather forward young man. She ignored his appeal, and said to her niece, with some little severity of tone, "My dear Hope, I couldn't think what had become of you! We are going home now."

Captain Cunningham, however, was not the man to let himself be so summarily disposed of. He accompanied the ladies down-stairs, helped Miss Lefroy into the carriage, stood for a few minutes talking to her after she was seated, and took care to find out what her engagements for the next day were before he bade her good-night.

Half an hour later, when Hope was in her bedroom, she noticed that a strip of white ribbon which she had attached to the handle of her fan was missing; and among other memory-pictures which passed before her drowsy eyes ere they closed was a vision of a young man in evening dress standing in the open door-way of a brilliantly-lighted house and thrusting something—could it be a scrap of white ribbon?—into the pocket of his coat. The vision, it may be assumed, was not wholly displeasing to her; for she fell asleep with a smile upon her lips. *Honi soit qui mal y pense!* She saw no reason to grudge the poor youth such a trifle if he valued it, being as yet ignorant of the important part that ribbons play in the affairs of this world,—of how great men will bribe and scheme to get a blue one, and victorious generals swell with satisfaction when they are permitted to hang a red one round their necks, and how young guardsmen with a few hundreds a year cannot possibly be entitled to ribbons of any color,—or even of no color, such as white ones.

CHAPTER II.

BAD NEWS.

MR. MONTAGUE LEFROY, M.P., was a man against whom no one had ever been found cross-grained enough to say a word. It is not necessary to be great, wise, witty, or munificent in order to gain the love of your fellow-creatures, whose demands, after all, are moderate enough, and who ask little more of you than that you shall have a pleasant face, decent manners, and wine which may be swallowed without danger to the health of the swallower. All these titles to esteem

Mr. Montague Lefroy possessed, besides a very nice house in Eaton Square, where guests were ever welcome, and a still nicer house in the midland counties, with excellent shooting attached and a sufficiency of hunting within easy distance to satisfy most people.

It is not every younger son who can boast of such advantages ; but a poor Lefroy would have been a contradiction in terms. This one had inherited a good round fortune, and many years back his elder brother had handed over to him for his sole use and behoof the house and estate of Southcote, which, though humble by comparison with the grandeurs of Helston Abbey, was yet a large enough place to content any unambitious country gentleman. Mr. Montague Lefroy was not ambitious, and was perfectly contented. He had always been able to gratify his tastes and at the same time to live within his income. In early life he had gone in for racing in a modest way, but had abandoned this form of amusement as his family grew up. He had a yacht, but, for reasons of which he made no secret, seldom took her out of the Solent. From the age of four-and-twenty he had sat uninterruptedly for the southern division of his county, and took a good-humored, amateurish sort of interest in politics. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that he was a Conservative : yet he could make allowance for the notions of other men. Radicalism rather amused than alarmed him. He had, as he said, "gone into the whole matter" at the commencement of his career, and had formed opinions which he had never since seen reason to change. Doubtless the world was far from perfect, and there were social problems and anomalies which were apt at first to unsettle the mind of the earnest inquirer ; but when once you had realized that these things existed by the will of heaven, it was all plain sailing. If there was anything so clear as to need no demonstration, it was that in all communities there must be rich and poor : it had been so from the beginning ; to all appearance it would be so up to the end. Therefore let every man strive to do his duty in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call him, and cease to repine because he was not somebody else.

The voice of this optimistic legislator was not often heard at St. Stephen's ; but when he did speak it was in an easy, colloquial manner which invariably charmed and tickled his audience. For a quarter of a century or more he had watched with benign equanimity the forward march of democracy, voting against it, of course, but not conceiving that the Constitution was in any immediate peril : the passing of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Act was perhaps the only thing that had ever given him a serious shock. Against it he had felt bound to deliver one of the few speeches with which he is credited in the pages of Hansard. Let us make no mistake, he said ; this was nothing less

than a revolutionary measure. He candidly confessed that he didn't know much about Ireland himself; had only been there once; was glad to say that he owned no land there, and was willing to accept provisionally the statements of honorable members who claimed to be better informed. What he did know was that the rights of property must be considered as the foundation-stone of the social edifice; and the House might take his word for it that when once they began chipping and hammering at that they would have the whole blessed building down about their ears sooner than they expected.

There was a good deal of laughter at this, and somebody wished to know whether the expression "blessed building" was parliamentary. The Speaker ruled that it was; and Mr. Lefroy, having said his say and done his duty to the country, crossed his legs and went to sleep. A subservient majority, as we know, passed the Act, and the consequences must be upon their own heads. They cannot at any future date plead that Mr. Montague Lefroy did not warn them of what they were about.

Hope was fond of her uncle, who also was fond of her,—as indeed he was of most people. When she came down-stairs on the morning after the ball she found him alone at the breakfast-table, and he looked up from his newspaper to say, "See what it is to have country habits! I don't suppose your aunt and the girls will put in an appearance for another hour. Well, I hope you enjoyed yourself last night?"

"Immensely," answered Hope, with fervor.

"As much as all that? Don't overdo it, you know. I mean, enjoy yourself as much as you please; only, if I were you, I would try to enjoy myself with a rather larger number of people. Variety is salutary."

"When one is dancing, one can only talk to one's partner."

"Yes; but one need not talk to the same partner throughout the evening. Especially if his name happens to be Cunningham."

"Is there anything against Captain Cunningham, Uncle Montague?"

"Well, I believe he is rather a flirtatious young gentleman."

"He didn't flirt with me," said Hope, calmly.

"*Didn't* he? I wonder what you define as flirtation at Helston! Besides, he hasn't a sixpence."

"Poor fellow!"

"Oh, poor fellow as much as you like; but you had better not become too friendly with him. In point of fact," added Mr. Lefroy, confidentially, "I expect you'll get into a row with your aunt if you do."

Hope did not care to pursue the subject. "Is there anything in the *Times* this morning?" she asked.

"Not much. Another big bank gone smash, I see,—the Bank of Central England. The paper says lots of people are hit by it,—people whom one knows, I mean. How any man can be such a lunatic as to hold shares in an unlimited concern passes my comprehension. I recollect Charles speaking to me about it: I hope to goodness he isn't a shareholder."

"Oh, dear, no," answered Hope. "Fancy papa running any risks! He wouldn't sleep quietly if he was getting more than four per cent. for any investment."

"I suppose not. Well, I must be off. Remember my little hint, there's a good girl. After all, one man does to dance with pretty nearly as well as another, and it isn't worth while to vex your aunt."

This Mr. Lefroy said both because he had long ago become personally convinced that it was never worth while to vex Lady Jane, and because he had discovered that his niece was fond of taking her own way. It will be perceived that he was not quite the most skilful diplomatist in the world. Hope made no rejoinder; but when he had left the room she said to herself that, whatever her future conduct with regard to Captain Cunningham might be, it certainly would not be influenced by fear of her aunt's displeasure.

Her cousins, Alice and Gertrude, joined her presently. They were pleasant, good-humored girls, having inherited the paternal disposition; they had neat figures, and were rather pretty than otherwise, though without much to boast of in the way of feature. Although one of them was a year, and the other two years, older than Hope, they had always entertained a high respect for her,—not only because she was an heiress and to all intents and purposes her own mistress, but because, as they frankly admitted, she did everything better than they did,—talked better, played better, and danced better, besides possessing an artistic talent which they looked upon as prodigious. In all matters relating to dress they had a blind faith in her taste, of which they availed themselves whenever they could. They proposed to avail themselves of it now.

"Hope," said Gertrude, "wouldn't you like to come with me and help me to choose a hat? As sure as I attempt to select anything for myself that I think particularly becoming, so surely is the result enough to make angels weep. I can't conceive why things should look so very different in the shop from what they do when they are sent home."

"Oh, and Hope," put in Alice, "would you very much mind coming on to the dressmaker's afterwards? She would never dare to snub you as she does me, and I know exactly what I want, if I could only

get her to listen. We can have the carriage, because mamma changed her mind after she had ordered it, and said she wouldn't go out this morning."

A woman who dislikes shopping may be an admirable person, but in the eyes of the impartial observer there is apt to be a slight *prima facie* case against her, as there is against a man who dislikes tobacco. Hope answered, quite truthfully, that she would be delighted to accompany her cousins. Probably, also, she was not unwilling to avoid the chance of a private interview with her aunt, for which, on account of some reason or other that she did not care to examine too closely, she felt disinclined at that especial moment. One cannot give reasons for all one's feelings; nor, as a general thing, is it in the least desirable that one should. Hope, as she was driven in an open carriage from shop to shop, through the sunny smoky mist which gives the atmosphere of London a peculiar golden tinge in fair weather, was conscious of being in high spirits,—in higher spirits, it might be, than there was anything to warrant,—but, like a true philosopher, she accepted the pleasant fact, and did not attempt to pry into its cause.

What was certain was that the appearance of the entire city had marvellously changed for the better. She could hardly believe that these were the dull ugly streets along which her father had been wont to hurry her during their flying visits to the metropolis, and where the last thing that one would ever have expected would have been to recognize an acquaintance among the crowd of uninteresting people that thronged them. They wore a cheerful animated aspect now, and were quite full of friendly faces. Several young gentlemen with high shirt-collars and bouquets in their button-holes raised their hats to the three girls as the carriage passed; ladies in other carriages nodded and smiled; everything and everybody seemed to be proclaiming that it was the season, that all the world was in town, that Miss Lefroy had been to a ball last night, and that she was going to another to-night. Near Buckingham Palace they met a detachment of the Guards, with fifes and drums and an officer, the point of whose nose could be discerned beneath his bearskin. One of the girls exclaimed, "Surely that is Captain Cunningham!" And though it was not Captain Cunningham,—for the nose turned up ridiculously and was quite unlike his,—still it might have been; and there was something very exhilarating in the discovery that, after all, one may sometimes chance upon an acquaintance in London without previous appointment. Hope had always hitherto supposed that it was far too huge a place for that.

It was past two o'clock before they were back in Eaton Square, and as they got out of the carriage Alice remarked that she believed

some people were coming to luncheon : it appeared that people dropped in to luncheon almost every day in that house. Hope found them in the drawing-room when she went down-stairs after changing her dress.

To the last day of her life she will remember those people, and their names, and the clothes that they wore, and how they looked ; the long cool room darkened by sun-blinds ; the blaze of flowers in the windows ; Lady Jane stifling a yawn ; the little fat man, bubbling over with laughter, who was telling a story about somebody who had been chucked over his horse's head in Rotten Row ; and then the door opening suddenly and her uncle Montague coming in, with a pale, grave face. Instantly she felt that some calamity had befallen her. When her uncle stepped hastily to her side and whispered, " My dear, will you come into the next room with me for a minute ? " it was as if all this had occurred at some previous time : the little dark library into which he led her had a familiar look, though she had never entered the room before ; she seemed to know exactly what his next words would be.

" Hope, my dear, can you be ready to go home with me in half an hour ? Your father has been taken ill. "

" I am ready now, " she answered, quite quietly.

Lady Jane had followed them : the two old people were looking at her with kindly, distressed faces. They were urging her to do something : what was it ? To eat ? She smiled a little, and answered that she was not hungry ; she would rather start at once.

" No, no ; plenty of time, " her uncle said. " If we start in half an hour we shall catch the 3.20, and your maid can follow with your things by a later train. Run down-stairs now and get some luncheon ; or tell them to bring it up to you, if you would rather have it in your own room. I can't tell you anything : I have no particulars,—only a telegram, " he added, hurriedly.

Hope understood that he was anxious to get rid of her : so she went away without a word.

As soon as the door had closed, Lady Jane asked, " What is it, Montague ? Anything very serious ? "

Her husband handed her a telegram. " From the butler, " he said.

" Good heavens ! how dreadfully sudden ! " exclaimed Lady Jane, dropping her eye-glasses and the telegram, which last consisted of only the following five words : " Mr. Lefroy died this morning. "

The heir of Helston Abbey and its dependencies blew his nose. To do him justice, he was not thinking about his inheritance at that moment, and had never at any time been eager to enter upon it. " Poor

Charles! poor old fellow!" he said. "The last time I saw him he told me his heart was all wrong; but I never expected this. Somehow, one never does expect—confound it all! Jane, I can't tell that poor girl. Wouldn't—couldn't *you?*" he added, appealingly.

Lady Jane shrank back. "Surely it would be better to get her home first. I can go down to-morrow, if you wish."

"Only, of course, she will have to be told to-night."

The truth was that neither of these worthy people had any taste for discharging painful duties. Life had been made very easy for them, and on the rare occasions when anything unpleasant had to be done, each generally tried to get behind the other. This system of tactics, if persisted in, is tolerably sure to bring about a collision between the manoeuvrers, and thus it was that Mr. Montague Lefroy, who abhorred collisions, commonly found himself in the post of honor. He accepted it now without much protestation: indeed, he could not but admit that there was reason in what Lady Jane urged, and that it would be wiser to get the journey over before allowing his niece to guess the full extent of her misfortune. The only question was whether the journey could possibly be got over without an explanation of some kind.

Happily for him, it was so,—or nearly so. On taking his seat in the railway-carriage, he hid himself behind a newspaper, round the corner of which he peered cautiously from time to time at Hope, who, seated opposite to him with her chin upon her hand, was gazing abstractedly out of the window. Her apathy surprised him more than it need have done. In truth, the girl had little confidence in her uncle. She knew that, whatever the news might be, he would make the best of it; perhaps, also, at the bottom of her heart there was an unacknowledged fear which kept her silent. Nevertheless, when the distance was about half accomplished, she made an effort and said,—

"May I see the telegram, Uncle Montague?"

"The telegram? Dear me! I'm afraid I left it behind," answered Mr. Lefroy, glad to be able to say so truthfully.

"What were the words?"

"I—I don't exactly recollect," replied her uncle, not quite so truthfully this time.

Hope sighed, and made no further inquiries: her one wish was to reach home. But when at length they did reach Helston Abbey, when they had driven across the park, in sight of the great house to which she dared not lift her eyes, and when the old butler came down the steps to meet them, with his face twitching and quivering,—then she knew that home was home no longer, and that that wish of hers could never be fulfilled.

CHAPTER III.

MORE BAD NEWS.

THE word "never" is scarcely understood by any of us, so completely are we the slaves of time; and perhaps it is even more incomprehensible to the young than to their elders. The blow which had fallen so suddenly upon Hope Lefroy was in so far easier to bear that it stunned her as it fell, and, for twenty-four hours at least, rendered her incapable of really feeling anything. Nevertheless, she had all her wits about her. She knew quite well that her father was dead; she had seen his body lying, stiff and silent, in what had once been his bedroom, and had kissed the cold forehead. She had heard the sobbing servants relate how it had all happened; how the newspaper had been taken up to the study as usual, directly it arrived; how, about five minutes afterwards, Mr. Goodwin (the butler) had fancied he heard a fall, and, hurrying up-stairs, had found his master lying face downward, on the floor; how a groom had been despatched immediately for the doctor, who, on his arrival, had pronounced death to have been instantaneous,—“his very words, Miss Hope.” All this she had listened to without a tear: the only thought that made her shudder for a moment was that while her father had been lying dead she had been laughing and chattering with her cousins in the London streets and saying to herself what a pleasant thing life was.

Her uncle was amazed at her calmness. He patted her on the shoulder and called her a brave girl, not knowing very well what to say by way of comfort to one who seemed so little in need of being comforted. When he remarked, “We will get your aunt and the girls down: you mustn't be left all by yourself, you know,” she answered, quickly, “Oh, please don't! it would be such a pity to interfere with all their amusement,” and then gave a little nervous laugh. Of course there could be no more amusement for them that season.

“I don't know what to make of her,” the worthy man said to his wife when she arrived: “she's as cold as a block of ice. That will never do: she'll be getting a brain-fever or something, if we don't mind. You must manage to make her cry somehow.”

But time and nature accomplished what might, perhaps, have proved beyond Lady Jane's powers. The girl's numbed senses woke with throbbings of pain which increased every hour; she began to realize her desolation, and if tears were what was wanted to preserve her from an illness she was soon safe. Her aunt and cousins were as kind and sympathetic as it was possible for them to be; but it was not

possible for them to sympathize in any true sense. They had never really known the dead man, nor could they know the extent of her loss. All the incidents of their long companionship came back to her: she remembered, as every one does at such times, a hundred trifling instances of his thought for her; he had not been specially demonstrative,—it was not his nature to be so,—but every now and then he had spoken a tender word or two which had been all the more valued for their rarity. She had never had a plan, or a pleasure, or an anxiety, with which he had not been connected, and now he was gone and the world was empty. All day long a song of Shelley's, which he had been fond of and had often made her sing to him, kept ringing in her head: "Death is here, death is there,"—every one knows the lines:

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves, must fade and perish;
And, such our rude mortal lot,
Love itself would, did they not.

Perhaps the significance of the last words escaped her: at any rate, she might be permitted to doubt their truth. As she sat alone, with her hands before her, she said to herself again and again that she could never be happy any more: she was too young to know that sorrow is as much doomed to fade as all other things.

Like is cured by like: there is no more certain remedy for trouble than a second dose of the same upon the top of the first. The treatment may not be an agreeable one, but it is generally found bracing by those who have any constitution in them to be braced or any courage to be roused. Of courage Hope Lefroy had always had plenty, and she was soon to discover that she would have need of all that she possessed. One day, about a week after the funeral, her maid came in to say, "If you please, m'm, could Mrs. Mills see you before she leaves? She's going away this afternoon."

Hope was sitting in the spacious, sunny room which she had been wont to use as a studio. Her painting-materials lay where she had left them before her departure for London; the unfinished picture upon which she had been engaged stood upon its easel, covered with a cloth; she had dragged an arm-chair into the bay-window, where of late she had sat, hour after hour, gazing idly at the flowers in the garden beneath, which went on blooming for their new master as they had for the old, and had no consolation to offer her. Only once since her return had she gone down-stairs, and that had been to follow her father's body to the grave. Relations, connections, and friends had assembled in large numbers to pay the last tribute of respect to the late owner of Helston

Abbey ; some had spent a night in the house, and a few had penetrated into Hope's room to take her by the hand and utter the halting commonplaces which must be uttered at such times. Every day her aunt or one of her cousins came and sat with her for an hour or so, and she managed to talk cheerfully to them about this, that, and the other, but she had not yet felt able to take her place in the dining-room, nor had any one pressed her to do so.

"Mills going away !" she said, with a bewildered look. "Why is she going away ?"

"Well, m'm," answered the maid, looking down, "she says she ought to be with her husband now."

Hope sighed. Of course there must be changes, and of course old faces must vanish. Mills was the first to go ; others must follow ; she herself must go soon, she supposed. Certainly it was time that she began to think of these things. "Ask Mills to come in," she said.

Shortly after Hope's birth Mills had been engaged as nurse, and she had never left Helston since. After her services were no longer required she had been retained at the child's earnest entreaty,—in what capacity it would be difficult to say. She was supposed to be generally useful, and perhaps she was so : in any case a servant more or less could make little difference in so large an establishment.

Somewhat late in life Mills had taken it into her head to marry the second coachman, a man considerably her junior ; but her matrimonial fetters had not weighed heavily upon her. When her husband, by way of bettering himself, had taken service with a London doctor in a large practice, she had never dreamt of accompanying him to his new home. Time enough for that, she said, when Miss Hope married. So long as Miss Hope was Miss Hope she meant to remain with her. But now, it seemed, she had changed her mind. She came in presently,—a tall, gaunt woman, past middle age, with a face of wavering outline, like a potato, and features which suggested that the second coachman had been moved to espouse their owner by some other incentive than love. Her nose turned up, the corners of her mouth turned down, and, to complete the list of her charms, she had a pair of goggle eyes, which just now were swollen with recent weeping. Yet her face, like many other plain faces, was not disagreeable to look at, its expression being one of quiet, honest kindness. Her late master had been wont to say of her that she was as ugly as a bull-dog and as faithful.

"Sit down, Mills," said Hope. "So you are going to leave me, I hear ?"

"Ah, Miss Hope," answered the woman, lowering her angular person stiffly to the edge of a chair, and sighing, "it isn't for my own

pleasure that I leave you, Lord knows! But I don't feel it's right for me to be eating Mr. Montague's bread; and George writes me that he's took the house and got the furnitur' in, on'y he can't do nothink about lodgers till I come, he says. So I thought to myself, 'Sooner or later it has to be done, and the sooner the better, maybe,' I thought." And she heaved another prodigious sigh.

"Do you mean that you are going to keep lodgings in London, and be worried from morning to night by horrid, dirty servants, and by people who will accuse you of stealing the sugar and will smoke in the drawing-room and make themselves obnoxious in all sorts of ways? You won't like it, Mills."

"I dare say not, Miss Hope."

"Then why do you do it? Why don't you stay with me?"

"Ah, my dear, I can't do that. I used sometimes to think I'd no business stopping on here, taking my wages and not earning my keep, even when—when—things was different. But now——" And Mills sighed for the third time.

"Don't sigh like that, you silly old Mills: you make quite a draught in the room. Staying with me doesn't mean staying at Helston. We must both look out for a new home soon; but I should like to keep you with me. And I shall want a coachman, I suppose. Couldn't we entice George away from the doctor?"

Mills gasped, made a hideous grimace, and then, to Hope's consternation, burst into tears. "Oh, dear! oh, dear!" she sobbed, "don't talk like that, child: you'll break my heart! To think that your uncle should turn you out of your own house!—for it *is* your house, as I'll maintain in the face of all the judges and juries in the land. Laws, indeed! Bother their laws! Call this a free country, and then tell me that a father mustn't leave his own property to his own child! Mr. Montague didn't ought to take the place; and I don't care who hears me say so."

"I am afraid he can't help it, Mills," answered Hope, smiling. "It is no more his to give away than it was poor papa's."

"Then he ought to make it up to you in money," said Mills, drying her eyes. "It can't be right that he should be so rich whilst you—you——"

"As far as that goes, I am rich too," Hope remarked.

Mills appeared to be upon the brink of another outburst of sobbing, but restrained herself, and, getting up, walked to the window.

"My dear," she said, after a pause, "if you was as rich as Creases you couldn't live all by yourself. Helston must be your home till you marry; and glad and happy your uncle and aunt will be to keep you.

I will say for them that I *believe* they'll be proud to keep you, and let you have your old rooms and your pianner and your horses and all, same as you've always been accustomed to. But I can't ask them to keep me, nor yet I wouldn't ask them,—let alone that George is a young man and wants looking after. You'll come and see me sometimes when you're in London, won't you, my dear?" she added.

"Of course I will, if you insist upon living in London," said Hope; and, after a little more conversation and some shedding of tears on both sides, Mills prepared to depart.

Hope wanted to give her ten pounds as a small parting gift; but this the old woman would not hear of. "No, child, no," she said; "keep your money and take care of it; it's—it's always a useful thing, and none of us knows how soon we may need ten pounds."

This oracular speech, and indeed the woman's whole manner throughout the interview, raised some suspicions in Hope's mind. What if she should prove to be less rich than she had supposed herself? It seemed impossible that she should be poor; yet if Mills had meant anything at all she must have meant that. Wealth had always been to Hope Lefroy what health is to those who have never known a day's illness: it was a blessing for which she was thankful in a general way, but which she hardly appreciated at its full value, since she was quite unable to imagine what life would be like without it. She was not at all alarmed by her old nurse's hints, only disturbed and a little curious. She determined to lose no time in finding out from her uncle what her position was, and therefore made it known that she would be present at luncheon that day.

She did not notice a brief moment of embarrassment which marked her entrance into the dining-room. Never having been accustomed to take either the head or the foot of the table, she made at once for her usual place, which happened to be on Mr. Lefroy's right hand, thereby unconsciously earning the approval of Lady Jane, whose horror of unpleasant situations was equalled only by her dislike for those who created them. But, despite this happy commencement, the conversation languished wofully. To be afflicted is to be an affliction to one's neighbors, and Hope's company would have been cheerfully dispensed with by every one present,—especially by Mr. Lefroy, who guessed only too well what had brought her among them and foresaw that a bad quarter of an hour was in store for him.

His fears were confirmed when his niece lingered after the others had left the room and intercepted a futile attempt to escape on his own part. "Are you busy, Uncle Montague?" she asked. "If you are not, I should like to have a little talk with you."

Mr. Lefroy admitted that he was not busy,—at least, not very busy,—but gave it as his opinion that a brisk walk in the fresh air was a much better thing for people who had been shut up ten days in the house than a dry talk about business matters.

“Perhaps I will take the walk afterwards to counteract the effects of the talk,” Hope replied. “I won’t keep you long, Uncle Montague. I only wanted to ask you how much money I shall have.”

“Oh, well, you know, one can’t answer questions like that all in a moment: there really is no hurry,” Mr. Lefroy was beginning; but Hope, who noticed the cloud that had come over his good-humored face, was not to be put off in that way. “You need not be afraid of telling me the truth,” she said: “I don’t expect it to be pleasant.”

“Some confounded fool has been chattering to you!” exclaimed Mr. Lefroy, suspiciously.

“No; not a confounded fool; only poor old Mills. And she didn’t chatter: she merely sighed. Please let me hear the worst.”

Mr. Lefroy sighed almost as loudly as Mills had done. “Very well, then,” he said, desperately, “let us get it over. It *is* the worst,—quite the worst that you can imagine. Do you remember, on the morning of your poor father’s death, my mentioning to you that the Bank of Central England had failed?”

“I remember perfectly well,” answered Hope, steadily. “He was a shareholder, I suppose.”

“Yes; I am sorry to say that he was. Heaven only knows what can have tempted him: however, there’s no use talking about that. The unhappy fact is that he did hold shares; and of course the estate is liable.”

“To a large amount?”

“It is impossible to say as yet,” Mr. Lefroy began, and then paused. “I think you would rather that I spoke the plain truth,” he resumed, with somewhat of an effort. “I am afraid that the claims made will swallow up the entire estate,—every penny of it.”

Hope gave a little gasp: she had not anticipated such a catastrophe as this. “Will Helston have to be sold?” she asked, in a low voice.

“Helston? Oh, no: they can’t touch the entailed property; and if they could, that wouldn’t affect you, my dear. But it seems certain now that the whole of your fortune will be lost. It’s a bad business,” he added, “a dreadfully bad business, and I believe it would have killed your poor father if he could have foreseen it. No doubt, indeed, that *was* what killed him.”

“Oh! do you think so?” exclaimed Hope.

“Well, yes,—the shock, you know. But in any case we could not

have hoped to keep him with us much longer : he told me some time ago that the doctors had given him his death-warrant. However, what I was going to say was that, bad as matters are, we must try to make the best of them. After all, when one looks the thing in the face, what does it amount to ? Why, only that instead of being an heiress, as you might have been, you are in the same position as Alice and Gertrude. Some day, no doubt, you will all three marry ; and, if I know anything of Lady Jane, you will marry men who are able to give you the comforts that you are accustomed to. Until then your life won't be an unhappy one, I hope. We can't make up to you for the loss of your father ; but as far as money goes—well, you know, we are not badly off, and I don't see why you need feel any difference. Everything will go on just as before."

"You are very kind, Uncle Montague," answered Hope ; "but it is not possible that things should go on just as before. If I have no money of my own, it seems to me that I ought to try and make some, and not be a burden upon you."

"A burden !" exclaimed her uncle, indignantly. "What do you take us for ? Why, I owe more to my brother Charles than you could spend if you lived with me to the end of your days and went in for every kind of extravagance ! How many years do you suppose I was at Southcote without paying a shilling of rent ? Now, I'll tell you what it is, Hope : if you ever want to make a speech which will vex and hurt me more than anything else that you could say, you will repeat the remark which you made just now. Please to understand, once for all, that you lay yourself under no sort of obligation to anybody by living here as you have been accustomed to live."

"I should not mind being under an obligation to you, Uncle Montague," answered Hope, with a faint smile : "it isn't that."

"What is it, then ?"

"I am not sure that I can explain : I must have time to think. Anyhow, I will gladly stay with you for the present, obligation or no obligation."

"You will stay with us until your wedding-day," said Mr. Lefroy, decisively. "And now let us behave like sensible people, and not worry ourselves with crying over spilt milk. Suppose we enter into an agreement never to refer to this subject again ?"

Hope did not see her way to making any such promise ; but she was quite of her uncle's mind as to the folly of crying over spilt milk,—the more so as lamentation over the loss of her fortune would have seemed to her something like a reflection upon her father's memory. Upon the whole, Mr. Lefroy was very well satisfied with her reception

of the bad news, and confided to his wife that night that Hope was a girl in a thousand.

"There was no bother about making her understand the state of the case: she took it in at once, and never so much as gave a groan. The best thing that we can do for her now is to find her a suitable husband as soon as we can."

To which Lady Jane replied, "That will not be quite such an easy matter as it would have been a week or two ago."

CHAPTER IV.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

THE bread of charity must always taste bitter, be the hand that bestows it never so generous, and it did not take Hope long to decide that the plan proposed by her uncle was one to which she never could consent. She might, and indeed must, accept his hospitality; she might even make Helston in some sense her home; but the pride of which she had rather more than was quite desirable revolted against the idea of pensioned luxury. The law that bound her was the law to which all humanity is subject. "I have no money, and therefore my first duty is to make some," she said to herself, as though that were the easiest thing in the world.

The next question was, How was a young woman who had suddenly dropped from affluence to pauperism to set about supporting herself?—and the only answer that could be made upon the spur of the moment was a little disheartening. There seemed to be nothing for it but to go out as a governess or as companion to an old lady, for neither of which employments could Hope feel that she had the smallest natural aptitude. But in the course of a few days her uncle made a communication to her which simplified matters greatly and caused her heart to leap with joy.

"Oh, by the way, Hope," he said, joining her one morning after breakfast in the garden, where she was pacing to and fro in grave meditation, "I want to tell you that I exaggerated a little in saying that your poor father's estate would yield absolutely nothing. We have rescued a trifle. It is only a trifle; but, such as it is, I have invested it for you as your trustee, and it will bring you in about two hundred and fifty pounds a year."

The excellent man was telling a falsehood which any one with the least knowledge of business-matters must have detected at once. It

was impossible that any investment of the late Mr. Lefroy's personal property could have been made so soon, nor was there a chance of ever so small a portion thereof being saved from the wreck; but he had confidence in his niece's inexperience; and his confidence was not misplaced, for neither then nor at any subsequent time did Hope suspect that the six thousand pounds invested in her name had come out of the pocket of her guardian and trustee. He had argued with himself that it would be necessary to make her an allowance of some kind, and that if she could be led to suppose that the said allowance was hers of right, much needless and painful discussion would be avoided. Had he foreseen in what light this unexpected windfall would be regarded by its recipient, it is probable that he would have stayed his hand; but where is the man wise enough to divine the queer notions that will get into girls' minds?

Hope's notion, if a queer one, did not appear so to her. Her course was now clear, and she felt herself free to utilize the one talent with which, as she believed, nature and education had endowed her,—that of painting. It must be said for her that she was an amateur artist of far more than ordinary proficiency, and also that her expectations were strictly moderate. She had learned enough to know how much remained for her to learn, and she did not deceive herself into thinking that she would be able to sell her pictures for some time to come. What she did think was that, with the aid of her small fortune, she could begin to study in serious earnest; and, after an hour or two of consideration, her plan assumed definite shape. Upon two hundred and fifty pounds a year one could live. This she repeated to herself several times with decision, because in reality she was not quite certain of the fact. The place of her abode must, of course, be London; and a most fortunate thing it was that Mills's lodgings would afford her a shelter to which nobody could take exception. As regarded the course of study to be pursued, she meant to put herself in the hands of Mr. Tristram, who, she knew, would befriend her and give her the best advice in his power.

With that celebrated and eccentric man her relations were already those of intimacy. Her father, who had discovered Tristram's genius long before it dawned upon the reluctant critics, had always delighted in his society, and would often run up to London for no other purpose than to spend an hour or so in his studio. Hope, as a child, used to take a mute part in their conversations, understanding very little of them, but gazing in fascination at the gigantic figure of the artist as he strode up and down the room, declaiming, gesticulating, pouring torrents of scorn and invective upon some person or persons unknown, while her father,

his hands folded upon the knob of his stick and his chin upon his hands, sat listening with a smile and every now and then putting in a quiet word. One day Tristram became aware that his audience consisted not only of an elderly gentleman but also of a girl whose face was as nearly as possible perfect in outline, and whose wide-open eyes expressed all sorts of things, hidden perhaps from the world at large, but perceptible to the artistic imagination. He came to a halt before her and stood with his hands in his pockets staring fixedly at her for a minute or two. Then in his abrupt way he said, "Miss Lefroy, I am going to paint your picture."

Nobody making any objection, the picture was painted, and exhibited in the Royal Academy of the following year, where it attracted a good deal of notice. It could hardly be called a portrait: Tristram was not a portrait-painter. In the catalogue it was described as "Hope: portrait of Miss Lefroy;" and certainly nine-tenths of those who admired it saw in it rather a representation of the treasure which Alexander the Great is said to have reserved for himself after dividing his possessions among his friends, than of Miss Lefroy, whoever she might be. But, if not a portrait, it was at least a likeness, and an admirable one; and the father of the model was considerably taken aback and a little annoyed when, on inquiring the price of the work, he was curtly informed that it was not for sale. "I mean to keep it," the artist said. "I shall never paint anything better; and, besides, I have taken a fancy to your daughter's face: it cheers me up when I have a fit of the blues."

This was, perhaps, a somewhat cool proceeding; but Tristram was not a man who troubled himself to consider whether his proceedings were cool or not, and those who valued his friendship had to accept him as he was. Hope, liking the man, liked his peculiarities, and did not dream of being offended with him because he sometimes spoke roughly to her, or because he smiled at the compositions which she ventured to submit to his notice. His smile, to be sure, was not a discouraging one. Without being loud in his praises, he admitted that she was making progress and that her drawing was fairly correct. "Ah, Miss Hope," he said, one day, "what a pity it is that you will never have to work for your living!" The phrase recurred to her memory now that she was resolved to work for her living.

Thus, by degrees, and by the pressure of other thoughts, Hope's great sorrow became more bearable to her; but, although her intentions with regard to the future were now fixed, she took very good care to say nothing about them as yet to anybody. There would be very little use in her moving to London before the autumn, and none whatsoever in divulging too soon a scheme which was certain to provoke opposition.

So she kept her own counsel, submitting herself outwardly to the wishes of her uncle and aunt, who did all that they could to render the change in her position as little evident to her as possible. They had every wish to be considerate, and when, in the month of August, they moved to Southcote for a few weeks, and she begged to be left behind at Helston, they yielded to her entreaties, although Lady Jane did not quite like it. It may be that they would have been less amenable had they not wanted to ask a few friends down to stay, and felt that the presence of the orphan in her black crape might be rather a restraint upon the cheerfulness of the younger members of the family.

That period of solitude and liberty Hope enjoyed so much that she more than once reproached herself for her good spirits. She worked at her painting with a new and professional interest; she rose early and wandered out across the park and along the grassy shooting-drives that intersected the woods; in the evening she usually went out for a ride, attended by the same sober old groom who had first taught her to sit upon her pony. She was free to come and go as she pleased; she had no one's convenience to consult but her own, and her own company did not weary her. But the return of "the family," as the servants had already taken to calling the new inmates of Helston Abbey, had been announced for the middle of September, and punctually on the appointed day they arrived, bringing with them two or three of the guests whom they had been entertaining at Southcote. "Only quite intimate friends,—almost relations, in fact," Lady Jane whispered, after she had embraced her niece. "Of course we would not ask any one else just now; but your uncle won't go out shooting all by himself, and it is so bad for him to have no exercise."

Hope did not feel that the case was one which called for apologies. Being human, she could not quite enjoy seeing others in possession of what had until lately been to all intents and purposes hers; but the addition of a few somewhat taciturn sportsmen to the party was no increase of her trial. Only one of them had the good fortune to interest her; and perhaps she would not have noticed him had she not remembered to have seen his face at the one and only ball which she had attended, or was now likely to attend, in London. He was a tall, thin man, with sunburnt face and hands and a long moustache; his frame was rather loosely put together, but he had the appearance of muscular strength and good condition; his voice was a pleasant one, notwithstanding a drawling intonation, which, combined with his habit of keeping his eyes half closed, conveyed an impression of constitutional indolence; and his face, Hope thought, was pleasant too, though certainly not handsome. She mentally set him down as middle-aged,

and did not consider the definition an incorrect one when she heard that he was just six-and-thirty. The girls, of whom she inquired his name, told her that he was Dick Herbert, "a sort of cousin of mamma's," and added that he was great fun, but, when asked in what way his funniness displayed itself, could only repeat their assertion, without supporting it by instances.

"Everybody knows him, and everybody likes him," they declared. "He has lots of money, and he has never married, and says he never will, which, of course, makes him the more interesting. He always does just as he likes, and says whatever comes into his head."

This description, as Hope pointed out, seemed to apply to a person more funny than agreeable; but her cousins assured her that Dick was both. "He is a dear old thing," they said. Alas! it is thus that maidens of twenty or under will speak of a man in the prime of life; and the truth is that Mr. Herbert was getting a little gray about the temples.

One evening after dinner, when the men came into the drawing-room, he steered straight for the sofa upon which Hope was sitting, and dropped down beside her. She thought he was going to say something, but apparently he had no such intention, and, after he had quietly contemplated her from beneath his eyelashes for several minutes, she broke the silence by remarking, "You find Helston rather a dull place, I am afraid."

"I? Oh, no. The people are a little bit dull, some of them; but I shouldn't call the place so. Besides, I can go away when I've had enough of it. I always do go away as soon as I begin to get bored anywhere."

"And do you generally stay until then?" inquired Hope, with a smile.

"No; because, as a rule, I have a pretty good lot of engagements from about this time of year onward. I'm rather a good shot, you see," he added, by way of explaining this circumstance. He relapsed into silence for a time, and then startled Hope a good deal by resuming, "I say, shall you go on living here?"

"It would be natural that I should, would it not?" she answered, not being ready with any reply to so unexpected a question.

He shook his head. "Not to you. Some people wouldn't mind, of course. Still," he concluded, pensively, "I don't see how you can very well do anything else."

He so evidently did not mean to be impertinent that Hope could not feel affronted. She took a long look at his face, which was an honest, friendly sort of face, and a strong inclination to divulge her project

to him took possession of her. It was not that she wanted his advice, for her resolution was taken, but even the most independent of mortals like to be backed up sometimes, and it struck her that Mr. Herbert would probably back her up in this instance. She could not, however, make a confidant of a man whom she scarcely knew, but she thought that perhaps she would do so at some future time if they became better acquainted.

They did become better acquainted, and their acquaintance ripened with singular rapidity. Somehow or other, Hope constantly found herself left in his company, and, though he did not talk much, his manner encouraged her to talk a good deal, while his unceremonious ways set her at her ease. He treated her, she thought, much as a good-natured elder brother might have done: she was a thousand miles from suspecting that Lady Jane was designedly throwing her at the head of one of the most desirable bachelors in England, or from perceiving the various stratagems by which that well-meaning woman was trying to effect her purpose. Mr. Herbert, who understood it all perfectly well, understood the girl's innocence also; otherwise it is probable that his engagements would have called him away before he had been three days at Helston.

A person who is disposed towards making confessions is seldom thwarted through lack of opportunity. It happened one afternoon that Mr. Herbert, who tired of partridge-shooting more easily than his host, was wending his way homeward with his gun under his arm, when he encountered Miss Lefroy at some distance from the house; and she, seeing no reason why she should not turn and walk with him, consulted her own wishes in the matter. They conversed for some time upon various unimportant topics,—or, rather, Hope conversed while her companion listened,—then, *à propos* of nothing at all, he said,—

“Do you know, Miss Lefroy, I feel rather bothered about you?”

“In what way?” Hope asked.

“The outlook doesn't seem to me very promising. How do you get on with Lady Jane? Does she ever have tantrums?”

“Never, that I am aware of,” answered Hope.

“I expect she does, though, or her husband wouldn't be always stroking her down. I shouldn't wonder if she was rather an old cat when she was rubbed the wrong way.”

“Please remember that you are speaking of my aunt,” said Hope.

“Well, you didn't make her, though she is your aunt; and she is no blood-relation of yours, after all. Upon my word, if I were you, I think I should try to get out of this before the wind changed.”

"I think I shall," said Hope, quietly; "though not exactly for that reason." And without further preface she unfolded the scheme which she had planned out for her future career.

Herbert did not interrupt her. The only comment that he permitted himself, after she had done, was, "There'll be a nice row when you tell them!"

"I suppose so; but I fancy that I shall be able to survive that."

"Very likely: you seem to have plenty of pluck. But, to tell you the truth, I think you will have to give up this idea after a bit. I know something about an artist's life, because I have a young *protégé* who is going to set the Thames on fire some fine day, and I hear about it from him. He is up in London now, studying. Of course that sort of Bohemian existence is all very well for him, for his name is Jacob Stiles—did you ever hear such a name!—and he had no father to speak of; but it would be a very different thing for you. A woman can't get out of her own class."

"Yet you advised me just now to get out of Helston."

"That's another matter. Of course marriage is the only means of escape open to you."

"Thank you," said Hope, rather coldly; "but I don't feel inclined to adopt that means."

"I suppose you are not of age yet?" observed Herbert, after reflecting for a few minutes.

Hope confessed that she was not.

"So that if old Lefroy won't hear of your going in for the painting-business, you'll be about done, won't you?"

"I shall try to get him to consent, at all events," replied Hope. "You are not very encouraging," she added, in a rather injured tone.

"I don't mean to be. You'll have no end of a fuss before you get your own way; and, besides, I don't much fancy the notion of your living in London lodgings all by yourself. Still, perhaps, as you say, it might be worth a trial. Anything for liberty."

Hope changed the subject, and regretted having introduced it. From a man of Mr. Herbert's independent character rather less conventional language might have been expected, she thought, and he might at least have displayed a little interest in what he had been told. She did not give him credit for being more interested than he chose to appear; nor did she know that it was in order to do her a service that he deserted her after dinner that evening and seated himself in a distant corner beside Lady Jane.

"That niece of yours," he remarked casually to his hostess, "is an uncommonly clever girl."

"She is a clever girl, and a pretty girl, and a *good* girl," said Lady Jane, emphatically.

"Yes, all that. There are plenty of pretty girls about, and I am quite sure that there are a fair number of good ones; but it isn't every day that you meet a girl who can paint like Miss Lefroy."

"Hm—well, no; I dare say not," agreed Lady Jane, who was not very strong as an art-critic.

"I was looking at some of her pictures the other day," Herbert went on, "and I was very much struck with them; I was really. It seems a thousand pities that so much talent shouldn't be utilized."

"Do you mean that she ought to sell her pictures?"

"Why shouldn't she? It's an honorable profession, and, under present circumstances, I suppose the money would be welcome to her. Of course she might not find purchasers for the things that she has done already; but after a year or so of study I do believe she would turn out an artist."

"There is no necessity for Hope to make money; but I am sure I shall be very glad to let her have lessons when we are in London," Lady Jane said, graciously.

"Oh, I don't mean that sort of thing: you can't learn an art in that way. To do any good, you must go in for the thing thoroughly,—live in London, you know, and give up society, and work hard. I was talking to her about it to-day. If only there were some respectable person whom she could board with—however, I suppose it couldn't be managed."

"Really," said Lady Jane, "I don't quite see how it could."

"No; oh, no: it was only a dream of mine."

He said nothing more for a while; but when Lady Jane was beginning, "I look upon dear Hope quite as one of my own daughters now—" he interrupted her with, "If ever I marry, which isn't a very likely event to come off, I shall marry a woman who can *do* something. I could make a friend of a woman like that. I should never be able to stand a wife who had only a pretty face and nice manners. Upon my word, I'd as soon marry a lady-doctor."

"My dear Dick," returned Lady Jane, affectionately, "you will never marry at all; and, to be quite candid, I shouldn't care to see any girl whom I was fond of married to you. You are too fastidious and fanciful."

This she said to show her dear Dick how guiltless she was of any designs upon him; but that night she remarked to her husband, with a certain quiet triumph, "Montague, I am going to astonish you."

"I am sorry to hear it," said Mr. Lefroy, apprehensively.

"You need not be sorry: it is nothing unpleasant, only something very surprising. I have discovered that Dick Herbert has fallen over head and ears in love with Hope."

"Oh," said Mr. Lefroy, "I could have told you that some days ago; but falling a little bit in love isn't quite the same thing as marrying. Added to which, it doesn't follow that she is in love with him. You had better prepare yourself for a possible disappointment."

"I am always prepared for disappointment," Lady Jane declared; "but, if I know anything of the ways of girls, Hope will not refuse Dick. My only fear is that he will take a long time making up his mind to propose, and perhaps will never do it at all."

He certainly did not do it before his departure, which took place two days later; but at the last moment he took occasion to whisper to Hope, "I think I've helped you a tiny bit. Don't broach the great plan for a day or two, and mind you are extra civil to your aunt. She is capable of taking your side if you keep in with her."

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

THE BELLS OF LONDON.

AS when an eager boy, I hear to-night
 The self-same bells clash out upon the air:
 It seemed not then a city of despair,
 But a fair home of promise and delight,—
 This London that now breaks me with its might.
 Is this the end of all sweet dreams and fair?
 Is this the bitter answer to my prayer?
 The bells deride me from the belfry's height:

"We clamored to thee in the old, far years,
 And all the sorrows of thy life forecast;
 And now, with eyes uncomforted by tears,
 And dry and seared as from a furnace-blast,
 Thou walkest vainly where no hope appears,
 Between veiled future and disastrous past."

Philip Bourke Marston.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

ONE of the marvels of Oriental magic is to plant a seed and cause it to germinate, shoot upward, and unfurl leaf and flower before the eyes of the astonished spectators.

With similarly marvellous celerity has the seed of Civil Service Reform expanded into full-grown beauty before the eyes of this generation, to be plucked at last and worn in its fairest, final blossoming, as the button-hole bouquet of Democracy.

Before it wilts in its new phase of decorative art, we may not go amiss in giving it a farewell glance under its old aspect of practical politics. I am admonished, however, that the time is short and what we do must be done quickly; for the poor little nosegay is so roughly handled by its unwonted and unwilling wearer that already it droops visibly, and there is danger that it may not attain even the desiccated immortality of the herbarium, but be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Still must the candid mind admit that, ill adapted as it may be to æsthetic Democracy, it cannot do worse than as a factor in active Republicanism. What was once partly inferential, to be reasoned out on general principles, has now become history, and we are in a situation to say, not only from opinion of its methods but from eye-witness of its results, that

Evil was the root and bitter was the fruit
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod.

If anything could console the Republicans for defeat, it would be the sight of Democracy writhing and riving under the breath of that Upas-bloom. Let it be clearly understood, however, that the posy was for "keeps," and that in attaching it permanently to the lapel of its victorious rival with the compliments of the season the Republican party feels so profoundly how much more blessed it is to give than to receive that the situation is lightened of its gloomiest features, and patriots put hand to plough with fresh heart and hope.

The peculiarity of Civil Service Reform as a cause is that it does not exist. There is a cry, there is a commission,—or at least there is at times a commission,—but there is no cause.

To illustrate the difference between a real or spontaneous cause and a manufactured or unreal one, we have only to look into our own political history. The Slavery issue was real. There was a radical human wrong, a grave political blunder, a fatal financial mistake. No

compromise could hush it up. No legislation could put it aside. No patriotism could frown it down. It lived and grew and threatened, till the question was between the life of the nation and the life of the excrescence.

Woman Suffrage is an artificial cause, and is just as hard to keep up as Slavery was to put down. Convention, discussion, legislation, fail to arouse any enthusiasm for Woman's Rights, because there is no organized, insistent, radical Woman's Wrongs. Individual women suffer, and concrete laws are unjust, but men as a class are not unjust to women as a class. As men increase in refinement and virtue, women share in the improvement,—inevitably, because man is compounded of men and women. Whatever women suffer they suffer from the imperfection of human society, not from any combined intentional oppression by the stronger sex. Woman suffrage languishes not because men will not grant it, but because women do not wish it. Women cannot be made to wish it, because they do not suffer from the lack of it. Whenever they want it they will have it. There is more danger that they will have it without wanting it than that they will want it without having it.

In like manner is there no solid grievance behind Civil Service Reform as a political battle-cry. Congress has always been charged with indifference to it. Rather such indifference should be credited to Congress. No one knows better than the Congressman the emptiness of its pretensions. However sincerely believed in by sincere men, it has always been most alluring to the demagogue. With strong temptation to take it up and make capital out of it, the undenied fact that Congress has largely let it alone is a gratifying proof of the substantial honesty of our legislators. When they have acted upon it, they have done so rather on the ground that it is not worth fighting against any more than fighting for. When the Civil Service bill was passed, a gentleman, now deceased, whose distinguished career abroad had given him great familiarity with the civil service of other countries, and whose distinguished service in public life at home had given him great respect for our own, expressed the intelligent opinion of those who were surveying and preparing the political situation in the slight and slightly contemptuous dismissal, "Humbug as it is, I am glad they have passed it."

In order to have a reform there must first be something to reform. To give Civil Service Reformers reason to be, our civil service should be corrupt. It is not corrupt. A great many people say that it is. In some restricted but resonant quarters, to say that it is corrupt and a national disgrace is considered the only evidence of superior political acumen, sound moral honesty, real Christian statesmanship. The people are flattered by being represented as a mass of purity shining bright

against the pollution of the civil service. No proof is so much as attempted to be produced. Civil service corruption is the Mrs. Harris of the Sairey Gamp party, always to be quoted, always fortifying Sairey Gamp's position, always building up the virtue, the self-denial, the general benevolence of the Sairey Gamp party, but never seen in the circle of Sairey Gamp's acquaintance, and whose place of residence no human being ever knew,—till the conviction is forced home upon the public that she is a phantom of Mrs. Gamp's brain, created for the express purpose of coining visionary compliments to the excellence of the Gamp Reform nature, and people are beginning, with Mrs. Prig, to fold their arms tighter, to shut their eyes closer, and to utter the memorable and tremendous words, "I don't believe there's no sich person!"

There *is* no such person. The civil service officers are already quite as honest as the people. Therefore any demand from the people that the civil service should be reformed would be grotesque. Just as all improvement in man carries along with it the improvement of the condition and character of women, so the improvement of the people carries along with it improvement of the civil service.

This is not my opinion alone. It is the doctrine preached at the first banquet of the Civil Service Reform Association in Boston. General Joseph R. Hawley, who has not been known as an opponent of Civil Service Reform, who was indeed bidden to the banquet as its friend and advocate, declared ours to be the "greatest, the freest, the best-governed land to-day." In fortifying his statement with arguments he read from a letter of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue: "In respect to integrity, efficiency, and fidelity to duty, the civil service of the government, as we find it to-day, can scarcely be improved. The business of the government, taken as a whole, is conducted in the most painstaking manner. The public revenues are carefully collected and faithfully accounted for, and defalcations are almost unknown. During the past seven years, as Commissioner of Internal Revenue, I have had an opportunity to observe the service here in Washington, and especially in my own bureau, which consists of over four thousand officers, clerks, and employés. As an organization for government business, the Internal Revenue cannot be excelled, for the promptitude and correctness with which all its affairs are conducted, by any private establishment in the United States. During the past seven years the Internal Revenue Service has collected more than eight hundred and fifty million dollars without the loss of a cent by defalcation. . . . In respect to the term of service of the force in the Internal Revenue Bureau, the average is more than ten years."

In further proof of his statement, General Hawley made a classifica-

tion showing that of the 2207 employes in the Treasury Department 454 have been in office from one to five years, 376 from five to ten years, 479 from ten to fifteen years, 281 from fifteen to twenty years, 18 from twenty to thirty years, 7 from thirty to forty years, and 2 from forty to sixty-five years. On an average, about twenty die and seventy-five resign every year. Of the number employed ten years ago, about forty a year, or less than one in fifty, have been removed for incompetence, negligence, or some other cause.

During the investigation of Comptroller Lawrence the reports affirmed that half the witnesses from the Treasury Department proved to have been clerks there for twenty-seven years or more. One had been a clerk for forty-two years, having been appointed under President Tyler. Two had been appointed under Buchanan. There have been only three librarians to the Congressional Library since the office was created, though the office is entirely at the disposal of the President.

Mr. James Lawrenson, of the Post-Office Department, has been in the service sixty years. Assistant Secretary of State Hunter has seen fifty-five years of continuous service. Several of the Departments contain messengers who have been on the rolls for a long period. Lindley Muse, the venerable negro who opens the door of the Secretary of the Navy, leads the list with fifty-six years of service without the loss of a month's time. The Quartermaster-General's office has a messenger who has served fifty years, and several others have served forty. Mr. James Marr, the chief clerk of a Post-Office division, has been in the service since 1851. In the Treasury Department a clerk named Mason Campbell claims seniority: he was appointed in 1847, and is eighty-seven years of age. He attends his office daily, but accomplishes little work. There are many who were appointed previous to the assassination of President Lincoln. The State Department witnesses few changes. Its employes either go abroad on missions or in minor positions, or grow old and die. Half the clerical force enrolled in the department in 1874 have died in the service. The oldest survivor, with the exception of the Assistant Secretary, is George Farritz, who began as messenger in 1840 and is now engrossing commissions at a ripe old age.

The chief of one of the largest divisions of the Treasury Department said that, so far from needing stronger tenure of office, we need most of all greater facilities for removal. He said it is harder to get a person out than to get him in. He has, for instance, five old men and two old women, the youngest of whom would have been retired long ago from any private firm, and all of whom together do not perform the work of two good vigorous clerks. He says that he has, moreover, a dozen inefficient and lazy clerks, who would probably pass just as good examinations as

their energetic and capable fellow-clerks, but they cannot or will not work. When something is to be done quickly and well, it is not intrusted to them : it is put on some willing clerk who is really oppressed because others are inefficient. Well may General Hawley ask any private business firm or corporation to show the retention of a larger proportion of employés or a better service.

He made still another tabulation, one which is perhaps even more conclusive, since pecuniary power is the final standard of confidence,—the sign-manual of the world.

For the last twenty-four years, during all the derangement of war, the demoralization of society, and the storm and stress of reconstruction, what have been the money transactions of the government? The national debt has been steadily decreased, both in interest and principal. Our bonds have been frequently at as low an interest as 2.85, 2.86, 2.87. Not a dollar of national bank notes has been lost to a holder by any default of government or banks. The London *Economist* says, "The credit of no nation in the world equals that of the United States."

In various public speeches in the autumn of 1884, General Hawley made some really startling statements as to the diminution of expenses under the Republican party. Before 1861 the cost of collecting a thousand dollars was \$3.59 ; of disbursing it, \$5.17. For the eighteen years after 1861 the cost of collecting was \$1.28 ; of disbursing, \$0.46. Under Republican administrations the cost of collecting and disbursing the revenue had been gradually diminished until under President Hayes it had been reduced to eight-tenths of a mill per thousand dollars.

In his speech at the dinner of the Merchants' Club in Boston, recently, Ex-Comptroller Knox said, "I lived at Washington for more than twenty years, without an opportunity of exercising the right of suffrage. I held a non-political office, and had a good opportunity to judge of the quality and character of the employés of the Treasury Department, and I can say, after an experience of many years, that no private establishment of your city can boast of a more efficient, honest, or conscientious body of men, as a whole, than are the officers and employés of the Treasury Department, composed as they are of members of both political parties. Few people appreciate the responsibility and work of the Treasury during the late civil war, when hundreds, you may say thousands, of millions of dollars were issued and reissued in greenbacks, 7-30 notes, compound-interest notes, bank notes, fractional currency, and various other forms of indebtedness of the United States ; and yet the whole of this responsible duty was performed, it may be said almost, without the loss of a single dollar.

"I entered upon new duties in New York on the 1st of May last, and within a few weeks thereafter people of that city suffered a loss from the wrong-doing of two men at least four times greater in amount than was lost during the twenty years preceding the year 1882, which includes the whole period of the civil war. If any politician, greedy for spoils, cherishes the belief that the Treasury is full of unwholesome persons who deserve to be turned out to give place to a hungry horde of successors, simply because they have done some unsavory political work in the late campaign, he is grievously mistaken. The employes of the government, as a rule, attend to their legitimate duties."

When Hon. James Gilfillan left the government service as Treasurer of the United States, his successor, before accepting the responsibility of the ninety millions of dollars kept in the vaults, desired to be sure it was there, and, according to custom, Secretary Folger ordered a count. For ten years all the business transactions of the government had been done with this money for a basis every day, and no count had been taken at night. Forty persons were detailed for the purpose. Days and weeks were consumed in the task. When the count was over, the sum was three cents more than the books showed. With all the men who in ten years had been handling that money, with all the millions of dollars which had been going and coming, three copper cents represented the illiteracy, the dishonesty, the partisanship, which had deflected the money from its proper course; and that deflection was to the advantage of the government!

When, upon the accession to power of the Democratic party, another count was taken, the discrepancy was only two cents; and even these defaulting pennies were afterwards found upon the floor, whither they had doubtless rolled in recognition of the obligation imposed upon *somebody* to prove the corruption of the civil service.

The district attorney in Norwich testifies that in that one district of Connecticut during the last ten years over nine hundred thousand dollars had been taken by defaulting bank-officers. In one district in one New England State more money has been lost by private fraud than the government has lost by civil service fraud through the twenty-four years' administration of the Republican party!

There can be no great reform of a service which is already more economically and efficiently conducted than the service of the men who are to reform it. There is no greatness in a cause which only proposes to do by law what is already done by custom. There is no substance to a cry which would model our civil service after the civil service of England or of any other country to which our civil service is already superior.

But, with that imperviousness to facts which is characteristic of—which is indeed necessary to—the Reformer, for the mind which has any relation to facts can have no relation to Reform,—without the slightest reference to these definite and authoritative statements, exactly the same as if they had never been made, or as if exactly the opposite had been made,—the Independent Reformer vociferously affirms that “Administrative Reform is the only idea just now worth anything in government. Corrupt political administration has done more to let the nation down than all other influences combined have achieved to hold it up.” This is mere wild talk, not one degree above village gossip, unless General Hawley’s facts are shown to be fiction. I see no report that at the banquet or on the platform their truth was denied, though they are absolutely destructive of Civil Service Reform. Rev. James Freeman Clarke, who was present, feebly suggested that the picture was rose-colored, but he did not suggest that the color was false. He did not venture to grapple with a single figure. He nerved himself to the startling and statesmanlike announcement that there is a large class of politicians in this country that does not deserve position for any special qualification but for their power to “run the machine,” and did not know that this is idle babble. The machine, any machine, would run forever were there nothing to oppose it but this vain repetition,—a generality which does not even glitter, which only rattles. That astute politician and stern moralist might as pointedly remark,—

Eggs, cheese, butter, bread,
Stick, stock, stone, dead—out!

If he, or any other, clergyman or layman, can disprove Senator Hawley’s facts, can demonstrate defalcations and government losses where Hawley and Knox say there are none, can name the clerks retained in Senator Hawley’s statements but actually dismissed upon the personal resentments or the personal partialities of members of Congress, can prove that the national bonds are not taken and the internal revenue is not economically collected and honestly disbursed, let him do so; but let him leave to minors, paupers, women, and idiots all meaningless maundering about corruption, and partisanship, and qualifications, and machinery, under the impression that it is moral purity and lofty statesmanship.

To the excellence of our civil service I have already brought the testimony of experts. I now summon another witness, an unintentional if not unwilling witness, Mr. Matthew Arnold. He indeed is an incredulous witness. He believes that it is only “the thick-and-thin American patriot who will tell you that there is no more corruption in

the politics and administration of the United States than in those of England." But he is on the road to truth. Already he is at the half-way house. He admits a change of heart. He confesses that he had "heard and read so much to the discredit of American political life, how all the best men kept aloof from it, and those who gave themselves to it were unworthy [is there any doubt from what quarter these reports reached Mr. Arnold's ear, or what American company Mr. Arnold kept?] that I ended by supposing that the thing must actually be so, and the good Americans must be looked for elsewhere than in politics."

Is it strange that a foreigner should form this opinion when he reads in a central, religious, Independent journal that "indications are that the worst elements—cacistocrats, from *cacistos*, worst, and *cratein*, to rule—are becoming the ruling power in America. . . . Gamblers, liquor-dealers, and other criminals wield the balance of power. Degradation, instead of the old word 'ambition,' expresses the act of canvassing. The business of politics is popularly thought to be a low one, in which only the worst classes are fit to participate. The principle on which men commonly seek position precludes any but the worst from becoming aspirants. The practices of rulers are equally those of the worst instead of the best,—stealing, getting up jobs, making corrupt bargains, and playing into the hands of corporations. The doings of our Congress and State Legislatures and city councils usually stamp these bodies as genuine cacistocracies. The bloated, red-faced, and shallow-brained politicians who get the offices stamp our officials as genuine cacistocrats. The native 'cheek,' 'brass,' and bold effrontery of our leaders indicate that they are descendants of cacistocrats. As members of a genuine ignobility, they might be appropriately addressed as 'Their Serene Lowness,' or 'Your Dishonorable Body.' . . . If our government goes to granting titles, it will have to be such as 'His Baseness,' 'His Beastliness,' 'His Thievishness,' 'His General Stupidity.'"

Could a stranger be expected to know that this indicates merely the incursion into modern society of the same spirit and the same manner of men that crept in unawares upon the ministry of Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ?—ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness; filthy dreamers, not apostles, not actors manfully doing man's work, but evoking filth in idle dreams; men who speak evil of dignities, evil of those things which they know not; spots in our feasts, feeding themselves with fear indeed, but always feeding themselves; trees whose fruit withereth, or without fruit altogether, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame and thinking it fame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever? We have forgotten: probably Mr.

Arnold did not remember that these men so severely arraigned by Jude, these murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts while their mouths were speaking great swelling words of virtue, were not the open Democratic heathen: they were false brethren,—the Civil Service Reformers of the Jewish Christian Church,—Independents, as saith the Apostle Jude, “who separate themselves.”

It is not to be supposed that an Englishman should divine this; but Mr. Arnold had the pleasure of dining with Mr. Bancroft,—late may that good gray head return to heaven!—and he found that the “politicians” whom he met there were “like the highest class of members of Parliament in bearing, manners, tone of feeling, intelligence, information.”

The shame of this country is not that her civil service is corrupt. It is that her own sons have so slandered her that an English gentleman is surprised to find at a Washington dinner-table American gentlemen!

With faculties trained by observation of real politics, Mr. Arnold quickly and quietly blows away all the fog and smoke and dust raised by the Reformers, and strikes directly and strongly at the substance of doctrine. What the Reformers have been devoting their lives to and founding a party on, to that an intelligent foreigner, coming here to observe, gives not the smallest attention, except for the one moment necessary to see and to say that there is nothing in it!

It took him but one moment to discover that “the practice so common in America [universal, he might have said, among Reformers] of calling a politician a thief” only means “that the speaker disagrees with him and dislikes him,”—is very much the same, he says, as when they in England call Beaconsfield a liar and Gladstone a lunatic. He does not yet see his way clear to pronounce us as free from corruption as in England, but he already sees that our corruption “is exaggerated, that it is not the wide and deep disease that it is represented to be, that the good elements can and will work it off, and that *even now the successful working of American institutions is not really in the least affected by it.*”

Our Civil Service Reformers avowedly base their reform on the example of England. The *Independent*, so late as October 2, 1884, pronounced Civil Service Reform to be the “life-or-death question of this country.” An Englishman conversant with politics comes over to look into our affairs, and declares that our institutions are not really in the least affected by it!

Mr. Matthew Arnold says, “Take the present state of the House of Commons. Can anything be more confused, more unnatural? That

assembly has got into a condition utterly embarrassed, and seems impotent to bring itself right. . . . To any judicious Englishman outside the House the spectacle is simply an afflicting and humiliating one. . . . Every day the House of Commons does not sit, judicious people feel relief; every day that it sits, they are oppressed with apprehension. Instead of being an edifying influence, as such an assembly ought to be, the House of Commons is at present an influence which does harm. It sets an example which rebukes and corrects none of the nation's faults, but rather encourages them. The best thing to be done at present, perhaps, is to avert one's eyes from the House of Commons as much as possible. If one keeps on constantly watching it welter in its baneful confusion, one is likely to fall into the fulminating style of the wrathful Hebrew prophets, and to call it 'an astonishment, a hissing, and a curse.' "

What has this to do with Civil Service Reform? Nothing whatever, but much against it. It shows how little Civil Service Reform has to do with real politics. England with her ideal civil service to which our Reformer ever points, England with her patronage abolished, her partisanship banished from her civil service, and her Congress without power to elect itself and so to corrupt itself by spoils, finds that Congress just as disgraceful and humiliating, harmful and bungling, as is our Congress with all its corruption and all its patronage.

Mr. Arnold goes further than this. "Our greatest institution, the House of Commons, we cannot say is at present working, *like the American institutions, easily and successfully*. . . . I will not ask if our institutions work easily and successfully in Ireland: to ask such a question would be too bitter, too cruel a mockery. . . . By our patchwork proceedings we set up, indeed, a make-believe of Ireland's being constitutionally governed. But it is not constitutionally governed. . . ."

What, again, has this to do with Civil Service Reform? Nothing with it; everything against it. It shows by the best English testimony, by an Englishman whose ears the Reformers had stuffed with falsehood before the politicians got a chance at him, but whose trained mind discerned the falsehood as soon as he inspected for himself, that the ideal civil service of England does not hinder one-third of her insular domain from being governed unconstitutionally, from being wellnigh governed by an absolute despotism.

Foreign affairs Mr. Arnold dismisses rather ruefully with the remark that nothing has happened but what was to be expected. "It is not with Lord Granville in his natural state and force that a foreign government has to deal: it is with Lord Granville waiting in devout expectation to

see how the cat will jump!" and Mr. Arnold, with a whimsical despair, turns—whither? Whither, but to the United States, with its civil service so corrupt that its reform is the great issue before the American people! His one resource is to inquire how "men who saw and thought straight would proceed,—how an American, for instance, would proceed in the three confusions which I have given as instances of the many confusions now embarrassing us. . . . And we find, from the experience of the United States, that just such provincial legislatures are the natural remedy for the confusion in the House of Commons, the natural remedy for the confusion in Ireland, and have the further great merit besides of giving us the best basis possible for a modern Second Chamber. If there be such a thing as demonstration in politics, the working of the American Senate demonstrates a well-composed Second Chamber to be the very need and safeguard of a modern democracy. . . . So we discover what would naturally appear the desirable way out of some of our worst confusions to anybody who saw clear and thought straight. But there is little likelihood, probably, of any such way being soon perceived and followed by our community here. And why is this? Because, as a community, we have so little lucidity, we so little see clear and think straight."

Thus we see clearly and straightway think that the great Reform which to the Civil Service Reformer is a matter of national life and death does not for an instant occupy the attention of an intelligent and patriotic Englishman who comes to this country to observe our institutions for the bettering of his own. He had heard from afar the voice of the Reformer voicing the familiar slanders, and he believed it. His own slight observation convinced him of its partial falsity; but the argument is even stronger than if Mr. Arnold's closer attention had proved to him the whole truth. For, taking our corruption in its full odium from the lips of the Reformer, he dispels it with a single whiff as of no national consequence. It is a matter of small, of individual, concern. "The successful working of American institutions is not really in the least affected by it." He advances instantly to questions of real politics. He wastes no time on petty administrative details, which are the sole political capital of the petty politicians who cry Reform and who have succeeded in vexing, deranging, and, to some extent, demoralizing the civil service, but have not in the smallest degree improved it. All the questions which Mr. Arnold discusses are such questions as occupy the attention of Republican leaders and of Democratic thinkers, men who study affairs, who shape policies, who deal in national interests. He touches only to dismiss as utterly insignificant the question which Reformers pronounce to be the life-and-death question of the nation, the proper

foundation of parties. He treats Civil Service Reform like what it is,—a small and not a great matter. That is, he does not treat it at all.

Still more remarkable and equally irrefragable evidence is given by the Reformers themselves in every step of their tortuous course. After having climbed into place on the shoulders of the Democratic party, they loudly proclaimed that their test case, the one infallible sign of their administration, was whether that administration should retain in office by reappointment Postmaster Pearson of New York City. If he should be reappointed, the Democratic administration would by that token be a real Civil Service Reform administration. If he should not be reappointed, it would thereby approve itself hostile to Civil Service Reform.

But observe. Postmaster Pearson was altogether and solely the fruit, the product and creation, of the Republican party whose corruption had forced the Reformers to come out from among them and be separate. He had been appointed to subordinate office by a Republican administration, he had been retained and promoted by succeeding Republican administrations, and he had been raised to the head of the New York post-office by a Republican administration whose leaders were the men most denounced by Civil Service Reformers. All his fame had been secured, all his system perfected by his own efforts, under the protection and sustenance of Republican administrations, without the interposition of Civil Service Reform. And the high-water mark of administrative reform was, not to mar or meddle with the work of the old Republican machine which the Reformers had left the party in order to destroy!

Of one other proof I speak with bated breath. What he suffered through the last long summer months of mortal anguish who sleeps in the quiet of Riverside, the nation knows which watched so tenderly by his dying couch. What of mental anguish he endured—he, an honest man, who had served his country in her supreme need with supreme fidelity—from the contumely and opprobrium heaped upon his head by the Civil Service Reformers, let those imagine who recall his dying gratitude for the words of kindness and sympathy that soothed his last weeks of mortal life. But when he had gone out of the way of human ambitions, no voices were louder in his praise than those of the Reformers who had most maligned him.

The inference is inevitable. They bore false witness, and they knew that they bore false witness. Death does not change the quality of moral acts. Death did not change Jacob Thompson's treason into loyalty, and when the country's flag was lowered to do him honor a roar of wrath rent the Northern heavens. The men who pronounced

and denounced Mr. Thompson a traitor were sincere. In life or death they held him dishonored.

There is no Civil Service Reform cause. There is no Civil Service Reform, in the sense in which the professional Reformers state it. There is a Civil Service. Under four-and-twenty years of Republican administration it had been carried to a high degree of excellence in promptness, efficiency, economy. No public service in the world surpassed it. No average private service equalled it. It shared the intelligence and the morality of the Republican party, and advanced in both as the people advanced of whom the party was composed. It was constantly improved and was constantly improving. It needed no new party to advocate it; for the Republican party was identified with it, knew that honor was involved in its quality, was ever watchful to reduce its force, to increase its ability, to demand its perfection. All that was really done in the way of improving it was done without sound of oratoric hammer or axe, for the matter was merely of routine, of method, of clerical interest. There was nothing to be eloquent about, nothing to thrill over. There was no great wrong to be righted, no great measure to be inducted. Every honest man wants the government honestly administered, and everybody is on the watch against dishonest administration. Every patriot wants the government economically administered, and a vigilant opposition is ever on the watch against extravagance. Civil Service Reform talk bears the same relation to real politics that talk about servants bears to real housekeeping and home-making. It is an important detail, and the comfort and happiness of the family may be greatly marred by flagrant inefficiency and misdoing. A good deal of ability and care goes to its satisfactory performance, and the house-mistress keeps a watchful eye and a clever hand on the machinery. But she never mistakes it for the education of her children. She never confounds it with the honor of her husband. She never merges in it or misses for it the duties of religion, the claims of the intellect, or the rights of society. She seldom boasts of her successes, and seldom bemoans her failures, knowing that the best admissible evidence is the household itself, and that the only result of eloquence would be that on the one side conversation would speedily sharpen into whining and on the other degenerate into tittle-tattle.

In the same danger is our national housekeeping. Intemperance is a question which affects not only every State, but every county, every village, in the land. Not a hundred thousand but a hundred times a hundred thousand are the human beings whose weal or woe depends largely upon the wisdom which we bring to the vexed question of Pro-

hibition. Fifty millions of people to-day are governed by a violent and fraudulent repression of the Southern vote. The race question concerns two hundred and fifty thousand Indians, five millions of negroes, an unreckoned number of Mongolians, the immediate prosperity of the Pacific States, the very life and honor of the nation. The monetary systems of the world are publicly declared to be deranged by the Paris Bourse and the London Stock Exchange, and the Monetary Conference, the Latin Union, the German Empire, are urgently appealed to for measures of relief, for the re-establishment of unity and co-operation. Labor is restless and discontented. Illiteracy and unrepublican traditions are piling clouds above our horizon, sinister and ever-rising. And the life-and-death question of politics for the Civil Service Reformer is whether the government shall hire its servants from the intelligence office or by recommendation from their last employer!

Gail Hamilton.

MY CHILDREN.

I SIT at my work in the afternoon,
 When the day is drowsy with dust and heat,
 And out of my window I watch the line
 Of shimmering sun on the well-worn street ;
 I mend the jackets and little gowns,
 Worn with playing and rent with tears,
 And every stitch which my needle takes
 Is set with a mother's voiceless prayers.

But after the shadows are growing long,
 And the glare fades out of the dusty street,
 With happy laughter the children come,
 With ringing voices and flying feet,
 And my heart leaps up with a sudden bound ;
 My children are coming home from school :
 I rise and watch with an eager hope
 The long white road growing dusk and cool.

Guy, and Hobie, and little Louise,—
 I shall see them come through the shady lane ;
 And Claire is away at a higher school,—
 Ah ! what is it comes with a sudden pain ?

I hear my darlings, I see them both,—
Both, I say, when it should be three,
 Hobie, my son, and little Louise.—
 Ah! “suffer *thy* children to come unto me.”

Day after day I cheat my ears
 When the children clamor with laugh and shout;
 Day after day I cheat my eyes,
 Waiting and watching when school is out.
 For Claire is gone to a higher school,—
 But Guy, my darling, my precious Guy,
 With his laughing eyes and his loving heart,
 Guy has gone to a school—*more high*.

Oh for the breadth of a little grave!
 Oh that it ever was dug so deep!
 And yet, were it sunk through a thousand worlds,
 I never could picture him there asleep.
 When the snow is deep and the frost lies thick,
 And the road is gleaming more coldly white,
 I think, “My children will all come home—
All—when the school is out to-night.”

And when the rush of the wild spring rain
 Awakens me with its sobbing deep,
 I say, “In the little room up-stairs
 My boys are dreaming in happy sleep.”
 How can I think, “In his lonesome grave
 My darling is lying so still and white,
 With rain-washed grasses and wind-blown flowers
 And dripping darkness alone to-night?”

O Father, forgive me my human love!
 Its death was bitter, its life was sweet;
 But that long white road leading past the stars
 Was best of all for my darling's feet.
 And when I watch from immortal heights
 For Claire, and Hobie, and little Louise,
 God grant I hear with immortal ears,
 “The kingdom of heaven is such as these.”

Marion Manville.

PALINGENESIS.

“ARE you an advocate of cremation?” asked the Professor, looking at the gentleman opposite him through a pair of extraordinarily bright spectacles. The eyes were brighter than the medium through which these glances passed, like diamonds seen in the limpid water that proves them genuine.

“I neither advocate nor condemn,” replied the other, whose name was Mario. “I have no theories upon the subject. I have never studied it.”

Mario was tall, pale, and thin, his hollow eyes were full of sorrow and of searching, and there was that strain and sinking in of the cheeks which tell of prolonged anguish without hope. He had a fine but over-sensitive face, with a woman’s large eyes, and full, soft lips. He was scarcely fifty years of age, and the dark hair falling over his forehead was so thickly threaded with gray as to be of an ashen silver color.

The Professor might have been of the same age, was tall and very blond, and his thin hair was all combed carefully back. The only decided color in his face was the clear beautiful sapphire of his eyes. He was lithe, strong, and flexible, like one of those blades that you can roll up like a ribbon, and, while looking perfectly bloodless, gave an impression of perfect health. A man devoted to science with a devotion which was a patience, not a passion.

He sat with his thin, nervous hands resting on the table before him, the left finger-tips accurately meeting the right. The gentleman opposite him leaned on one elbow, with a hand half hidden in his long beard.

The two were in a tower in the midst of a vineyard on the western coast of Italy. Both tower and vineyard belonged to the Professor, who spent the greater part of his time there. Almost every day towards evening he descended to the little town by the sea, and wandered through the streets, peering at everything through his bright spectacles. Sometimes he called upon the rector of the college, who considered him the most learned man in the world. He considered the rector a very good man, but weak, and afflicted with curiosity,—not the noble sort which is the base of scientific knowledge, but its shadow, which is one of the roots of gossip. For this reason, on the rare occasions when his visits were returned he never invited his visitor to go higher than the first floor of the tower, a room where any one might enter.

The semi-rustic citizens of the town looked upon the Professor as an

oddity, and laughed at him with a comfortable sense of superiority. The superstitious feared him, and passed by on the other side. They believed that he was possessed of forbidden knowledge, and that he had the evil eye. For his part, he looked upon them with philosophical indifference, as beings in whom the beast predominated.

It had been his habit to go on a journey now and then. Now and then some stranger came to see him,—possibly a person of note; for he had a good repute in certain scientific circles. But he kept the common curious very decidedly at arm's length. His vignaiuolo was his portiere, and had a little lodge at the gate. His orders were to admit no one except Signor Silvio, the rector, or some stranger presenting a card.

His present visitor the Professor had found looking through the latticed gate when he came up from town that afternoon. He stood there gazing with the vague earnestness of one whose mind is full of thoughts quite alien to what the eyes behold, seeing something beyond the vineyard. When the owner of the place appeared, he did not start. He merely stood aside out of the path and bowed slightly, but without any change of expression.

There is something impressive in an intense preoccupation which is not absence of mind. It excludes, without being either rude or unconscious. The Professor, who was appreciative, if not sympathetic, could not but perceive that the person before him had suffered a great defeat on some one of the many battle-fields of life, and that he had lost all consciousness of trivialities.

“Would you like to come in?” he asked, unlocking the gate.

“If I may without intruding,” the stranger replied, with that negative courtesy of manner which is at once without compliment and without offence. No possibility of a smile showed itself in his face.

They entered together, the Professor locked the gate after him, and they walked slowly side by side along the path leading to the tower. The sunset was in their faces, at their left the vineyard sloped towards the town, and beyond the town was the sea. It was a cloudless June evening, and the sun was a half-disk of dancing red gold on a purple mountain-top. In the silence they heard sharply the crackling of little twigs beneath their feet. The air was rosy, and sweet with the delicate odor of vine-blossoms. The birds were at their pause between vespers and complin. The fresh canes which supported the vines shone like gold through their leaves. There were boats out on the shining sea: one could see the spray that fell from their oars, and the red waistbands of the sailors.

The scene was lovely and peaceful; but an expression of distress was added to the fixed sorrow of the stranger's face. He turned his

head every moment to look at the town, and his step grew every moment more reluctant. At length he stopped.

"Can one see the rector's house from here?" he asked.

The Professor pointed it out. "It is there beside the cathedral tower. You cannot see the whole house, but only the end of it. There is a long window with persiane opening on a little terrace. The terrace seems to touch the tower. The parapet is visible up against the sea."

"Oh! oh!" murmured the stranger, in a voice that was faint and tremulous with anguish, pressing his hands over his heart. "Oh!"

His eyes were fixed on the terrace that lifted itself against the bright sea.

"I used to sit there with *her*," he said, after a moment, still gazing. "We looked up here sometimes, and promised each other to visit the tower together; but we never came. She said that it was beautiful, standing out a softly-mottled amber-color against the blue sky. She laughed and said that we would come here to live. Oh! oh!"

It was the moan of one who, already faint with prolonged suffering, undergoes a painful surgical operation. Sorrow had so incurably transfixed his soul as to have become a physical stigmata.

"Adelaide—you knew her?" the Professor asked, somewhat hastily.

The wonder of this strange visitor was explained at once.

"And you?" the other exclaimed, turning upon him with dilated eyes.

"You are, then, Mario Cagliari," said the Professor. "I knew her during the last three months of her life," he added.

"You knew her!" his visitor exclaimed, gazing at him fixedly for a moment.

Then suddenly his eyes grew dim, his parted lips were closed convulsively. He covered his face with his hands, and burst into a passion of tears.

We have said that the Professor was not sympathizing. He watched this paroxysm of despairing grief without a sign of emotion. But he was gentle.

"Come with me, Mario, to the tower," he said, laying a quietly compelling hand on his visitor's arm. "Come and rest. You can see better from the window there."

Mario ceased weeping as suddenly as he had begun, and they went to the tower together. But the Professor did not arrest this visitor's progress at the chamber where he received the rector. Unlocking a narrow door, he preceded him up a stair built in the thickness of the wall. It led to a dimly-lighted mezzanino which was apparently used

as a lumber-room. Passing this, they ascended a second stair like the first, and arrived at the piano nobile of the tower. There were no ante-chambers nor corridors. Each floor consisted of a single circular room. The one they entered now was lofty, and had high windows reached by steps. It was scantily but decently furnished as a salon or library, and surrounded with cases of books, of preserved birds and insects, of specimens of earths and ores.

But the Professor did not stop here. Drawing a porte-monnaie from his pocket, he took a small key from it, touched the spring of a lock-cover, opened a third door, and again ascended.

The chamber they entered now was different in character from those below. Five long, narrow windows reaching from floor to ceiling filled it with light and gave an enchanting prospect in every direction. There was a narrow balcony outside these windows, extending quite round the tower. Two or three chairs, and a large round table with a black marble top, occupied the centre of the chamber, and the walls were lined with shallow cases shut in with glass. These cases were filled with a variety of objects. There were surgical and chemical instruments, lenses, bottles and vials of all sizes, lamps, books which were distinguished only by a number and which seemed to be manuscript, and, over all, a line of separate cases, half of which were empty, the other half scantily occupied by a number of crystal amphoras of different sizes, held between an under and an upper shelf.

It was evidently the Professor's work-room.

He opened one of the southern windows, pushed a chair before it, and pointed silently. When Mario had seated himself there, and was gazing with strained eyes towards the town, he pressed a field-glass into his hand. Mario received it without a word of thanks or a backward glance. He resigned himself to be served as a sick person does.

There it was, the little terrace where they had sat so many a time, inebriated with mingled joy and sorrow! The lens brought it so near that he could see the stains on its brick pavement and the tiny weeds in its brick parapet. There was the long window with its green persiane and the lace curtains dropping to the floor. They always stopped for a last kiss behind those curtains before coming out on the terrace. Everything was as he had left it scarcely a year ago. The year sank out of sight while he gazed, and the wretched man who looked from afar at this scene consecrated to him by a supreme love became as the shadow of an ugly dream. He lifted the lace curtain and entered that chamber. There was a blue velvet sofa where she sat smiling at him and holding out a welcoming hand. He heard her sweet command to draw the curtain close. He sat beside her, with her head on his shoul-

der, her silken hair stirring in his breath, her form softly pressing his side, her hand caressing his with light, soft touches.

The Professor, meanwhile, had seated himself at the table, the top of which turned on a pivot and was set all round with drawers. He opened one of these, took out a microscope, and, bending over it, looked down the jewelled passage which was a beetle's throat.

This conduct, which seemed the result of sensibility of feeling, was, in fact, dictated by a delicate intellect. He wished Mario to remain.

The Professor, who had begun his studies with an enthusiastic interest in physical laws, was rapidly growing to care for them only as a means of arriving at psychic knowledge. Unlike many who become more material in idea the more they study matter, he had begun as a materialist and was constantly etherealizing. At twenty he had said, "There is no spirit: all is but different degrees of matter." At forty he corrected himself, or, at least, changed his formula: "There is no matter: all is but different degrees of spirit." Which was, perhaps, saying the same thing.

There were reasons why he should feel an interest in this man. Besides, he had never before had the opportunity offered him of experimenting on a broken heart. It is true, however, that he was willing to heal it; but he wished to watch the progress of its healing.

The arm holding the field-glass, becoming weary, sank unconsciously, and in an instant, with a shock, the visions of the past fled like shadows, and the terrible present confronted once more the shrinking dreamer.

Mario uttered a faint cry, and turned from the window. For a moment he seemed not to know where he was, nor with whom. Then recollection returned.

"You knew her!" he said, repeating the last words he had uttered.

The Professor gently pushed the microscope aside, but without raising his eyes. He leaned his head upon his hand, his elbow on the table, and seemed reading his answer from the marble: "I came here three months before her death: that was a month after you went away. I used to meet her out walking with her maid. I looked at her with interest, not because she was beautiful, but because she was so full of life. I spoke with her two or three times at the rector's. I perceived then that she was fragile, like one of those large, swiftly-growing lilies which a touch may snap. Her life would naturally be brief and full of color. It is a mistake to think that large women are usually the strongest. I have found a medium size the most enduring. She had all the delicacy of a flower or an infant, with the size of a Juno."

"Yes," Mario said, with an eager anguish of appreciation. "Her

flesh was like swan's-down to the touch. Her hand seemed to melt in mine."

The Professor continued: "She did not, however, fade like a flower: she went out like a flame. Her fever was short and violent,—a simple fever. She was burned at an invisible stake by—I cannot say an invisible flame, for she was wrapped in fire. When I saw her, her cheeks and lips were of a vivid crimson, and her eyes sparkled with brilliancy. She was excited, exalted, but reasonable. I was called to pronounce upon her sanity. She had certain wishes——" He hesitated. "Her uncle was not sure that she knew what she was saying. I found her mind remarkably clear and logical. An excited person sometimes is so. It is a common mistake to associate always coolness with reason. Reason dwells at that altitude where the mental atmosphere is clear, and varies with the character. Reason is sometimes luminous and winged, sometimes it goes on four legs. The uncle yielded to my decision and to her wishes."

When he paused for a moment, Mario remained silent, gazing at him breathlessly.

"I began by studying medicine," the Professor resumed. "My specialty was nervous diseases. From the nerves I naturally went to magnetism and electricity. This put an end to my regular practice. In fact, I had found it annoying from the first. Regular practice is practising in harness. At the best the physician is sufficiently hampered. One of the greatest misfortunes is that he has so often to see the malady distorted through the medium of the patient's mind, not being able, or not being allowed, to set that medium aside."

The speaker paused again, as if to see whether he had succeeded in turning Mario's attention a point aside from its one engrossing subject.

"It was the uncle who separated us," Mario said. "Being an orphan, she had always lived with him, though she was independent pecuniarily. He sent her here to pass the summer with the rector's family, thinking that I would not follow her. I followed. The rector made a little opposition at first, then declined all responsibility. Adelaide was her own mistress, or soon would be, he said. He pretended not to know how much we were together, but he reminded me that in marrying her I would be dependent on my wife, and that while I was poor she was not rich. It aroused my pride. Oh, what has pride to do with love? Then a chance was offered me to become rich. But I must go away for six months. She never fully consented; but I went. I was to go to Spain, she to remain here till I should come for her. The night before I went we were privately married."

"Ah!" said the Professor, looking up.

“For three months and a half I received a letter every day,” Mario went on, without seeming aware of the interruption. “Then one day—it was not a letter, it was a thunderbolt struck me!” He put his hands to his temples, pressing them hard. “The news of her sickness was to me the news of her death. She wrote herself, but she said ‘addio.’ She never wrote again. Somebody else wrote. I lay there—I don’t know where I was—and let the ten days’ storm pass over me. I scarcely felt the last stroke.”

He was silent a moment, then resumed, his hands still tightly clasping his temples: “I dared not come here, and I could not stay away. It is six months since she died, and all that time I have been hovering about the place. I have come within sight of it by land and by sea, have stood on the top of the mountain there, and sailed to the point you see at the south, and ridden towards it through that long fading strip of campagna; and each time when the walls and roofs began to take on their familiar shapes to me, and I could see the church-tower against the sky as we used to see it from that terrace, I cried out, and fled.”

He raised his face with a sudden calm.

“But at last I come,” he said. “The frenzy of my grief is past. I am broken in strength and spirit. I weep instead of shrieking. I feel myself dying; and I wish to die where she breathed her last.”

He sighed, and looked down towards the town, over which transparent shadows were softly gathering, while the vineyard and tower were still glowing with a clear topaz light.

“The arch-enemy which humanity has to conquer is the fear of death,” the Professor said. “Christianity professes to have done that in the persons of its highest representatives; but they conquered death only by despising life. What we need is the wisdom to cherish life and enjoy it to its fullest in our several ways, while at the same time we cease to tremble at that change in the form of individual life which we call death.”

The Professor went on to describe the beliefs of different nations and times concerning death and a future existence, and, somewhat abruptly interrupting himself, put the question with which this record opens.

While he talked, the evening had softly opened out its cloudless way to the stars. The Ave Maria bells had ceased ringing, the birds had sunk into their nests. But in the transparent twilight of that lofty chamber the two men were distinctly visible to each other, the daylight which still suffused the west with silver touching their profiles, one turned northward and the other southward as they sat at opposite sides of the table.

The Professor went on : " For the body cremation bears to the natural process of corruption the same relation which in the spirit, according to Christian doctrine, an act of perfect contrition bears to lengthened penance and expiation : it purifies instantly and nobly by a supreme immolation. The flame of visible fire and the invisible flame of love are the body and soul of purity."

As when he spoke of death, he now again amplified his subject, mentioned the names of noted persons who advocated cremation, and exposed their arguments, talked learnedly of cremation as practised in ancient times, and described its progress in modern times.

While he talked, the night deepened around them. The features of the two men became indistinct, their faces showed as pale blotches of light, their figures, seen against opposite windows, made two blurred shadows against the stars. The air was dewy around them, and sweet with the delicate odors of vines and of herbs. Now and then, in long breathing-intervals, the perfume of a rose that climbed the tower came floating in and touched Mario in the face, as if it were the sweet breath of one leaning near him. The stars danced with brightness.

"All worn-out things should be burned," the Professor said ; "above all, dead things which have had animal life. The soul is thus spared an infinite disgust and an enforced exile. The deserted body purified by fire, that which once gave it life might willingly revisit the dust which had rendered it visible on earth. If the spirit should not resume its ashes, who can say that the spectre—what the pagans of old called the shade—might not? That ancient belief that man is spirit, shade, and matter cannot be disproved. Perhaps what we call beasts are so because they lack the spirit, which requires the human form. Perhaps imbeciles are beasts in human form, the imperfect dual nature of the beast lacking that spirit which made man's triune nature like unto God. Perhaps lunatics are persons from whom the spirit is withdrawn in disgust, or from whom it has been driven out violently, leaving an animal ever wildly conscious of a supreme but uncomprehended loss. Perhaps the human body can LIVE with only an animal soul, or shade, or spectre, whatever you may call it, after the spirit has withdrawn, as we see in the dying, who breathe when no longer conscious. The two tenants do not leave the body together, since they do not go to the same place. It is like blowing out a candle: first the flame disappears, then, after a while, the smoke, leaving the wick dead. I think that when a person faints the soul perhaps leaves the body, and that it may leave the body during sleep. It is an ineffable thing, only half recognized and never understood by the lower being around which it hovers and into which it penetrates like an atmosphere."

Mario had caught but one idea out of this discourse. "You believe—!" he exclaimed in a sharp whisper out of the darkness.

The Professor understood. "Experiments have been made," he said. "Duchesne knew in Cracow a Polish doctor who preserved in amphoras the ashes of certain plants. The doctor showed him a rose which grew up out of its own ashes and was so perfect that it seemed to be just gathered from the tree. I can show you the same, and more."

He rose and lighted a candle, then closed the windows and the shutters, drawing down thick curtains over them.

Mario watched him, pallid with excitement. To that soul which, like a bird blown by the tempest, ceaselessly beat itself against the dead wall that hid from it its only treasure, the possibility that some lost thing might be resuscitated, some creature called back for a moment from the invisible life where he had lost her, though but a bird or a flower, was a rapture and a terror. She might have seen the bird and touched the flower whose image now he waited for. And then it seemed to him that such a vision from beyond the point of dissolution was a door ajar against which he might fling himself and enter by violence. So much possible, what remained impossible?

The Professor lighted a cluster of wax candles in a little chandelier close to the centre of the ceiling, and placed a large silver spirit-lamp under a silver stand on the table. The lamp was so made that the flame could be graduated from a tiny blue mist just hovering over the wick, to long jets darting out in a circle of fire, and the stand was pierced with holes and surrounded by a turned-up rim for the protection of whatever might be placed on it. Then, pushing a case of steps out from a hidden niche, he mounted them, and took down three amphoras from three separate cases, setting them with great care, one by one, into openings in the table shaped to receive them, lifting the covers so closely fitted in the marble as to have seemed but natural veins of color.

These amphoras were of different sizes and crystal clear, and each contained a little ashes.

"By the way," said the Professor, arresting his hand as he was about placing the smallest of the three on the silver stand over the lamp, "you do not know what those last wishes of Adelaide were which made her uncle doubt if she were sane?"

"What were they?" cried Mario.

"She wished that after death her body should be burned," the Professor said, and set the amphora carefully in its place and lighted a small violet flame in the lamp beneath it.

“The cremation was intrusted to me,” he pursued, having received no reply. “It was privately done at a solitary point ten miles down the coast. Only the uncle, myself, and the rector know, besides the necessary assistants. Several persons have been cremated at the same place, but always secretly. There is a prejudice in many minds which it is well to evade. But also there is a wider favorable conviction than is generally suspected.”

He looked at his companion to see what his silence meant. It meant horror. Mario was staring at him with fiery eyes, but his tongue, his whole body, seemed to be paralyzed.

“The ashes were sealed in an urn and enclosed in a tomb in the wall of the church below,” the Professor went on, calmly. “I think she meant that they should be given to you. ‘Keep them till they are asked for.’ That is what she said. Now look and see a lily !”

Mario’s eyes followed mechanically the sign given them, and fixed themselves upon the ashes in the amphora, warm now from the lamp. These ashes were stirring gently, and a mist rose floating over them. Then from the centre was pushed slowly up a tiny lance of folded green, like a furred banner. It grew and unfolded itself, and became a leaf, and as it grew another tiny lance appeared, and yet another, crowding leaf on leaf without a sound. Large stems, juicy, transparent, and crisp, held these broad veined leaves that found the crystal of the amphora no obstacle to their growth, passing it as they passed the air. Then from the centre of the plant arose four stems like sceptres, tipped with pale green buds that swelled and whitened and separated at the ends into backward-curling points. Slowly and silently, watched in breathless silence, the visionary flowers unfolded, till they hung four drooping clusters of superb white lilies, silvery white in all their gleaming petals, gleaming gold in all their radiant hearts, an exquisite wonder fair enough to grow unchanged in Paradise.

“Oh !” sighed Mario, in an ecstasy. “*She* may have seen that flower !”

The Professor extinguished the lamp. For an instant longer the lily stood there in all its beauty ; then it grew dim, and dimmer, sinking down, lessening, faded to a mist, and disappeared.

The Professor placed a second amphora on the stand, lighted the lamp again, and rose to replace the amphora of the lily in its case on the wall. Coming back, he said, “Van der Bect declares that the corpuscles of the blood contain the seed of the animal, and that the seed contains the animal. He distilled fresh human blood, and says that he found in it the spectre of a human body, and that the spectre moaned. This is said to be the reason why the Jews were forbidden to eat any-

thing mixed with blood. He who eats or drinks blood will have in him the elements and nature of the beast whose blood it was, and the stronger conquers. The lion and the tiger grow strong on blood; the blood he drank was the sole life of the vampire. Look now!"

Mario was already looking eagerly. The ashes in the amphora stirred, a mist arose and covered it, and condensed, and rose higher as it took shape, then suddenly shook itself into visible life,—a lark! All the little fluffy feathers were distinct, its wings outspread, its throat swelling with an inaudible song. As true a lark it looked as ever sprang out of the grass at morning, singing to the dawn, all palpitating joy and music. So perfect was the posture of its soaring, while retaining still the same relation to the place, that all the place seemed to be soaring with it.

Mario felt a sense of dizziness, and covered his eyes with his hands. Had *she* heard the song inaudible to him? Oh, the wall was not so dense as it had seemed. A flower had been flung over, a bird had flown through. His hope and longing grew an agony.

When he looked up, the bird had disappeared, and only a thin mist hovered above its ashes.

The Professor rose and replaced the amphora in its case, and came back to his seat. "I have never tried it," he muttered to himself. "Shall I try it now?"

Mario was gazing at him, his lips parted as if waiting to speak. "If animals and plants can—why not—?" he whispered; and his eyes and face explained and finished the question.

"You are nervous and excited," the Professor said, with a certain coldness. "I have perhaps done wrong in showing you what I have kept secret from all else. Maybe we had better say no more."

"Pardon me," Mario said, eagerly. "Grief had made me desperate and careless of all but itself. I have had no thought of controlling myself or hiding my misery. It was because I did not care. But I can control myself. I have a strong will. I will be calm. If you tell me to smile, I will smile so that you would think I was happy. But do not send me from this place where life and death unfold themselves. You have given me what I thought never to have,—a hope, a consolation which is not death. With such studies and such powers as yours, I could patiently endure what space of life remains to me."

The Professor watched him keenly. "Is it so much, then, to see the spectre of a bird or flower?"

Mario's hollow cheeks were growing red. "It is much as a beginning! I would study, leaving everything else. I would take you for my master, and the fortune she left me should be half yours. We

would follow up this track through the air ; I would—" His voice had gradually sunk till it became a whisper, and he no longer addressed his companion, but seemed to be thinking aloud. Then, looking down, he sank into a feverish revery, imagining what wild thing might be possible.

He was scarcely conscious that the Professor had moved the silver lamp and stand aside a little farther from him and placed the third and largest amphora on them. His fancy teemed with visions. He knew not where he was, or took the place as a part of his dream. His cheeks crimson, his lips parted, his downcast eyes sparkling, he lived another life. The lamp burned with a violet flame tipped with rose, as he saw, and a white mist soared above it. Almost he saw that it was a tall column of mist, silvery white as were the lilies, opaque and curling into folds like drapery.

Then he knew that the Professor sat beside him with a hand clasped tightly on his arm. There was an awful silence everywhere, and something sweet and solemn in the air, a sense of terror, too, that made him fear to lift his eyes. An odor floated over him from a sponge laid on the table near, and seemed to press his eyelids down. He turned languidly towards the lamp, and saw its flame rose-tipped, and knew that something tall and white floated above.

"Do not move nor speak!"

He heard the whisper at his ear, and felt the hand tremble on his arm.

His languid glance crept slowly upward.

What had seemed smoke or a mist was long folds of a white garment, dropping straight and outlining two hidden feet, the folds opaque yet softly luminous. Slowly, inch by inch, his dreamy glance moved upward. Two hands, lovely with rosy palms and finger-tips and dimpled joints, hung down among the folds of white with the fringed ends of an azure girdle.

Mario's head reeled for a moment with the strong muffled blow his heart struck suddenly. He rose slowly and stood upright, both his arms in the strong grasp that held him back. The drug he had breathed still lay a weight upon his nerves and muscles ; but he was conscious.

There she stood, his darling, rosy with perfect life ! The hair unbound fell down in waves, the brow shone like a pearl, the sweetness of a smile hovered about the lips, the smooth and richly-colored cheeks were hers, the chin, the throat with its full curve,—Adelaide ! It was she as she had stood his bride, now floating in the air before him, living, visible, and perfect. Those eyes—were they the same ? Was there a

soul in their unchanging brilliant gaze fixed unwinkingly on space? The gods when they came down to earth had such eyelids, immovable and level. There she stood, his love, his lost idol, his bride, steadfast and living in the air before him.

His life seemed to go out of him like a mist of fire as he gazed.

"Adelaide!" he whispered, faintly. "Look at me!"

One of the hands that held his arm was withdrawn, and the Professor reached across the table and drew the lamp from under the amphora.

"Adelaide, look at me!" panted Mario.

The serene and brilliant eyes remained immovable, but a slight mist came over them. A slight dimness hovered round the radiant face, the outlines of the figure grew indistinct, the vision began to recede.

As he saw it, Mario uttered a cry that seemed to split his heart in twain, and broke with sudden force away from the hands that would have held him.

"Adelaide, stay!"

He threw himself forward with outstretched arms to clasp the fading vision, and fell headlong to the floor, bearing the amphora with him with a crash of broken crystal and a cloud of flying ashes that had once contained a soul.

"Fool that I was to trust him!" muttered the Professor, as he stooped to lift the motionless figure lying face downward on the floor.

It was a dead weight he lifted; for the soul of Mario had flown out in swift pursuit of the vision of his lost bride.

Mary Agnes Tincker.

GRAY WETHERS.

A GRAY Wether is not a peculiar form of sheep, entered to be judged in a special class by the learned breeders who usually compose a cattle-show jury. It presents, in fact, about the same sort of analogy to a live wether that a pillar of salt does to Lot's wife. In the concise and graceful language of the geological text-books, it is "a block of saccharoid sandstone," which, I suppose, may be regarded as scientific English for a big boulder closely resembling a gigantic lump of brown sugar. All over the surface of Salisbury Plain (so called because it consists, in reality, of an undulating upland) and along the high ridges of the Marlborough Downs you may see these gigantic Gray Wethers, reclining peacefully in the eye of the sun, and looking really, at a little

distance, very much like a scattered flock of sheep of Titanic proportions. Some of them are twelve or fifteen feet across and about four or five feet in thickness; and they lie on the surface of the shallow turf, like the squatting toadstone on Tunbridge Wells common, great naked masses of hard but friable sandstone rock, in the midst of a wide and unvaried chalk country. How they got there was, and is still in some ways, a profound mystery. Their presence on the spot has been variously attributed at different periods to Merlin and to the devil, to the Universal Deluge and to the great Ice Age; geologists have referred them to the action of denudation, and popular fancy has, perhaps with higher probability, attributed them to the agency of the elves, the fairies, the Druids, and the Saracens.

But the problem how these huge blocks of shapeless sandstone came to find themselves isolated on the hill-tops in the midst of a bare and unvaried chalk country is not by any means the only point that gives interest and dignity to the Gray Wethers. They derive a far deeper and more human claim to attention from the fact that they compose the stone of which the great outer circle of trilithons at Stonehenge is built; and all the secret of Stonehenge itself is closely bound up with the kindred secret of the Gray Wethers. Even local tradition knows as much as that, for it declares that when the devil, or Merlin, or some other person or persons unknown, first transported the hanging stones of the great temple, by magic art, through the air from Ireland, he dropped a few of them carelessly on the way over the Wiltshire downs; and these stones, thus let fall by accident in the midst of the bare chalk country, are the Gray Wethers. Tradition often contains a wonderful kernel of truth, and this one, as preserved for us by Aubrey and others, enshrines two or three various bits of really genuine antiquarian intelligence. In the first place, it recognizes the original identity of the Gray Wethers and the Stonehenge trilithons. In the second place, it declares that Stonehenge is a foreign temple, as imported. And in the third place, it attributes the importation to Merlin, the devil, the Druids, the Saracens, or the fairies, all of whom, in spite of accidental diversities, have this much at least in common,—that they are all wicked, all heterodox, all ancient, and all magical.

The Gray Wethers, like modern swindlers, have several other names as well: they are known by the aliases of Druid Stones and Sarsen Stones; which last designation—by far the commonest at the present day—has a very curious and interesting origin. It is a corruption of Saracen. Now, what on earth have the Saracens to do with the county of Wilts in that part of the United Kingdom known as England? There were Moors in Provence, as everybody knows, and Buddhists in

Mexico, as some people assert, but were there ever any Saracens in Wiltshire? Rather not. To the mediæval fancy, all Paynims were Saracens alike,—worshippers of Mohammed, or, what came to pretty much the same thing, of the devil in person. Your mediæval thinker made as little distinction as a modern missionary between Mohammedans and Pagans; he regarded them all equally as dogs of Saracens, and he mixed up in one universal condemnation, as the Prayer-Book does in one concise petition, Jews, Turks, Heretics, and Infidels. Now, the English people in the Middle Ages knew, in a dim, half-mythical fashion, that Stonehenge and the other great scattered megalithic monuments, like cromlechs and dolmens, were all the work of some prehistoric Pagans and connected with some forgotten heathen religion. Therefore it obviously followed that they were Saracen stones. The conclusion flows logically from the premises: it is only the premises themselves that are a little bit confused and muddled. After all, the mediæval blunder is not much more absurd or much more unauthorized than the modern one which regards all these vastly archaic and prehistoric structures as “Druidical monuments.” Because there were once Druids in England, and because the Druids were “Ancient Britons,” and because these stones are also very ancient, therefore the stones were set up by the Druids. We might on precisely the same grounds assign every Roman object found in Britain to Julius Cæsar, and every coin of George I. or James II. to William the Conqueror. As a matter of fact, Stonehenge was already hoary with the rime of ages when the first Druid missionary set foot, with his tribesmen, on the soil of England; and the so-called Druidical monuments generally have no more to do with those very shadowy and half-mythical Celtic priests than they have to do with St. Augustine of Canterbury, or St. Thomas à Becket, or the Salvation Army.

Let us see, then, what is the real history of the Sarsen Stones, or Gray Wethers, as revealed first on the one hand by geology, and on the other hand by modern archæological research.

The first thing that strikes one whenever one examines a Gray Wether is the fact that it is very much weathered indeed. It is a hard lump or kernel of friable sandstone, worn away on every side by rain and wind; a mere relic or solid core of what was once a much larger and broader piece of sandstone. But the odd point is that these isolated blocks occur now in a country where there is no rock of any sort, save chalk, for miles and miles around in every direction. Why is this? Well, it is now pretty certain that once upon a time (a very safe date) a great sheet of just such friable sandstone overlay the whole of the English chalk downs. At that remote period, of course, they were therefore not chalk

downs at all, but sandy uplands of the same character as the pine-clad country round Bagshot and Woking, where the troops from Aldershot camp out in summer-time. In point of fact, this layer of sandstone, or rather several such layers, still cap the chalk in all the London basin; and by boring through them you come at last upon the underlying chalk, beneath several hundred feet thickness of superficial deposits. But on the higher uplands of Wilts and Berkshire the rain and streams have gradually worn away and removed piecemeal the whole of the eocene and other upper layers, cutting down the hills to the level of the chalk beneath, and leaving only a few of the very hardest and lumpiest kernels of the sandstone strewn loosely about on the surface of the downs. These kernels are the problematical Sarsen Stones. Some of them seem to be derived from one layer of tertiary deposits, and some from another; but they remain at the present day as solitary witnesses to the vast thickness of similar rock which has been slowly removed from the summit of the chalk downs by the rains and torrents of a million winters. They are but the last fragments of a wide-spread deposit which once covered the whole south of England with its barren sheet, and of which larger patches still remain among the wild heaths of Wilts or Surrey and the slopes of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Chalk country is always noticeable for three great wants,—the want of wood, the want of water, and the want of building-stone. Broken flints are the chief architectural material of the English downs, and they are employed impartially for walls and houses, church-towers and monastic buildings, throughout the whole of the fruitful chalk belt. Accordingly, from very early times, the utilitarian philosophy of bucolic man set him to work to utilize the Sarsen Stones for his own purposes. The stones serve to this day, wherever they occur, for walls and gate-posts, for farm-buildings and paving-stones; and, worse than all, these mystic relics of a remote antiquity are pounded up by the representatives of the late Mr. Macadam for the vulgar purpose of making road-metal. Hence it is not surprising that the number of Sarsen Stones to be found *in situ* where nature left them is year by year rapidly diminishing, and that in the course of time the last Gray Wether will disappear entirely from Wiltshire, save where accidental use in the formation of a prehistoric monument may happily save it from final destruction by the iconoclastic forces of the nineteenth century. Even that hallowing antiquity may not always preserve it from untimely desecration; for what earthly thing is sacred in the greedy eyes of the modern contractor and his myriad myrmidons? Not the tombstones of the dead, or the memorials of the past; not the Roman vallum, or the prehistoric fosse; not hoary antiquity, or natural beauty. Nothing but the almighty dollar, the

divine locomotive, vested interests, and a ten-per-cent. dividend. They would cheerfully chip up Henry the Seventh's chapel at Westminster as material for mending the street at Whitehall, or drive a permanent way with patent sleepers through the very centre of the inner circle at Stonehenge. They would regard the trilithons as a shocking waste of good building-stone, and they care less than nothing for any inner circles, save in the solitary instance of the Metropolitan and District railways.

But prehistoric man, like every dog, had once his day, and in his day the Sarsen Stones of Wiltshire appeared to him also, after his primitive fashion, an excellent building-stone for architectural purposes. Long, long ago, before England was yet even Britain, in the dim old days of the newer Stone Age, when short squat men of Finnish or Euskarian breed occupied the whole of what are now the British Isles, the utilization of the Gray Wethers first began for practical objects. "Let us exploit the Sarsen Stones," said primitive man, in his own language (probably agglutinative), and straightway he began to pile them up into dolmens and cromlechs, gigantic trilithons and prehistoric temples. And then it was, as modern archæology tends every day more and more fully to show, that the large circles of Stonehenge were first piled up on Salisbury Plain. There can be little doubt at the present day that Stonehenge is a tribal temple of some petty Wiltshire kingdom in the newer Stone Age, and that it antedates by several thousand years the arrival of the Celtic Aryan conquerors in the isle of Britain.

The really curious point about Stonehenge, however, is this,—that it does not all consist of Gray Wethers, though the biggest and most conspicuous of all the trilithons are composed of those huge local boulders. There are other stones in that ancient temple which came from some far more distant land,—stones the like of which certainly cannot be found within a hundred miles of Salisbury Plain, and some of which, in all probability, can only be matched on the continent of Europe. Stonehenge is undeniably not a native Wiltshire monument: it is probably not even British at all.

In order to understand this very strange and mysterious fact, we must look a little more closely at the composition of this great surviving specimen of Stone Age architecture.

The focus or real centre of the Stonehenge temple is the so-called altar-stone, which occupies precisely the same position in the primitive structure as the high altar occupies in most modern Roman Catholic cathedrals. But this very altar-stone, the great central fact around which all the rest of the ancient building clusters, is *not* a Gray Wether, nor a Wiltshire stone at all: it is an imported slab of felspathic hornstone, plentiful in some parts of Wales, about Carnarvonshire and Mont-

gomeryshire, but utterly unknown in southeastern England. Now, that is in itself a sufficiently strange and remarkable fact; but it becomes a thousand times more strange and remarkable if we remember that the slab was brought there, without any advanced mechanical appliances, by the Stone Age folk. To transport a big block of the sort from the very nearest point where it could possibly be obtained—namely, from North Wales—would tax even at the present day the resources of civilization as understood by the modern contractor and his myrmidons aforesaid. The mass would have to be carted from the quarry to Dolgelley Station, shunted at Ruabon, transferred from the Great Western to the South-Western at Didcot, transported to Salisbury, unloaded on to a truck, and then driven across country by a doubtful road on to the bare bosom of Salisbury Plain. And all that after Macadam and Stephenson have wreaked their worst upon the communications of the United Kingdom.

But when the half-naked Stone Age folk carried their sacred symbol to its home at Stonehenge, Great Britain must have been a very disunited kingdom indeed. Long ages after, when Cæsar first landed at Deal, for the distress of all subsequent generations of archæologists and school-boys, it was still divided among Icenians and Coritanians, Cati-euchlanians and Trinobants, and half a dozen more assorted unpronounceable Celtic tribes. Much more, then, in the dim recess of neolithic times must countless petty principalities, like those of South Africa or New Guinea in our own day, have occupied every shire of England, and every Riding in the county of York. If the altar-stone came from Wales, it must have been rolled, tumbled, wheeled, or dragged, over pathless mountains and through trackless plains, guiltless as yet of the wiles of the Macadam, all the way from Carnarvon or Llandeilo to its present position on Salisbury Plain. I do not myself believe, however, for a reason which I will presently state, that the altar-stone is British by origin at all. It came, no doubt, to Wiltshire from a far country, but that country did not lie in the direction of Wales: it lay rather to the extreme east. But, concerning this, more anon.

To add to the wonder, the smaller circles at Stonehenge are also intrusive and of foreign origin, their place of nativity having been as much debated among geological authorities as Homer's or St. Patrick's among the curious in such matters. One thing alone is certain: they are not English, but are naturalized aliens. According to older authorities, they are greenstone from Ireland; and that idea would fit in well with the tradition that the devil, or Merlin, or somebody else mysterious and unchristian, transported them hither from the Green Isle. But then I don't think we need attach much importance to the tradition in this respect, because Ireland, being the Isle of Saints, and the Isle of

Druids, and the magical, mystical country generally, was a good place to bring anything mysterious from, just as India and Egypt are at the present day to our own Blavatskys and spiritualists and theosophists. Professor Ramsay, on the other hand, without positively identifying the smaller circles with any British rock, observes that the blocks are of the same nature as the igneous masses in some parts of the Cambrian region in South Wales; and this would fit in pretty well with the theory of the Welsh origin of the altar-stone. But still later inquirers have suggested that the stones may have come from Belgium or some other part of the Continent, where they find rocks still more closely resembling the Stonehenge specimens than any purely British igneous masses. This suggestion appears to me, from the archæological point of view, far the most probable; and on the following grounds.

Whoever put up the altar-stone and the smaller circles at Stonehenge must certainly have brought them from a great distance. Now, people don't usually carry about large blocks of greenstone or felspar in their waistcoat-pockets, without a good reason,—especially if they don't wear waistcoats, and if the blocks are as big as a good-sized door-step. Hence, I think, we may conclude that the imported stones at Stonehenge were originally sacred,—in short, that they were the Lares and Penates of some intrusive conquering tribe, which carried them along with it, like pious Æneas, through all its wanderings. All over the world, upright slabs or menhirs form common objects of worship to savage or barbaric people: the poor heathen, as we were universally informed in the nursery, bow down in their blindness to stocks and stones. These stones are in the most literal sense mere blocks,—rude shapeless masses which it would be desecration to carve or cut with a knife, even if the unsophisticated savage happened to possess any proper knife wherewith to cut them. In India, to this day, our Aryan brother sets up just such unhewn stones in the centre of his agricultural holding, to represent the Five Brethren of the old Hindoo mythology. But, as a rule, I believe, the unhewn sacred stone is really a tombstone; it is the upright pillar or menhir, erected originally on top of a barrow, to mark the spot where a great chief or king has once been buried. Offerings are daily made at the stone by the grateful or terrified descendants, to appease the ancestral ghost; oil and wine (or whatever else the country affords of alcoholic stimulant) are dutifully poured over it; and all fitting respect is paid to the grave of the mighty dead by the obsequious survivors. In process of time, however, the object of the worship gets gradually forgotten; the ghost itself fades away, and it is the actual stone that comes to be regarded as sacred, not the tomb or barrow of which the pillar is but the outward and visible symbol.

As soon as the sanctity of the stone has got to be well and firmly established, it will follow that the tribe, on being forced to migrate elsewhere, will take these its household deities on the way with it. All migrating tribes, from pious Æneas and his Trojans downward, always carry their paternal gods in their own portmanteaus. And there are numerous cases on record where migrating tribes have actually thus carried in their train their sacred stones. The Scots carried theirs from Ireland to Argyllshire, and when Edward I. conquered them (*pro tem.*) he took it off in turn from Scone, and placed it in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey, where that remote relic of prehistoric paganism still figures in the midst of a Christianized ceremony. It seems probable, therefore, that in the same way the intrusive foreign stones of Stonehenge were brought to Wiltshire by some invading tribe as their own fetishes, much as the South Sea Islanders, going about in canoes from one little group of islets to another, carried with them their own sacred stones to serve as the nucleus of a national religion in the lands where winds or waves might drift them.

But why may not the newer Stone Age men who built Stonehenge have come to Wiltshire from Wales or Ireland? Simply because the chances are against it: in Britain, at least, the wave of conquest has always gone in the opposite direction. Westward the tide of empire takes its way. The conquerors, like the wise men, come always from the East. It is as improbable that the Stonehenge folk came from Carnarvon or from Wicklow to Wiltshire, as that the founders of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston came from Chicago, St. Louis, or San Francisco to the Atlantic seaboard. The possessor of the plains of England and the lowlands of Scotland has often conquered the Welshman, the Highlander, and the Irishman, but he has never once been conquered by the mountaineers in return.

Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief,
Taffy came to my house and stole a leg of beef;

but Taffy never dreamt of attempting to overrun the shires of the Midland and the pastures of the south. When Tougal descended on the lowlands, his utmost exploit was to "drive ta cattle," as in the familiar instance of the immortal Fhairshon. On the other hand, the possessors of the English plain have often been conquered and driven back or subdued: first the Euskarian by the Celt, then the Celt by the Roman, then the Romanized Briton in turn by the Saxon, then the Saxon once more by his still heathen brother the stalwart Dane, or his half-Christianized and Frenchified cousin the Norman; but in every case the conquering people came, without one exception, from the continent of

Europe. Never once in Britain has the man of the mountains beaten the man of the plains: he takes his tardy revenge by charging the intrusive Saxon in the pass of Llanberis or the strategic defile of Killiecrankie alone. If you fail to catch the point of this last remark, you are recommended to go there and see, when its hidden meaning will become immediately apparent to the meanest understanding.

Since, then, most conquering people come to Britain from the continent of Europe, since such people are apt in early stages of culture to carry with them, in the rough, their country's gods, and since rocks capable of producing the raw material of the particular deities now in question are better found on the Continent than in Britain, I think we may conclude with great probability that the builders of Stonehenge came to Wiltshire from somewhere southeastward,—especially as a broad belt of land at that time still connected the opposite shores of Dover and Calais and rendered the proposals for a Channel tunnel at once premature and practically unnecessary. I don't doubt that for the Stone Age men it was a mere walk-over, and that they carried weight in the shape of the altar-stone and the smaller pillars.

When they got to Salisbury Plain, I take it, they called a halt, and began to set up afresh the standing stones they had carried with them on their long journey. Under the altar-stone, perhaps, the actual Æneas of the Stone Age colonists, flying from some early prehistoric Agamemnon, was duly buried at last by his own people. Certainly some interment or other took place upon the spot, for when an iconoclastic lord of the manor, in the days of the Stuarts, went digging among the hoar stones in search of treasure,—vulgar-minded wretch,—he was rewarded only by the discovery of a few old bones, stags' horns, bullocks' heads, and other wonted memorials of a primitive neolithic funeral feast. Having set up their fetish stones in due order, however, the pious immigrants determined to add to the dignity and glory of their national temple by piling up around it a circle of the tallest and biggest Gray Wethers that all Wiltshire could readily produce. These Gray Wethers they dressed roughly with their polished flint axes into rudely quadrangular shape, piled them up by two and two, and then lifted by main force a third on top, so as to form the familiar shape of the existing trilithons. Thus it is the smaller stones of Stonehenge that form the really most ancient and important part of the whole erection. The other portion of that great prehistoric temple, the huge trilithons that astonish us still, even in this age of advanced engineering, by their bulk and massiveness, have grown up around the lesser and more sacred obelisks, much as the magnificent church of Our Lady of Loretto has grown up about the Casa Santa of Nazareth, which was miraculously

transported through the air from Palestine, like Stonehenge from Ireland by the arts of Merlin.

It is probable that the greater part of the biggest Sarsen stones were employed at one time for just such purposes as at Stonehenge,—dolmens, cromlechs, chambered barrows, and so forth,—and thus they got to be mentally identified by the rustic intelligence, not, it is true, with Druids (for the Druidical nonsense, like Arkite worship and all the rest of it, is a pure invention of the “learned” or pedantic classes), but with some old forgotten heathen worship. Hence they were commonly spoken of as Saracen stones; and the name was justified by the common belief that the architects of Stonehenge, in carting the great blocks to their present position, had tumbled some of them about on the downs. Within the memory of men still living, a fair was held at one such prehistoric monument, and was opened by solemnly pouring a bottle of port over the sacred fetish of a race long since passed away from among us. Could anything prove more conclusively the persistence of custom in an old settled and very mixed population? Celt and Roman and Saxon and Norman have since come, and many of them gone again; but the heathen rites offered up at the grave of some dimly-remembered Euskarian chieftain survived through them all up to the very beginning of this enlightened nineteenth century.

Grant Allen.

LOVE IS DEAD.

I HEARD one cry out strongly, “Love is dead!”
 And then we went and looked upon his face,
 Turned into marble by Death’s final grace:
 His silent lips, that once so vainly pled,
 Smile now, as men smile being newly wed,
 Since some strange joy Life’s sorrows did efface
 When Death’s arms clasped him in supreme embrace,
 All his long pain of living comforted.
 And you would wake him? Dare you him recall
 From Death’s enamouring to Life’s stern pain,
 Make him again the old grief’s hopeless thrall,
 Bind him once more with the old clanking chain,
 And goad him on his weary way again?
 Nay! let him rest with Death, the Lord of all.

Louise Chandler Moulton.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

THE announcement that Mr. Howells is about to remove to New York has renewed the old controversy as to the future literary capital of the United States. In any discussion of this question it would be best to begin by a definition of the term "literary capital." What is a literary capital? Is the expression to be taken as meaning merely the chief centre of literary activity? or does it imply that there shall be only one focus of literature, into which all others shall be absorbed and concentrated? In France, for example, we see complete literary centralization: nearly every French man of letters is a Parisian. If we except the little group of neo-Provençal poets, Mistral and his fellow-*félibres*, there is no sign of literary movement anywhere in France outside of Paris. Writers of Southern birth and of Southern instincts, M. Alphonse Daudet, for one, and M. Emile Zola, for another, have had to migrate to Paris to make themselves known, and, with all their love for the Southern scenery and for the Southern character, they write *Romans Parisiens*; and if they finally break loose from the bondage of the capital, they have felt its fascination too forcibly ever to forget it or to release themselves wholly from its fetters. The apostrophes and dithyrambic rhapsodies of men like Michelet and Victor Hugo show how strong a hold the city by the Seine has taken on the imagination of the French. In literature, Paris is France: it may be asserted fearlessly that ninety-nine per cent. of the French books known to the world at large come from the capital. In the department of literature in which the French have been supreme for now two generations at least, the Drama, there is almost absolutely no life elsewhere than in Paris. Nearly all the theatres in the smaller towns are giving up their stock companies and relying for their performances on the travelling combinations sent out from the capital. And the playwrights reside where the theatres are most active, for business reasons, if for no other. Mr. Stedman has recently reminded us that the dramatist is of necessity urban, for he must live in the thick of existence, seeing many men of many minds. M. Augier dwells in the outskirts of the capital, M. Dumas goes in the summer to Puy, and M. Sardou tries to spend the winter at Nice; but in their way of looking at life they are all Parisians. Space fails here to consider the injurious effects of this domination of one city. It needs only a cursory knowledge of the French novels and French plays of our time to see that the disadvantages of this excessive Parisianizing of French literature are many and various.

In England, the supremacy of London is not so overwhelming. Most English books are published in London, but Edinburgh is a good second, and while many English authors reside in or near London, as many, if not more, are scattered through the island, clustering around the two great universities or scattered here and there in the lovely nooks of rural England. No writer of fiction publishes "London novels" in any way equivalent in aim and intent to the *Romans Parisiens* of the French. And, the drama being a far less important part of English literature than it is of French, the massing together in the capital of those who write for the stage is less significant than the similar movement in France. In Ger-

many, ever since the consolidation of the Empire, Berlin has been increasing its activity as the head-quarters of literature, but Leipsic is still the centre of the book-trade, Vienna is a powerful rival, and many of the smaller cities, once capitals of sovereign states, retain some share of their literary independence. The tendency towards centralization at Berlin is probably too strong to be resisted for long; but it may be doubted whether it will ever result in as complete a suppression of literary endeavor in the smaller cities of Germany as we see in the smaller cities of France. The local universities, with their world-wide reputation, would in some measure tend to counteract the increasing centripetal force of the capital.

With certain marked differences, the situation in America is not unlike that in Germany. The federal system, having been tried and found wanting in Germany, is there discredited and enfeebled, while in the United States it has stood a severe strain and is to-day stronger than ever. In Germany the central authority is daily growing in power, but in America the principle of local self-government is too deeply rooted in the habits of the people to be overborne for long. Our double system of courts, State and federal, is also a great barrier to centralization. In England all the great lawyers must live in or near London, where the chief courts are held; but in America every State has its own bar, with a pride and a dignity of its own. Law is one of the great feeders of literature. The separate jurisdiction and the individual jurisprudence of the Scotch courts are in part the cause of the prolonged life of Edinburgh as a literary capital. There are forty State capitals in the United States, each with its bar, and no one of these is of necessity second to any other. Vermont is a small State; but while Mr. Edmunds and Mr. Phelps are at the head of its bar the State can stand in no position of inferiority. The federal system of equal States is the greatest bulwark against the centralizing movement, which seems at times almost irresistible. The separation of the political capital of the United States from the commercial metropolis has also had its influence. And a third factor, perhaps as powerful as either of the others, is the existence throughout these States of a countless throng of colleges, self-styled universities, institutions of learning of one kind or another, and of more or less importance, but at any one of which the literary man may earn his bread while he relies on authorship for his butter. Upon the vexed question of the multitudinous and ambitious fresh-water college, with its full faculty of five Professors and its President who is also a clergyman as well as Lecturer on Mental and Moral Philosophy, there is much to be said both *pro* and *con*. In so far as it is a pretentious sham, turning out students who have not studied anything thoroughly, and raising smattering to the level of a fine art, a college of this sort is an unmitigated nuisance. But there is another side to the shield, and the immature "university" of the county town, though it be but little more than a high school, is, in its way, a tiny centre of light and learning. Doubtless it was to these little knots of men leading the intellectual life that Mr. Matthew Arnold's critic referred when he asserted that there were hundreds of towns in the United States where there were social circles with both intellectual aspirations and accomplishments.

These are all reasons why there will never be any absolute centralization of the literary forces of the United States in one city, as the literary forces of France are centred in Paris, or even as the literary forces of England are centred in London. In considering which of the cities of the Union is to be the future literary capital of the United States, we have to determine only which

of them is likely in the future to be the chief,—*primus inter pares*, as the United States are *e pluribus unum*. That New York, which is not the political capital, although it is the chief city of the Union in point of power and population, is now the centre of literary activity, can hardly be gainsaid by its greatest enemy,—if it has one. More than half of the solidly-established publishing houses are permanently fixed in New York. Nearly all the weekly papers of any weight, and all the foremost monthly magazines, with two or three exceptions only, are issued from New York. The author is apt to reside near the market where he can vend his wares to best advantage; and there are now more literary men living in or around New York than in or near any other city in America. New York has a more cosmopolitan feeling than any other city in the Union, and less local pride. The New Yorker is a citizen of the world in a degree that the Bostonian, for instance, cannot understand. There are abundant evidences of a growth of the literary spirit in New York. Within a few years there has been a ripening and expansion of Columbia College; there has been an increase in the number of New York libraries, public and private; there has been a more cordial co-operation of the literary men of the metropolis, evidenced, for instance, by the founding of the Authors Club and by the organization of the American Copyright League. These signs can be seen only in New York. The literary supremacy of Boston, once unquestionable, is now fast becoming a tradition only. The younger generation of American authors seem to hold that Boston is a good place to hail from, so they make haste to emigrate. Washington, as the capital of the country and as the head-quarters of the scientific and literary departments of the government, is the only city which seems to be gaining ground; and, without commerce and manufactures, it is scarcely probable that Washington will ever be in a position seriously to contest with New York the right to be called the literary capital of the United States.

WHEN the enticing strains of "Patience" were ringing in all our ears, there was one line which, in ignorance of the famous London tailors, had for some of us a peculiar meaning:

"A Howells and James young man."

But in that this youth was the symbol of the commonplace, every-day, realistic hero, he might have stood equally well as the creation of our native firm. Not that the firm can be said to glory in him: it is on his pretty sister that they have wreaked themselves in analysis and description; it is as truthful artists of the American young woman that they are praised in the gates. To be more exact, the first member of the firm gets most of the praise, Daisy Miller having given his countrywomen a prejudice against Mr. James. Yet in some respects he gives us broader portraits than Mr. Howells,—women who have interests outside of themselves and their own heart-analysis. Charlotte Evans, Mary Garland, Isabel Archer, are all indicated as at once clever and charming,—not a crude cleverness, but rather that which comes from a habit of knowing. But Mr. James deals in the young American as influenced by Old-World surroundings, while Howells prefers the pure native article, and, if he sends his heroine to Europe, takes care that she shall see and learn no more than if she had stayed at home.

Let us see, then, how Mr. Howells, keen observer, truthful reporter, as he is ranked, paints the American woman. Up to the present time we have seven

novels, three novelettes, and a number of short stories and parlor plays. We have thus an aggregate of a dozen heroines and rather more friends and relations. His world is not large; they are nearly all of New England. There are no bad women among them, or rather they all mean to be good, though their goodness is of rather a negative type and narrowness and prejudice sometimes cause strange lapses. But, taken as a whole, what idea of our women does one get from his works? All his heroines are beautiful, affectionate, and almost morbidly conscientious; but they are idle, inconsequent, and more or less jealous, incapable of earning a living, incapable of philanthropy, incapable of hard thinking or decided action. That, despite these faults, he interests us in them is a high tribute to his art; but their counterparts in real life would excite little sympathy. If it be said that he is only a reporter, a photographer of what he sees about him, we may excuse his shortcomings, but at the expense of his art.

As a photographer, he has indeed caught all our tricks and our manners, our way of sweeping up a train, of dropping scissors, of draping a skirt with a mouth full of pins, of flouncing a mantel or trimming a mirror. But all this has nothing to do with character, and the realistic touch it gives his work is its only value. With all his study of women's ways, does he know much of them? Let us consider his heroines, and see if the list of adjectives given above is justified.

Of them all, Marcia, of "A Modern Instance," is most unsatisfactory,—a spoiled and wilful girl who develops into a hard, jealous, unforgiving woman. So unlovely is she that one can hardly be properly sorry for her miseries. She has beauty, indeed, but beauty uninformed by intelligence and untouched by sweetness. Her mother is a nonentity; but mothers count for little in Mr. Howells's novels: most of his heroines have none at all, and are to be congratulated on the lack, when compared to the few who have. Florida Vervain has more heart than Marcia, but she, too, is bad-tempered. The Lady of the Aroostook is a crude, ignorant girl, and, placed in an awkward situation, has not native wit enough to see it. She has beauty, like all the rest, but the judgment passed on her by Mrs. Dunham in the conclusion, though apparently meant to indicate the time-worn tradition of feminine spite, seems very near the mark. "She was good, I suppose," her critic says. "She was very stiff, and she hadn't a word to say for herself. I think she was cold. To be sure, she was a beauty; but we all know what becomes of beauty after marriage."

Lily Mayhew, of "A Fearful Responsibility," is a type often found, always described as "such a nice girl," with the implication that there is not much beyond the niceness. She and Lydia Blood both go to Venice, but they might as well have stayed in Patmos, for all the effect the strange new world has on them. They have apparently neither eyes to see nor minds to feel the beauty around them, and Mrs. Elmore even makes it a reproach to her husband that he expects Lily to be interested in art or history.

In Helen Harkness Mr. Howells had an excellent chance to show us the courage and persistence of the heiress suddenly forced to earn her living; but he did nothing of the kind. There is a fine irony in the suggestion that the best education the best people in Boston can give their daughters is of no practical service, and the story of Helen's experiments is a faithful picture of many a woman's trials. But it is a pity that at the last she should "escape into marriage" as a refuge from her own failure. She might have achieved something had her creator chosen; but among the seventy-five thousand women in his State whom the census makes self-supporting, a proportion brilliantly successful, Mr. Howells

could find no one, at once sweet and strong, for a heroine. One resents, too, the implication that it is because Helen is a lady, sensitive and refined, that she fails. He is kinder to her, however, than to Dr. Breen, whose practice is a mockery, and who is not even allowed to place her failure where it belonged, on individual deficiencies. "You would not fail individually," Dr. Mulbridge says. "You would fail because you are a woman." When she repeats, "The fault is in me, individually," he answers, laughing, "I don't agree with you. Why should you wish to spare your sex at your own expense?" A distinguished French review, in noticing this novel, said that apparently in New England the prejudice against lady physicians was greater than in France. "No one in Paris, certainly, would consider them a public scandal because they are studying medicine." Few do in America, outside of Mr. Howells's novels. Summing up the case against professional and working women, he makes Cornelia Root say, "I don't know whether I want to join in any cry that'll take women's minds off of gettin' married. It's the best thing for 'em, and it's about all they're fit for, most of 'em."

He does not, apparently, approve of talent in a woman. He makes one of the characters of "Private Theatricals" say, "Talent is a trouble and vexation even to men, but to women it is nothing but misery." In Rachel he hints genius, but she is left to wrap it in a napkin, and it mars her womanly charm. "We do find genius indigestible—in a woman," one of the heroes says. As if it were not equally indigestible to the commonplace majority in a man! Mrs. Gilbert, in the same story, is represented as a woman of sense and judgment, at once wise and kind, and this is the sentence she passes on Rachel: "She would be so much happier if she had no talent. If some one could only marry her, and put her out of her misery in that way!" "I'm sorry you think so meanly of women," her nephew says. To which she rejoins, "I take my cue from Nature: she never loses an occasion to show her contempt for us." And again she utters the trite sentiment, which is at best but a half-truth, "A man can have no idea how very little women think of each other." It would not be far wrong to say that one may judge a woman's own nobleness and breadth by the judgment she passes on her sisters. If she is narrow, petty, frivolous, she thinks them so.

But there is one type of which Mr. Howells is very fond, to judge by its continual reappearance,—the type which a vigorous Western phrase describes as "the woman with seven different varieties of a fool in her." Sometimes she is young, sometimes old, but age brings only a more unceasing flow of nonsense from her lips. We made her acquaintance first in "A Chance Acquaintance" as Mrs. Ellison; in "A Foregone Conclusion" the hero describes her—this time she is the heroine's mother—as "a combination of perfect fool and perfect lady," and she plaintively says of herself, "I don't seem to have the strength to be sensible." Then came Mrs. Elmore, alternately throwing the Fearful Responsibility on her husband and reproaching him for taking it. Mrs. Maynard, of "Dr. Breen's Practice," is even more trying, and one finds few worse things in his stories than the judgment she passes on Grace, and her partial acceptance of it. "You defy public opinion by being a doctor," she says. "There isn't one of these women who doesn't think you more scandalous than"—a wife seeking a divorce, as Mrs. Maynard is. Clara Kingsbury, whose mind "resembled the top drawer of a lady's bureau," is a pleasanter variation of the same type, and feminine philanthropy is made ridiculous in her. Mrs. Erwin, of Aroostook fame, is another; so is Mrs. Roberts, of "The Sleeping-Car," "The Elevator," and "The Garroters." They are all married, and the husbands never lose patience with

their in consequence. But they do not seem to understand that they have married fools, or rather fool and woman seem synonymous terms to them, for Mr. Howells hints that the folly of the women is in some mysterious way bound up by nature with their feminine organization.

But, wise or foolish, his women are always adored by lovers and husbands, and he would have us believe that to these latter they are helpmeets indeed. The wives lightly sketched in "Private Theatricals" and "Dr. Breen's Practice" are, indeed, rich chiefly in headaches and nervous troubles, and their world does not seem much wider than that of an Oriental. One has heard of New England women as clever, bookish, given to the Associated Charities and with interests outside of themselves; but none of these frequent Mr. Howells's summer resorts. There is, indeed, one with an outside interest,—cat-tails; and, having made a successful study of them, she is by its sale "confirmed in her belief that wifedom was no more the whole of womanhood than husbandhood of manhood, and that to expect her to keep house would be the same as asking every man to make his own clothes." But, as a whole, with their idleness, their in consequence, their morbid sensibilities, and their sudden jealousy, they would seem anything but helps. Mrs. Lapham is of a different type; but she is not much more satisfactory. She represents the ordinary, commonplace woman, bound up in husband and children, and good as far as she knows. Her husband proudly says that she has "made" him, that she has been of invaluable assistance to him by her faith and energy. The conferences and even the petty quarrels between the two are singularly life-like; but it cannot be said that she commends herself by judgment or common sense. Intuitions are supposed to count for something in women; but Mrs. Lapham's business intuitions are all wrong. She does not know a rascal when she sees him; she cannot endure that her husband should treat a rogue as he deserves. Her crude notions of justice and right-doing put her, not with her husband, but apparently on the side of the man who is trying to cheat him and tempt him to a dishonorable act. Her overstrained conscientiousness is the first factor in her husband's failure, and the mocking lesson would seem to be, "Don't take your wife's judgment in business matters." Worse than this, her faith in the Paint does not extend to her husband. After thirty years of wedded life, after perfect knowledge of his disposition and habits, she falls into mad and unreasoning jealousy on the strength of a business memorandum which he declines to explain, and an anonymous note. Jealousy transforms her, and just when he most needs her help and sympathy she is upbraiding him with sins he never dreamed of. There is no previous intimation that she was of a jealous disposition, and the outbreak is incredible. It may be true to some special case which has fallen under the author's observation; but how often have we heard the dictum of fiction that a thing must not only be true but probable! Mrs. Lapham's jealousy is not probable: its only use in the story is to heap more misery on the husband, and to fling at all faithful, simple wives the imputation of like folly.

In sum, Mr. Howells gives us not truth but a half-truth; and the pity is the greater because all mankind are prone to take the half for the whole. He brings out woman's faults and weaknesses; he ignores her virtues—except a general ineffective goodness—and her strength. He has all the outside, but there is little or no soul within. If Realism be only the art of the photographer, its value is not great: in the hands of a true artist it should give us spirit as well as flesh.

It is nearly twenty years since the *Nation* published an article showing "Why our Railways are not Luxurious,"—why it was that the well-to-do American, who required that the house in which he dwelt, the carriage which took him to the station, the inn at which he stopped,—even, after a fashion, the steam-boats on which a part of his journey was made,—should be provided with all known and many elsewhere unknown comforts, was content with a railway conveyance which not only excluded privacy and invited danger, but which was uncomfortable (except for short journeys in fine weather) to a degree which made the third-class of Europe luxurious in comparison. Since that date empires have risen and have ceased to exist, but no revolution has been greater than that in railway travel in this country.

Twenty, or even fifteen, years ago, sleeping-cars were still in the embryo state, and were used on few lines and by few people. The best day-cars were substantially the same as now, though with smaller windows, lower roof (and, consequently, worse ventilation), and far more dangerous stoves. But the most important difference, as regards the comfort of the passenger, is the new coupling and brake system, which obviates the terrific jar which at every start and stop left the weary traveller's nerves on edge. The theory that only one class was known in America was then, as now, a fiction, though it would have been correct to say that the public had no choice as between classes. The cars which the companies used on their express-trains and called "first-class" deserved the name, both because there were no better ones and because there was then a second as there is now an (unacknowledged) third class, consisting of the cars whose paint has become too shabby and springs too weak for the express-trains, and which are given another lease of life as good enough for way and suburban traffic.

As to speed, through and fast trains were almost unknown. With rare exceptions, railways had been built by small companies to cover small areas, and the process of consolidation and lease, by which such important results have been achieved, had hardly begun. As a rule, the traveller had to change cars where each local road ended, and had either to change or submit to the delay involved in ferriage wherever a considerable river had to be passed.

When we take an external, as opposed to the internal, view of railway improvement, the changes, though less essential to the traveller's comfort, are more conspicuous, and far more important to the public good. At that date, railways either stopped at the outskirts of a city or passed across its streets at grade, without further protection to the passer-by than was afforded by an often invisible flagman, finally to land the passenger in a small brick barn or wretched shed, with small, stuffy waiting-rooms, a fruit-stand in place of a restaurant, and no substitute whatever for the hand-luggage dépôt or barber's shop of to-day.

In view of the enormous number of changes which have taken place in our railway system, it is a remarkable fact that so small a proportion of them are due to European example. We are still far behind Europe in many particulars, notably in the absence of union stations in cities, and in the want of facilities for the prevention of accidents on country crossings. In fact, so far as we know, flagmen are not frequently seen at rural cross-roads in any State except New Hampshire. But where devices similar to those in use abroad have been adopted, they have generally been a re-invention and an improvement, while many of our conveniences have been, on the Continent, directly imitated. Thus, our check system was long since introduced into Germany, but with this differ-

ence, that in place of duplicate pieces of brass, a large assortment of which must be expensive and very cumbersome, German officials have books, each page of which consists of three connected blank forms, on one of which a record is kept, while the other two are torn off, one to be pasted on the article checked, the other being kept as a receipt by the owner. A combination of the two systems is coming into use in this country, having been adopted by the Pennsylvania system. Instead of a great variety of differently-stamped pieces of metal, this road uses a uniform brass holder, the destination of the luggage and the route over which it is to pass being written on a narrow piece of pasteboard which is inserted in the holder. On the other hand, our sleeping-cars, while far more expensive if not more tasteful in their fittings, are essentially the same as at first, while the European sleeping-cars far exceed them in privacy, ventilation, and convenience. A kind of night-car which was common a few years since, but which has meantime disappeared, had many advantages—especially that of good air—over “sleeping-cars.” This was the adjustable-chair car, in which one could sleep with great comfort, and the charge for which was only half that for a “berth.” The last fact probably accounts for its disappearance, as also for that of the head-rest attachment to seats in common cars on night-trains, it being, apparently, in the interest of the companies to make the passage outside of the sleeping-cars as uncomfortable as possible. For a car in which to travel both day and night, nothing we have equals the second-class cars in use on through-trains on the railways in which the Prussian government is interested. These cars are entered at one end (not at both ends, like ours), and access to each compartment is afforded by a narrow passage at the side, the whole being heated with steam and lighted with gas. Why our best cars, both day- and night-, still depend upon oil-illumination (?) we have been unable to discover. But, while second-class abroad is more comfortable than second-class here, we doubt if anything will exceed the neatness and convenience of the newer Pullman day-cars, with their facilities for luncheon, oblique windows, and cinder-excluding screens, combined with the conveniences which our “parlor”-cars have always possessed. It is worthy of mention, also, that the over-ornamentation, destitute alike of originality and of taste, has given place to simplicity and at least negative tastefulness.

DOES college graduation tend to aid a business-man in earning his livelihood? I very much doubt it. A trained intellect is a fine tool. But we know that in many mechanical operations the very fineness of an implement is a bar to its usefulness. It either cannot do coarse work, or it does it imperfectly, and to the injury of the material on which it operates, as well as with almost certain damage to itself. Every-day experience tells us that the analogy holds in the ordinary business of commercial life. There are a thousand contingencies in the store, the warehouse, the shop, and the counting-room, wherein the average cultured mind finds itself out of place. Too generally it regards the work as beneath it, and, therefore, humiliating; almost uniformly it finds it commonplace and uninteresting, often positively irksome and distasteful, or absolutely painful. The result is discontent with—not rarely contempt for—the position in which it is placed. “O quam miserrimum olim fuisse beatum!” was the pathetic cry wrung from the desolate heart of Coleridge when serving as a private in a British regiment of dragoons. It would be vain to look for anything but a perfunctory and unsatisfactory discharge of duty from any one

who regards in this spirit the work he has to do. Coleridge never rose out of the awkward squad. The man of culture whom the humdrum drudgery of everyday commercial life affects similarly is certain to continue in a corresponding lowly position.

The men who succeed in any branch of business constitute a very small proportion of those who embark in it. Almost as I write I come on the following item in a daily paper. Of a thousand medical students who graduated from an English institution fifteen years ago, twenty-three have achieved distinguished success and sixty-six considerable success; the remainder are struggling for a bare livelihood, have failed, left the profession, or died. Other professions and occupations would tell substantially the same tale. Commerce forms no exception. Even in the case of employes in our large houses or corporations, it is a fact familiar enough to business-men, but not generally appreciated perhaps by outsiders, that the men in receipt of one thousand dollars a year or over form a very small percentage of the whole staff. When competition is so intense and the prizes so few, it is easy to infer that the man handicapped in any way stands a poor chance of forging to the front. In point of fact, the great majority of those who attain even this comparative degree of success have entered their house as boys, have grown up in it and identified themselves with it. It is their world; it satisfies their mental appetencies and aspirations, and gives scope for all their energies. They are, therefore, abundantly contented in it, and the deft and nimble execution of its most mechanical details is matter of pride to them. They are parts of a machine. Is it to be expected that the average college graduate could compete on fair terms with such men? Nor must the fact be overlooked that, irrespective of special qualifications, mere length of service is an important factor in promotion. Here, too, our student is at a disadvantage. While he was cultivating his tastes and forming his habits in the groves of Yale and Harvard, his less cultured rivals were putting four good years to their credit.

It is much the same in other walks of non-professional life. The men who attain the highest positions in the executive departments of our railroads are not college graduates. The same holds in the various departments of government. Few chiefs of division or heads of bureaus who have worked themselves up without political influence are college-bred. They are, for the most part, practical business-men.

Why, then, it may be asked, do so many business-men give their sons a college education? Largely, it may be, because such persons attach an exaggerated importance to any branch of knowledge or learning in which they feel themselves deficient; and, more legitimately, because they have learned by experience that a certain degree of culture is necessary to enable a man to move comfortably in the social sphere to which they have attained. It must be borne in mind also that the sons of such men have not to commence their business life at the bottom of the difficult ladder, but are at once placed on the higher steps and have all advantages in climbing. And yet, withal, it would be curious matter for inquiry to determine what proportion of those youths born with the silver spoon in their mouths better or maintain their fathers' position.

NOTE.—*The next number of Lippincott's Monthly Magazine will contain an article on Civil Service Reform from the Reformer's point of view. The two serials will develop fresh features of interest, and there will be stories, sketches, and poems by J. S. of Dale, Helen Gray Cone, etc.*

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY, 1886.

TAKEN BY SIEGE.

CHAPTER III.

RUSH HURLSTONE was not the only young man in New York in love with Helen Knowlton. There was scarcely a man in the city who was not in the same condition. I cannot say that all were as hard hit as our young friend, but several of them thought they were,—which amounted to the same thing for the time being. This is not to be wondered at, either. Helen Knowlton was a woman of remarkable attractions. Aside from her gifts as a singer (and she was now at the zenith of her powers), she was a clever woman, a student of books and of men, and with sentiment enough to enable her to interpret poetic characters most successfully. While not, perhaps, what would be called a beauty, she was strikingly handsome. According to classic ideas, her features were not perfect; yet one seldom sees finer eyes or a straighter nose, or a handsomer mouth than hers when she was talking or laughing. Some people thought her mouth too large, but Rush never liked a small mouth in man or woman: a large mouth with glistening teeth always attracted him. Her eyes were brown, with jet-black lashes and brows, the former so thick and long that when he looked into her eyes he thought of fire burning its way through shrubbery. Her hair was brown, and grew in waving lines around her brow, and the line that marked its growth at the back of her neck was as clearly defined as though it had been drawn with a pencil. This may seem a small matter to speak of, but it is a great beauty in a woman. Her figure was exceedingly well proportioned, and she dressed with the most exquisite taste. With all these physical attractions, she had an un-

usually bright mind. She was constantly adding to her store of knowledge, and what she knew she knew thoroughly. If she had not been a prima donna, she would have distinguished herself in some other walk in life. As to her character, it was peculiar. When Rush came to know her intimately, he told her she was the most singular combination of baby and woman he had ever met ; and so she was. She lived in the world, but she was not a woman of the world. She could not say one thing and mean another, and her friends used to tell her that was an accomplishment a prima donna, of all persons, should possess. She was credulous, yet suspicious ; she was practical to a fault, yet sentimental ; she seemed cold in her nature, yet she unconsciously hungered for love. She made friends easily, and took no pains to keep them, yet somehow or other they stuck by her. She was at this time just a little spoiled, —and with reason. The town was at her feet. There wasn't a man, woman, or child who would not have been proud to do her a favor. Ladies vied with one another in entertaining her at their houses, young men fought for an introduction, and old men toasted her at the clubs. I believe that if she had chosen to have Union Club men pull her carriage instead of horses they would have humored her whim. Everything new that came out in the way of bric-à-brac, jewelry, or books was sent to her on the instant by some known or unknown admirer. Artists painted her in their pictures, and poets lauded her in their lyrics. She had had so much of this adoration that she took it almost as a thing of course ; yet she was pleased by every new attention, and never tired even of the flowers that were showered upon her. Guarded like a hot-house plant herself, the breath of scandal had never blown towards her. You could not look at her and believe that she was otherwise than pure, and the veriest old *roué* would have found himself awed by her innocence. Yet she was no prude. She was fond of the society of men, and enjoyed a good time as much as any one, but she was possessed by a very strong idea of what a woman should and should not do. Her position made it necessary for her to be particularly careful, and, although she was twenty-five years old, she had never entertained a man alone in a room in her life. Foreigners, with their ideas of women on the stage, could not understand her, but none the less they joined with her countrymen in burning incense to her.

Helen Knowlton's parents had died when she was a baby, leaving her in charge of an aunt, Miss Rebecca Sandford, her mother's sister, who was known to half of Helen's friends and the whole musical profession as Aunt Rebecca. This good lady was a dragon of virtue. She looked upon her niece as a child, and treated her as such ; and, as it was

kindly treatment, it had the effect of keeping her young,—so that at twenty-five she was as fresh and youthful in her ideas as most girls of eighteen. Aunt Rebecca never let “that child” know any of the business details of her profession. The good lady stood between her niece and the managers. She read the contracts; Helen signed them. It was a shrewd manager who could get the better of her in a bargain, and the managers knew it, and respected her cleverness. There were, naturally, a great many visitors to the little Gothic cottage in West Twentieth Street where the prima donna made her home; but they all had to pass the eye of Aunt Rebecca before they could see her niece, and even then the matron seated herself in the room, let the visitor be man, woman, or child, and never left till he or she had gone. She did not always take part in the conversation, but would often busy herself with a French novel (Aunt Rebecca was very partial to Georges Sand) and let the young people talk of their own affairs. It must be confessed that she rather overdid the guardianship at times; but if any very intimate friend suggested this, she would say, “I don’t want to give wagging tongues a chance. If any gossiping creature says such and such a thing occurred at such a time, I can reply, ‘My friend, you lie, for I was there.’” Aunt Rebecca used sharp language at times; but, as she said, “What is the use of beating around the bush? You might as well eat the devil as drink his broth.”

Never having known anything different, Helen was well satisfied with her aunt’s guardianship, and never questioned it. Sometimes she would say to her young friends, as they started for a walk in Fifth Avenue, “I envy you your freedom to come and go as you please, but I suppose while I am a public singer I must accept the situation and give up the usual amusements of young women of my age.” So she would go back to her room and superintend the making of a costume with so much interest that she would forget all about the ordinary pleasures of life, and be wholly wrapped up in the dry details of her profession. She studied hard every day, and exercised and ate as carefully as an oarsman in training for a race. Properly speaking, she had never had any childhood, as she had begun her studies when very young and had been singing since she was in her teens. She liked the life of a singer and she didn’t like it. The act of singing was itself a pleasure, and there was nothing in the world so exciting to her as a large and enthusiastic audience. “If an audience only knew how much better music it gets from an artist when it gives her something in return,” she used to say, “I think it would always show a sympathetic spirit.” She had little to complain of on the score of coldness in her audiences. In New York she was always treated as though she were the particular

favorite of every auditor, and the applause when she came upon the stage only ceased when she began to sing.

It is not surprising that a woman of this sort should have had many admirers. It was said in society that she could marry any man she wanted,—that they all would only be too happy to bestow their hands and fortunes upon her, from Uncle Lightfoot Myers to that much-courted young man, Mr. West Hastings. Aunt Rebecca smiled at the attentions of Uncle Lightfoot, but she was more severe upon West Hastings, though the latter was of a suitable age, had an income of eighty thousand dollars a year, and was considered a most desirable *parti* altogether. He was looked upon as a confirmed bachelor until he met Helen Knowlton, to whom he began paying devoted attentions very early in their acquaintance. Hastings was a man of the world, a member of half a dozen clubs, and lived more like a European than do most Americans. He had inherited his money, and had never done a day's work in his life, which was so much the worse for him; but he was not so good-for-nothing as are many of his countrymen similarly gifted by fortune. It was said that he patronized the ballet in the persons of its *premières*; but, however this may be, you could never find a woman in society who would believe it, for there was nothing in his manner to betoken that he was not a man of the most exquisite refinement. If it had been Livingston Dash, or Charlie Vernon, or any one of half a dozen other well-known club-men, who had been so accused, the accusation might have been believed. When Archie Tillinghast told his cousin Bessie Archer that he had seen West Hastings's coupé, with the blinds up, driving away from the stage door of Niblo's Garden during the run of "The Black Crook," she left the room in indignation, and would hardly speak to him the rest of the evening, though he was her escort to the Charity Ball. When it became generally known that Hastings was paying marked attentions to Helen Knowlton, the women said that she would do well to accept him,—that a marriage with him would be a brilliant close for a brilliant career; but some of the men who knew him best shook their heads, and said that, while West Hastings was a "good fellow," he was hardly calculated to make a good husband; that he would get tired of the best woman in the world if he was married to her, and they wanted to see Helen Knowlton married to a man who would make her happy to the end of her days.

That Hastings was interested in Miss Knowlton is not surprising. She was the most fêted woman in New York, and she was the one woman whose head was not turned by his attentions. He had been used to a different sort of woman on the stage. Here was a prima donna who was as much of a lady and as pure a woman as his own

sister. He began by pouring the ordinary compliments of a man of the world into her ear (he had to do it in Italian, for Aunt Rebecca was always on hand); but he soon saw that it bored her, and that she was only interested when he talked sense. He had travelled far and wide, had heard the native music of many countries, and could be very interesting if he chose. That she listened to him best when he appeared to the best advantage pleased him. Indeed, she pleased him altogether, for she gave him a new sensation, and if there was anything in this world that Hastings honestly loved, it was a new sensation. He was beginning to think that he was in love with Helen Knowlton; and so he was, to a certain extent. He thought her cold, but he also thought her the most interesting person he had ever met; and then he liked to be considered the favored suitor of the most popular prima donna in the country. It pleased him that the men at the club called him a "lucky dog," and he enjoyed hearing it whispered, "That is West Hastings with Miss Knowlton." "I believe I'll marry that girl," he would sometimes say to himself, never taking into consideration the fact that "that girl" might refuse to marry him. Then he would think of his luxurious bachelor quarters, of his perfect freedom from all domestic ties, and he would conclude to wait awhile longer before making a formal offer of marriage, believing that he could occupy the field as long as he cared to.

Helen Knowlton liked West Hastings very much. He was attentive and amusing, and he didn't ask her to marry him. I think that if he had put the question seriously she would have refused him. She was in love with her art. Music was the only thing that realized her ideal. She looked upon men, the little she saw of them, as pleasant companions, that was all. Music had satisfied her longings up to this time, and Aunt Rebecca had instilled into her mind the idea that men were a delusion and a snare,—that her art was the only thing upon which she could rely. "The more you do for men, the more you *may* do," said that wise woman; "but the more you do for art, the more art will do for you. Don't tell me! I haven't lived all these years among men for nothing. They can't take me in, and they never could." I don't think the man ever lived who could have been induced to take Miss Rebecca Sandford in, for he would have known that if he did so he would have to give the reins into her hands and resign the driver's box forever.

Aunt Rebecca didn't intend that her niece should marry, at least for many a long day, and her influence was very strong. She wouldn't say, "You mustn't know So and So," or try any of the usual means of keeping a girl from falling in love; but she would with her witty tongue put a man in so ridiculous a light that Helen could never

think of him again without laughing. Aunt Rebecca was very clever in her way, and she was more than a match for her niece. If she had once given Helen a chance to fall seriously in love, the girl's attachment would have been too strong to be shaken by her shafts of ridicule. But she did not. When she thought West Hastings was becoming a little too attentive, she asked Helen if she had noticed how he picked all the truffles out of the pâté and put them on his own plate, and selected the delicate bits of the celery for himself. Helen had not noticed this, but she supposed that if her aunt said so it must be true. Aunt Rebecca was always ready with an anecdote against Hastings, which she told with a good-natured laugh that entirely diverted suspicion. No one knew why she was so opposed to Helen's marrying, except that she wanted her to make even more of a career and add still more to her bank-account. And she really did not believe that a woman was any happier for being married. "Marriage is a lottery, where all the tickets are blanks," she would say; and she got her niece to be very much of her opinion. In the case of West Hastings, Aunt Rebecca's plan was to impress Helen with the idea that he was a selfish old bachelor (he was only thirty), and every little thing he did that might be regarded as selfish she magnified. He was a selfish man, there is no doubt about that. Most wealthy bachelors are. They have had few or none of the experiences that are supposed to sweeten a man's disposition. Hastings had everything in the world that he wanted, and he was never crossed in any of his pleasures. It piqued him a little that Helen Knowlton did not seem to be more impressed by his attentions, but he never for a moment dreamed that he would be unsuccessful in a serious suit of that young woman. At the time Rush Hurlstone saw him escorting Miss Knowlton to her carriage at the stage door of the Academy of Music, more than one-half of society thought that he was engaged to be married to her, though neither of the persons most interested had heard the rumor. Aunt Rebecca took a wise course in the Hastings affair. From the day Helen first met him at Bessie Archer's "coming-out" ball, she showed a greater liking for him than for any man she had met before, and the astute Miss Sandford said to herself, "To break this off I must be diplomatic. It never does to oppose young people openly in matters of this sort. Let him come to see her. I will stop him from going too far if I can, and if I can't I shall accept the situation gracefully (he has eighty thousand dollars a year) and consider myself shelved for the rest of my days. But I don't propose to let him go too far. I don't see myself shelved at my time of life."

Aunt Rebecca enjoyed the business details of the operatic profession as much as her niece did the artistic part. To outwit the managers was

as exciting to her as a game of chess is to some people, and she loved to plan a winter's campaign. No travelling was too hard for her, not even a jump from Boston to Chicago. She could make herself as happy on a car as in a drawing-room. Her mind was on the gallop all the time, and it could work as well in one place as in another: indeed, she contended that the motion of a train only stimulated her thoughts. Helen was naturally of an active disposition, but she had grown passive under her aunt's dominating influence, and did not assert herself as much as she should have done. Once in a great while she would rebel, but it was a mere flash in the pan. Few people who did not know Helen Knowlton can imagine such a person, and there is no doubt that she was an exception to the rule of womanhood. Just at the time of which I write, she was absorbed in the study of her new part, and the thousand-and-one things that had to be attended to before the eventful night on which the new opera was to be produced. Every one in New York who had a picture or a book relating in any way to Helen of Troy sent it to her, and all took a personal interest in the presentation of the opera. The night was drawing near. The Saturday *matinée* was postponed that she might get more rest and study, and there was to be a full-dress rehearsal on Sunday, to which the critics of the press and a favored few were to be invited. Monday night was the great night, and you may imagine that she was more or less nervous in anticipation. Uncle Lightfoot Myers sent her a set of gold bands for her hair, with his best wishes for her success, and West Hastings sent her a beautifully-wrought golden girdle, with the inscription, "And, like another Helen, fired another Troy," engraved on the inside.

It seemed as though every one in New York wanted to have some part in the production of the opera beyond the mere buying of seats. In that they were generous enough, for everything in the house was bought up the day the box-office opened. Monday came. There was a flurry of spring snow in the morning, but by afternoon it was bright and clear. Helen did not get up till twelve o'clock. She ate the lightest sort of breakfast, and at four had a heartier meal. All day long she was not allowed to speak,—which was no deprivation, as she did not feel like it, being too much excited for words. At seven o'clock the carriage was at the door, and she was driven to the Academy with Aunt Rebecca and her maid. For the next hour everything was confusion in the dressing-room at the foot of the little stairway. Stitches that had dropped had to be caught up, a tight sleeve had to be let out, and all the thousand-and-one details that crowd into the last moments of a great occasion had to be attended to. As the *prima donna* stood in front of the long mirror, maid and costumer busily at work upon her skirts, she

would open her mouth and run a scale to see if her voice was in condition, while the narrow walls trembled with her song. When the finishing touches had been put to her toilet, the manager came in to see how she looked. "Beautiful, my child! *Mon Dieu!* how exquisite! Superb!" And he kissed both her hands enthusiastically and retired. Then came the leader of the orchestra, with a similar ecstasy of admiration, and the announcement that it was time for him to begin,—that the ballet had been danced, and the men were tuning up for the opera. Was she ready? "Yes; begin at once. I am nervous as a witch; but nothing is gained by delay."

The house was packed: there was not a square inch of standing-room in the place by half-past eight. Even the boxes were filled, the usually tardy occupants being as anxious as the family circle to welcome the prima donna when she came upon the stage in her new *rôle*. And they did welcome her. They gave her three cheers, and would have added a "tiger" if any one had suggested it.

But where was Rush Hurlstone all this time? He was not far away. Being unable to buy a seat,—they had been sold before he came to New York, and the speculators' prices were beyond his means,—he acted upon the suggestion of his friend of the ballet and accepted the stage-manager's offer to don a Grecian dress and go on the stage as a Trojan warrior. You would have supposed that he was going to sing the leading tenor *rôle*, he was so exceedingly nervous on this occasion. But it was not the thought of facing an audience that unstrung his nerves; he knew well enough that he would not be seen, or, if seen, recognized: it was the fact that he would be taking a part, no matter how small, in the same performance with Helen Knowlton, and that he would be within touching-distance of her garments perhaps a dozen times in the evening.

It was a great occasion, and the new opera was a complete success. Helen never sang more beautifully. In the great aria just before her flight with Paris she brought the house to its feet by her dramatic singing and acting. Uncle Lightfoot Myers leaned out of his box at an angle that imperilled his life, and waved his opera-hat, shouting "Brava!" until he was hoarse. West Hastings, who occupied a proscenium box with his sister, Mrs. Dick Griswold, stood up and applauded with an elegance that was remarked by every one in the house; and Mrs. Dick not only threw the bouquet that lay on the railing of her box, but unpinned the bunch of roses at her corsage and threw them at the prima donna's feet. Mrs. Vandewater Tod, who occupied the next box, not to be outdone in enthusiasm, took a large diamond star from her hair, and, pinning it to a bouquet, threw it with excited

fingers at the singer ; but it fell short of its mark, and, striking the venerable bass-viol player on his bald head, bounced into the orchestra. The house roared with good-natured laughter as the old man, after feeling his head to see that the skull was not cracked, picked up the bouquet with its precious addition and handed it to the smiling prima donna, while the family circle shouted and the boxes waved their handkerchiefs. The ushers were worn out carrying "floral tributes" down the aisle ; and, altogether, such a night had never been known. The most excited person in the house was Rush Hurlstone. By a lucky chance, he was standing in the wings in all the dignity of his Trojan armor when Helen made a hurried exit. Coming from the brilliantly-lighted stage into the dark behind the scenes, she struck her foot against a carelessly-laid gas-pipe and almost pitched into his arms. He put out his hand, and she caught hold of it quickly. The thing did not take half a minute. "*Grazie*," said she, lightly, thinking of course that he was one of the regular Italian chorus. Then she passed on to her dressing-room, followed by her maid bearing her train, and her aunt, who had just thrown a wrap across her shoulders. Rush blushed scarlet under his warrior's beard. He was afraid the men standing around would hear the thumping of his heart against his tin armor. When no one was looking, he raised the back of the hand she had touched to his lips and kissed it ; and then he wondered how he could have been such a fool.

When the opera was over, Rush thought it no more than polite for him to accompany Madame Cella and her daughter home ; but when he went to look for them he found that they had gone as soon as the dancing was finished. He was not sorry, for now he could linger around the place and perhaps see Helen again. As he stood by the door leading into the auditorium, he saw half the wealth and fashion of the city pass through on its way to the prima donna's dressing-room to congratulate her upon her great success. He could catch an occasional glimpse of her, standing there in her classic robes, a veritable Helen, giving her beautiful hand to this one and a gracious word to the other. Rush felt like throwing himself at her feet, or (like another Paris) bearing her off in his arms. He watched the men as they talked and laughed with her, until he was beside himself with jealousy. He recognized West Hastings at once, having seen him at the stage door the week before, and felt certain that the confidence of his manner in addressing the prima donna was the assurance of proprietorship. Uncle Lightfoot Myers came rushing in, his gray hair matted on his brow, and the perspiration running down his florid cheeks.

"I deserve a kiss, my dear, for what I've done for you to-night,"

he exclaimed. "Two pairs of gloves split into shreds, my collar wilted, and my voice all gone shouting 'Brava!' Come, now, where is my reward?"

"Your reward is in the consciousness of having done a good deed," answered the singer, gayly, giving him her hand, which he kissed with old-fashioned gallantry.

"Ah, Uncle Lightfoot," said Mrs. Dick Griswold, "you are too young a man to be claiming an old man's privileges."

"Nonsense! nonsense!" said Uncle Lightfoot, straightening his necktie and looking as pleased as Punch. "I'm old enough to be Helen's father."

He was really old enough to be her grandfather; but it would have been a cruel person who could tell him so.

Men and women came crowding in and out of the prima donna's room, but Rush noticed that West Hastings stood his ground and showed no signs of going, and he also noticed that he stooped down now and then and whispered some words in the singer's ear which seemed to give her a good deal of pleasure, for she would raise her eyes to his with a look that Rush would have died for. He didn't know then that a woman, particularly a prima donna, may look everything and mean nothing. Finally there was a lull in the gay chatter, and the manager entered the room, followed by a somewhat seedy-looking young man with keen bright eyes and a well-shaped head. He whispered something in Italian to Miss Knowlton. An expression of annoyance passed over her face, but she was exceedingly polite when the manager introduced Mr. Grady, of *The Dawn*, who begged that he might ask her a few questions. The young man was evidently embarrassed at meeting so many outsiders in the room, and the prima donna, though she was annoyed at the interview, was most gracious in her manner, particularly as she detected the ends of West Hastings's moustache turning scornfully upward, and feared that the reporter also might notice his sneer. Aunt Rebecca would have taken the interviewer under her protection at once, but she was striking for bigger game. She had the musical critic of *The Daily Trumpet* by the ear, and was calling his critical attention to the remarkable *fioriture* added by her niece to the grand aria. Rush recognized in the reporter one of the men he had seen at the office of *The Dawn*, and he listened attentively to learn how the process of "interviewing" was carried on.

"How were you pleased with your reception, Miss Knowlton?" the reporter inquired.

"I was delighted: nothing could have been more cordial or more gratifying," she answered.

“Is the music of the opera pleasing to sing?”

“Thoroughly so. It does not strain the voice, yet it displays its best qualities.”

“What impressed you most in the performance?”

“I can tell you what impressed me the most, Helen,” exclaimed Mrs. Dick Griswold, bursting in upon the interview. “It was in the scene with Tartalli, when you took the poor old thing’s hand and made her come down to the footlights. She hadn’t done anything, to be sure, but your manner in insisting upon her sharing the applause with you was beautiful. It almost made me cry; for, although I never heard Tartalli in her prime, I know she used to be a favorite singer, and I always feel the liveliest pity for favorites who have outlived their popularity but who still have to keep before the public to earn their bread and butter. Put that in your paper, my dear sir, and you will have a charming incident,” rattled on the vivacious Mrs. Dick. The reporter thanked her and the prima donna also, and bowed himself out of the room, the manager following at his elbow. “The poor fellow didn’t get much material for an interview there,” thought Rush. “He’ll have to make his excuses to the city editor to-night.” The talking was resumed in the dressing-room; but only in the shape of good-nights. West Hastings said something to Uncle Lightfoot in an undertone, and the old beau put Mrs. Griswold’s arm through his. “I’ll take you home, Mrs. Dick; and, if it isn’t too late, I’ll stop and have a rubber with that lazy Dick of yours, who, I’ll wager, is toasting his toes and reading the stock-market reports before the fire.”

“I’ll gladly accept your invitation, Uncle Lightfoot, and we’ll leave West to Helen’s tender mercies. Will you take good care of him, Helen, and keep him out of mischief?” said Mrs. Dick.

“If that be possible,” replied the prima donna, laughing. “But in the mean time I shall have to ask him to take a seat in the greenroom while I get ready for the street.”

At this all the visitors retired, and Rush hurried off to a room somewhere up among the flies, where he transformed himself from a soldier of Troy into a peaceful citizen of New York.

(To be continued.)

BACKWOODS PRERAPHAELITES.

MADAME returned to her native land almost a stranger. For, although she had never ceased to remember that native land with affection, years following years had stolen much of her young self away. Those spent at home had carried with them her youthful enthusiasm; those spent abroad had replaced her original spread-eagle Americanism with habits of closer and clearer observation and more thoughtful judgment of other lands than her own.

She was an American who remembered America rather than realized it, and came again to her own with a curious mingling of the alert inquisitiveness of the foreigner and the dreamy pensiveness of an exile.

"*Nous voilà enfin arrivés dans le pays du Yank!*" exclaimed a French fellow-voyager.

It is curious how really Française she felt as he said this, how fully she shared his curiosity concerning the genus Yank upon its native heath.

"*Voulez-vous a morning paper?*" grinned a Battery newsboy in her ear.

Instantly she was not in the least French, and frowned severely upon the gamin, that he had not recognized her Yankhood at sight.

From the Boulevards, the Théâtre Français, and the Champs Élysées it was but eleven days to the American backwoods. Madame seemed thus suddenly thrust into a new world. For not only was the human element strange, but so also was the vividly—almost crudely—colored landscape, the dazzling atmosphere, more than all, the infinitely high and infinitely blue sky. It was as if she were suddenly shot into space, so vivid was the realization of a largeness and freedom that she had never known before.

The last stage of the journey was accomplished by means of a rickety narrow-gauge railway branching away from a somewhat less amateur line, which, in its turn, departed from a main thoroughfare of travel. A train consisting of one mean car with four passengers, two of them drunken lumbermen, behind twenty empty tan-cars, trundled through miles of ragged forest, where the only visible signs of man were the charred stumps of trees, and now and then a weather-beaten saw-mill with clustering rude dwellings of blackened pine.

The end was a mountain town of five or six hundred inhabitants in a saw-mill and tanning region of one of the most sparsely settled counties of a yet—in portions—sparsely-settled Middle State. Twenty

years ago neither axe nor fire had been laid at a single tree, and up to the present moment there are only fifteen thousand souls in the rough and unkempt county. Yet the town already brags of its "palatious mansions" (*vide* the county journal),—funny little pine boxes of houses painted white and trimmed with tatting or crochet edging,—a few "stores," an "opera-house," two baby wooden churches of half-breed Gothic, one or two hotels, a court-house, and a roller-skating-rink of pea-green pine.

At night huge fires burn all through the village, flashing and snapping with loud, portentous sound. These are the gas-lights,—natural gas rising from the earth and burning massively and entirely uncovered in the open air. The gas is likewise carried into all the parlor-, cooking-, and store-stoves of the community. Not only are the dinners cooked by it, but the inhabitants as well.

It is a primitive community, where he is rich who has ten thousand dollars at interest, and he not poor who lives by precarious "chores."

In Europe we should be peasants, laborers, and rustic shopmen; here we are every one of us superior to the played-out occupants of tottering European thrones, every one of us filled with unaffected contempt for any other nation than our own, every one of us convinced that Europeans are a mean, decrepit race, continuing in the effete Old World only because too weak to escape to the New.

Scorn, indignation, incredulity, are the dominant emotions excited by the statement that United States postage-stamps have not their face value all over the world, and that the coin of our country is not eagerly grasped in every mart and bazaar.

"Don't them Britishers know what *real* money is?" queried disgusted chorus.

"I think likely I should have to brush up in history to go to Europe," said a county editor. "I always mix up Jane of Arc with Lady Mary Jane Grey, Queen of Scots. But then what's the use of going there? The Yooropeans all come here, and the hull country's played out anyway."

This editor's education leaves much to be desired in the way of Yooropean history, but in all the details of his own he is thoroughly at home, as well as with every intricacy of past and contemporaneous American politics where advantage leans to the Democratic side.

"Do they keep court fools nowadays?" he asked later.

"They're all fools," spake up sudden answer. "Ef they wa'n't, they wouldn't stay in *that* God-forsaken country."

Which remarks point a difference between American provincial patriotism and French or English.

The French peasant is so absolutely sure of the superiority of France and Frenchmen over all the rest of the universe that it never occurs to him to assert it, any more than to call attention to the fact that the sun shines or that fire is hot. The British yokel abuses his own country, but always with a sort of pride in the British superiority which can find something to blame even in that most perfect result of human civilization. Both French and English are too sure of their own proud eminence to find it worth their time and breath to point out the inferiority of other countries. The American, on the contrary, while just as utterly sure that his country is the admired and envied of nations, never ceases to tip-tilt the nose and shoot out the lip at all things not American.

The Italian has more of the French and English feeling than of the American; and in Rome an American was once complaisantly and patronizingly assured that probably the reason why the American accent in speaking Italian was noticeably better than the English was because "an Italian discovered your country."

He or she who in rural America dares assert a preference for anything foreign, to set Bass's XX above Milwaukee lager, or French artichokes above green corn, is regarded as half-way a traitor to self-government and the Rights of Man.

"I'm going to stop my subscription to my *New York Weekly Times*," said our squire. "It's got too much in it about furrin parts. I jest believe it's in the pay of the British! What do I care whether the Maydee is dead, or alive and kicking? I'd ruther read about lynching niggers down South. *That's good American nooz.*"

"How can you like England, and you a born American?" asked one of Madame's compatriots. "I declare, 'tain't Christian!"

Said another, upon another occasion, with the usual American acerbity in face of the same circumstances, "If there's anything I despise, it's an American who lives abroad and then comes home praising the Europeans!"

"Yet," the culprit meekly answered, "you know many English do exactly that same thing. They live awhile in America and then return home bragging might and main of the superiority of everything American over everything European."

"Of course! shows their sense!" answered compatriot.

"Our American girls just lick all creation! You can't deny that almost every one that goes over there marries some Pope, or Emperor, or something!" asserted Miss Dean.

It was remarked that in Europe the ladies of a family do not usually follow their dead to the grave.

"What a hideous, depraved state of society!" groaned the squire.

When the squire groaned thus, Carpenter Brown was of our company,—Carpenter Brown, four days a widower, now swaying himself comfortably to and fro in a large rocker while we breakfasted.

"You was awful kind in my wife's sickness an' in layin' out the corpse," he said to our hostess, impressively laying a deeply-weeded tall hat against the Sunday splendor of deeply-blue waistcoat and violently ruddy necktie. "I'd like to show how gretful I am, so I've come to ask if you an' the gal will go to the circus with me to-night."

"What tarnel fools some folks is!" continued Carpenter Brown. "I told Jones somethin' about my diseased wife, an' he wanted to know what disease she'd got."

"By blank!" roared the squire, "don't the blank-blanked old plug know that a 'diseased' is a deader?"

Our loudest talker, our showiest dresser, our most lavishly be-banged, is the "gal," whose visiting-cards are decorated with pigmented sunflowers and inscribed "Miss Genoa Dean," but who is more familiarly known in her own twenty-miles-away native woods as "swearing Gin." Her familiar conversation is quite Carlylese,—that is, Jane not Thomas Carlylese, and her "devil-take-its!" "hang its!" "Great Gods!" and many vastly stronger expressions are eminently worthy of the "your much-bedevelled Jane" of the "Memorials." She is, however, hard-working and honest, is always stupendously perfumed with camphor, "to squash the smell o' the cow," sleeps in gloves, and does our housework, including barn chores, for two dollars a week.

"Ain't that your feller a-comin', Gin?" asks her mistress, peering through the window-vines.

"Lord! ef it jest *ain't!*" screams Miss Dean, stampeding up-stairs to her bedroom. A moment later she reappears, a hand-glass in one hand, in the other a sponge dripping Bloom of Youth. One eye follows her beautifying in the mirror, the other watches her "feller."

The question adjusts itself thus: Which will arrive first, complexion or feller?

Madame sighs a little, with the knowledge that this beautifying costs half a week's wages the bottle. She remembers certain other domestic servants over the seas, called *La Petite Fadette* and *Marie of La Mare au Diable*, and she wonders if it really be true that there is no poetry in our own conglomerate race, and that in the blending together in us of all races every instinct and every intuition of ideal beauty has been bred out of our primitive social strata.

Miss Dean whistles about her work like a trooper, and the frail pine mansion trembles beneath her tread as were she an army with

banners. Sometimes she addresses her employer as "Jim," sometimes as "You darned old fool!" To her mistress she sweetly remarks, "Do jest hold your yawp. You've got more chin 'n's healthy."

Begged to pass anything at table, this vivid demoiselle graciously pitches it at the beggar at once, whereas squire and squires never fail to serve themselves from circulating bowl or plate before helping it on its way.

Mademoiselle is missing, and horrible wailing uproar proceeds from her room. Our hostess prepares the six-o'clock supper of hot hashed meat, doughnuts, cookies, cheese, pickles, jelly-roll, stewed blackberries, and bitter, herb-like tea, that astringent horror of American rustic tables.

"Gin's gone in for a good old howl," she explains. "Her feller came up to-day from Logger's Holler with the schoolmarm, 'n' Gin's jealous."

"What gumps women are!" sneers our squire. "In such a case as that a man would jest resort to retallatation and vindicativeness."

At our dining-room door, opening directly outward and downward upon a stubbly mountain-side, call all the travelling peddlers who infest the region,—the itinerant dyer, who takes away sewn carpet-rags and faded overcoats and gowns, the farmer who brings vegetables, and sits in his wagon bawling "Suze" or "Gin" till mistress or maid acts the vassal or serf at his call, the swashbuckler of a veterinary surgeon, the eternal book-agent, and the ambulant coiffeur, who "swaps hair" and strews the countryside with grotesquely old-fashioned chignons.

If we chance to be at meals, each and all are invited to "sit by." The dyer brings his wife, a typical woman of the region, worn and faded from hard work, sallow, flat-breasted, sharp-featured, strident-voiced, her thin hair tightly drawn away from her face into a poverty-stricken knot behind.

"She's got a disease of the hide," explains the dyer, "'n's got to loaf a bit, so I take her about with me. She's alwuz been middlin' white to me, so I try to be pretty white to her."

Like all our guests, our dyer "peels" for dinner. "Couldn't swallow my rations with a cõt [coat] on," he half apologized to Madame. "Pass the cow, marm."

Meekly she passed "the cow,"—*anglicé*, milk-jug; as meekly also she "shoved the grease" when her neighbor wanted butter.

In her husband's absence, she who has been always "middlin' white" describes to us how she trained her lord in the way dyers' wives' lords ought to go:

"When we wuz fust married we lived on a farm, in a one-room log

cabin. When the fust spring come, I told Jim I wa'n't goin' to hev no more fires in the chimbley, but wuz goin' to do my cookin' outerr doorr. 'All right,' sez Jim, 'but I'm a-goin' to hev a firre long's the evenin's holds cold.' I sez nothin', but that mornin' I swep' out the firreplac, filled it with greens, 'n' done my cookin' outerr doorr. Jim sed nothin' till night; then he commenced to cuss 'round coz he wuz cold. I sed nothin' till he commenced to pull my boughs outerrr the chimbley. I wuz hoppin' mad, but I hel' my hosses nuff to tell him ef he didn't jest dry up *someboddy* 'd get licked! He kep' on, so I jest pitched interrrr him, hammerrrr 'n' tongs! I knowed he wouldn't dare tetch me, coz Miss Mills had jest sworn salt 'n' batterrrr onto her husband an' he'd had to pay a big fine. Jim tried to hole my hands; but he wuz alwuz a gret, soft, lazy bummerrrr, slow's 'lasses in winter, jest like he is now, so I jest gut all 'round him, and banged him a dozen times afore he could hollerrrr twice. I tell *you* I jest wollopped him pretty! I jest bunged up one eye so he couldn't have seen an oil-well afire. Sence then he's alwuz ben as meek as Moses."

This lady is very strongly Protestant.

"Be you Cath'lic, marm?" she asks, gazing as at a single-legged calf or a double-headed goose. "Be you Cath'lic? Well, I'll say *this* for you—you don't look it!"

Rag carpets, often unconsciously æsthetic in low-toned harmonies of tertiary tints, cover our floors. Scarcely a house has not its parlor-organ, to the unskilled accompaniment of which untrained voices wake discordant but much-admired sound. The bourgeoisly-pretentious and yet rustic elegance of our house-furnishing, our showily-embroidered table-covers and lambrequins, our crochet mantel—"falls," our much-betided cane-seated chairs and rockers, our scriptural mottoes wrought upon perforated cardboard and elaborately framed, our gorgeous chromos, our snowy bed- and table-linen, our plentiful silver, and the reckless profusion and waste of execrably-cooked food, would seem luxury of Arabian Nights to the rustic shopkeepers and *petits cultivateurs* among whom we should have been born had we been born Europeans and not Americans.

Our hostess is a farmer's daughter of twenty-one, step-mother of her husband's boys. She was "raised" amidst her present surroundings, and was "taught" by her husband's first wife, now divorced and keeping a boarding-house a few miles away down the mountains among the zinc-mines. Like too many American women, our hostess has also had a varied matrimonial experience, and at twenty was divorced from the husband she married at sixteen, to whom she now invariably alludes as "that skunk!"

She plays her own accompaniment upon her parlor-organ, and squalls vociferously, mostly "Lorena," to her own slam-bang anvil-and-hammer accompaniment. Like almost all American women of her class and kind, she has boundless ambition for "fixing up" her house, and delights in fancy-work. Her work-basket overflows with silks and wools, and shows that the last dying wave of æstheticism, of Botticelli and Filippo Lippi dead-leaf tints, spends itself upon these backwoods shores.

The sunny windows are aflame with vigorously-blooming house-plants, hanging baskets dash cascades of foliage from every coigne of vantage, canaries twitter and carol among the lavish greenth. Yet all this borrowing from nature's beauty seems to come from no love of nature, no idyllic sentiment, but simply from the social instinct of "fixing up" and having a home as decoratively fine as our neighbors.

Our hostess does not care enough for flowers to have a garden, although with ground-space enough and to spare, and contemptuously throws away the bouquets of exquisite wild flowers gathered by her city guests, as "litter" and "rubbige," and laughs in her sleeve at those city guests as "gawks" when they stand entranced before these glorious, even *awfully* glorious, American sunsets.

Between parlor-organ, sewing-machine, the rattle of the cook-stove, the dragon-like tread of both mistress and maid, and snatches of Salvation Army hymns, in which maid and mistress unite over the wash-tub and the ironing-table, the house has little of the blessing of silence.

All around are the eternal hills, crowned by solemn pines and wrapped about in transparent but myriad-hued films, as if in a visible garment of eloquent silence. Far down in a distant cup of the hills, white marble gleaming in the hot, still sunshine reveals the eternal silence which enfolds all the clamors and confusions of lives perhaps once as boisterous as these under our own roof. Outside our doors no sound breaks the sweet mountain stillness save the hum of insect life, —that life so vastly more abundant in America than in Europe,—the song of birds, and the faint, soft echo of some woodman's axe away off in the idealizing distance.

Thus all the uproar, the sound and fury of the universe seem concentrated within our thin pea-green pine walls, and the lover of quietness and nature's dulcet murmur shudders with the consciousness that in almost every one of the far-apart houses of the village something of the same coarse tumult prevails, for such is the nature of the American backwooder, male and female.

Doubtless God might have made more boisterous women than of

the American young and middle-aged rural kind, but doubtless God never did.

Drums and cymbals, locomotive-whistles and bagpipes, in shrieking concert, are mere bagatelles of sound compared with that proceeding from our open door when a few of us, in pasteboard sun-bonnets and working-aprons, drop in upon our hostess to borrow a drawin' o' tea or return a raisin' o' yeast.

It is impossible to detect one single touch or shade of poetic sentiment or ideal aspiration in us. Life seems to hold nothing better for us than that we may eat well, live in houses more "fixed up" than our neighbors', and finally enter into the kingdom of riches.

"Mrs. Smith is an old potater-bug! Don't you be gump enough to return her call," Madame was advised. And when Madame asked how the lady made her potato-bughood manifest, "Why, she tells all 'round that she's livin' in a mean barn of a house, only fit for pigs; 'n' *we* lived in that house for five years! As if *we'd* live in a barn!" And the accompanying snort was indescribable.

There is little time and opportunity for those who hew civilization out from virgin forests to listen to the dreamy music floating ever to sensitive spiritual ears from mystic regions, with exquisite, baffling hints, and the subtle intoxication of an existence of which this is but the black shadow. We are all either those who have laid axe and fire to the forest, or those who grew up amid the hewing: hence it is scarcely to be wondered at that life seems to us more of a struggle than a dream, or, as Corinne says, "*un combat, pas un hymne.*" We have no eye or feeling for the exquisite virginal nature that surrounds us, and once, when attention was called to the frost-tinged forest, countless bushes whence Jehovah might have spoken to his prophets, countless trees dripping liquid gold, "Lorrr, yes! it *is* ratherrr han'sum; but, I de-larrre, I neverrr noticed it beforrrre," we answered.

Few of us ever read anything save the domestic columns of the newspapers, and now and then one of the Rev. E. P. Roe's novels. Our squire, however, lingers over a volume of Byron, and inquisitive Madame asks him why.

"'Cause he's *blank* against churches, and priests, and all that blank-blank-blanked rubbige, they say," answers the squire, with tired, puzzled air.

Some of us are "religious," but Madame sees not our superiority in that respect (and finds us much less picturesque) over the bead-telling and votive-offering European peasantry. We are Dominicans rather than Franciscans, and our works are not of gifts and penances, but of church suppers, sociables, picnics, and occasional violent revivals, while

we of the bastard-Gothic "Methodists" hold scant respect for us of the illegitimate-Gothic "Baptists." Yet even to the most indifferent of us no shadow of doubt concerning evangelical church doctrines ever comes to our feminine minds. Those minds are too little illumined to reflect shadows of any kind, and we "believe," vaguely and unconsciously, merely because we know not how to doubt, leaving the "blanking" of churches and priests to our more reckless lords and masters.

One may well wonder if we ever think at all; for our mouths are ever open, in chatter, laughter, or song. One wonders what glimmers of thought even sorrow and loss bring to us, for beneath the rod we shut not our mouths, we weep as vociferously as we sing, and we chatter even our lamentations.

Also have we primitive ideas of certain principles which have much to do with the dignity of human existence and the welding together of human society.

"Ain't Madame Blank *mean* to keep her journal in French?" naïvely complained our squires to a sun-bonneted group. "I b'l'ëve she jest does it o' purpose, coz I've got a key to her writin'-case."

This remark suggests a subtle distinction of ethics. Madame Blank would not steal the contents of her neighbor's private papers, but Mrs. Suze would. But then, again, Mrs. Suze would never dream of robbing a vague general public of a loosely-lying cup beside a remote way-side stream, while Madame Blank's Europeanized conscience and fingers itched——

Our host is the son of a butcher, and learned the shoemaker's trade. As he frequently declares, he has but one ambition in life,—to become a rich man. Finding the shoemaking way but slow to fortune, with true American pluck, ambition, and energy he earned, saved, and borrowed money enough to read law during some months in a lawyer's office. Without the least taste for study, with such mind as he has too crude to be either logical or analytical, yet ambitious enough to move mountains if ambition would do it, he has a tremendous "gift of the gab," and can talk a jury blue, if blue he means it to be, while many a cleverer man is merely gathering his resources together. A year ago he was chosen justice of the peace, having given up the practice of his "profession" because of a nervous affection influencing his power of speech and brought on by excessive drinking. He is a teetotaler now, a school-commissioner, and the master of flourishing tan-works, with an income of perhaps twelve hundred a year.

He loves his children in a semi-human, semi-bestial way, and addresses his boys as "red-head whelps," his three-year-old daughter as "Miss Squint-Eye," his wife by many a more brutal title.

When, descending somewhat tardily to breakfast, Madame finds everybody at table, he politely assures her, "We're a-waitin' for you, you see, hog-fashion!"

Nasal is his voice, coarse his speech beyond compare. Yet, like the vast majority of our countrymen in his walk of life, his honesty is perfect, and his charity turns no beggar or tramp from his door. He quarrels violently with all his neighbors, curses them as sincerely as Jane Carlyle did her husband's shirts, chuckles when their cows choke with potatoes, dines gleefully upon their black hen the day after they are suspected of having dined upon his white one, and laughs dramatically when their other hens blow away in fierce cyclones, leaving not a feather behind. He is ready to "fight any man" who wishes fighting rather than peace, and brags of having "killed his man" in remote ante-bellum days. Those he killed during the war he considers professionally, not pugnaciously killed, hence no bragging-matter.

Once Madame drove with him through a wild country where the high spring buggy sped over boulders and fallen tree-trunks as lightly as heavy European carriages over perfect European roads. By a roadside stream they stopped to drink from a cup, not of silver, but of excellent imitation, and so elegantly wrought as to be ornamental enough for any backwoods table. It lay loosely in the running stream: one could have carried it away as easily as a flower. Were this Europe and not America, it would have remained there only till the wayfarer came by: indeed, as it was, had there been nobody there to see——

"Surely that cup will be stolen before night," exclaimed Madame. Our squire looked widely at her with clear, blue, honest eyes.

"It's been there ever since I've known the spring," he said. "We've got some powerful mean cusses in these diggin's, but I'll be blanked if I believe there's one mean enough to steal a drinking-cup."

Our squire comes home from "The Works," bringing the beefsteak for dinner, as well as the string-beans, not yet matured in our own stump-pervaded and shaded garden. A pair of mud-stiffened, malodorous boots hang over his arm, just from the cobbler's. For convenience' sake, these boots serve as market-basket, and in them our coming dinner reeks of long-worn cowhide.

His raiment is rough, but his moustache has the style of that of an officer of Guards, and his profile is pure Greek. He reads the local newspapers assiduously, and reflects vividly their vital faith that America can lick all creation and more too. He studies political questions with interest, but ever with the Republican beam in his eye, avows himself blank against Free Trade, and was active and orational during the last Presidential campaign.

His boys read the same newspapers and hear the same discussions, but with more flexible and quicker if not deeper intelligence than his. Two of them already talk of college and the bar, while the third has as yet only ambition to drive a butcher's cart. By and by he will take his crass ignorance, his colossal bumptiousness, his burlesque English, to Europe, as we all do when *nouveau riche*. There he will care nothing for art-galleries, libraries, museums, castles, cathedrals, ruins. But he will gasp at the squalor and meanness of English low life and rage at the beggary and impositions of the Continent. He will kick furiously against the veil system, and will make "cussory" remarks on Europe and Europeans and bumptious ones on America wherever he goes. Then all who see him will say, "Behold the typical American!"—whereas he is typical of nothing in the world save the ease with which the low-born American rises from his original condition, if rising it be.

It took no long residence in our lofty valley to teach the exile more than one new thing concerning her countrymen.

For instance, she had lived many years in America and many away from it, never having seen, to her knowledge, a tobacco-chewer in all her life; more than that, for years she had gone to and fro in Europe declaring tobacco-chewing almost unknown in our native land and its pretended frequency a slander of transatlantic tourists.

The second day in our mountain eyrie we walked see-sawing planks before a piazzad hotel.

"How wet this sidewalk is!" she exclaimed. "Has it been raining?"

"*Comme tu es naïve!*" laughed he. "Don't you know that if our country expects to rate more it must expectorate less?"

We looked in at the pea-green skating-rink, and there saw a huge placard,—

"GENTLEMEN will not SPIT on the floor!"

Doubtless to European eyes this would seem pre-eminently American, as indeed it did to Madame's.

Nevertheless, over the *bénitier* in St. Germain l'Auxerrois, in Paris, all the world may read,—

"*N'oubliez-pas que celle-ci est la Maison de Dieu! Ne crachez pas sur le pavé! Crachez dans votre mouchoir.*"

Some malicious reader may insinuate that this *affiche* is chiefly intended for touring Americans of the status of our squire. Not at all. Our squire never carries a *mouchoir*.

One day was spent in the court-house. It was court week, and streets and piazzas were filled with long, sallow faces, sunburnt goatees, and slouch hats picturesque with backwoods unconventionality and

quaintness. The session-room was light and airy, handsomely finished with beautiful native woods. Inside the carved and polished bar was the usual entourage of the law,—judges, jury, lawyers, criers, clerks, witnesses, and accused; the bench rose high up above our heads, and behind its carved and velvet-upholstered desk was a rocking-chair, in which the judge swayed monotonously to and fro. His honor's bourgeois garb was somewhat seedy, but he himself was, if not of dignified presence, at least of meditative, intellectual countenance, a fine type of our countrymen, intelligent, legally well read, of unimpeachable integrity, but of merely common-school education.

Below, lawyers moved restlessly to and fro. Legal feet were posed high upon green-baized tables; and, looking up to note how his honor tolerated such *sans gêne* in his presence, lo! the honorable boot-soles in full view!

Several members of the bar chewed unlighted cigars; nine-tenths of the jaws worked like rotary engines; the rank efflorescence of "cuspidores" was more than tropical.

Lawyer O'Flannagan was addressing the jury,—twelve tanned and tired peasants, with evidently as much idea of right and justice dissociated from prejudice and passion as of the differential calculus. Illiterate and narrow-minded though they were, there was yet a certain ferret-like alertness of expression, lacking to their kind across the sea.

The English boor may be not less intelligent, but he certainly is more stolid, running more to tissues and less to nerves.

Said Mr. O'Flannagan (and his words were faithfully taken down on the spot),—

"Gentlemen of the jury, if there's a spark of manliness in your bosoms he knows that a man ain't got no sort of right to lick his wife, no matter *what* she's done. It's the duty of this court to force harmony into the congugigal relation. A man ain't got no sorter right to come home and kick down the stove-pipe and lick his wife, like this man done, coz she's the weaker vessel and can't lick back, and every gentleman of the jury with a spark of manliness," etc., etc.

Mr. O'Flannagan gained his case, the opposing counsel being a quiet man who used irreproachable English and debated points of law and evidence, instead of firing off sparks of manliness and trying to inflame bosoms.

Mr. O'Flannagan is the son of Irish peasants, and by the fluid conditions of our democratic society is enabled to rise from bog-trotting to a large legal practice with three thousand dollars a year. He never saw the inside of a law-school, but his sons, who drop the *O* and pronounce their name Flanagan, are entered in one of the best in the

country, and, so far as finite eye can see, there is no reason why Paddy Flannagan's grandson may not be Chief Justice, or even President, of these United States.

Chez nous il n'y a rien d'impossible.

M. B. Upham.

THE COMRADES.

“OH, whither, whither, rider toward the west?”

“And whither, whither, rider toward the east?”

“I rede we ride upon the same high quest,
Whereon who enters may not be released :

“To seek the Cup whose form none ever saw,—
A nobler form than e'er was shapen yet,
Though million million cups without a flaw,
Afire with gems, on princes' boards are set ;

“To seek the Wine whereof none ever had
One draught, though many a generous wine flows free,—
The spiritual blood that shall make glad
The hearts of mighty men that are to be.”

“But shall one find it, brother? Where I ride,
Men mock and stare, who never had the dream.
Yet hope within my breast has never died.”
“Nor ever died in mine that trembling gleam.”

“Eastward, I deem : the sun and all good things
Are born to bless us of the Orient old.”

“Westward, I deem : an untried ocean sings
Against that coast, 'New shores await the bold.'”

“God speed or thee or me, so coming men
But have the Cup !” “God speed !”—Not once before
Their eyes had met, nor ever met again,
Yet were they loving comrades evermore.

Helen Gray Cone.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTOR INTERVENES.

“COME,” said Mr. Lefroy, persuasively; “I think we might arrive at a compromise if we tried. You say that your life is your own to dispose of, and that you wish to devote it to the service of Art. As a fact, your life is not altogether at your own disposal just yet; but we will waive that. Let it be agreed that henceforth the chief aim and object of your existence is to be the painting and selling of pictures. So be it, and I shall be delighted to help you in any possible way: only, allowing you to live all by yourself in London lodgings is not a possible way.”

It was on a misty October day that Mr. Lefroy, in the course of an interview with his niece, thus delivered himself. He was sitting in his study, which had once been his brother's study and was still full of his brother's books and odds and ends. He was sorry to be obliged to receive Hope there; but what could he do? He must have a den of some kind, and he could not shut the room up. Nevertheless, the influence of the place caused him to listen very patiently to what the girl had to say, and prevented him from meeting her request with a blunt refusal.

“You yourself must see,” he continued, “that it would never do for us to turn you adrift like a friendless orphan; but you can have the best masters, and attend classes, or Schools of Art, or anything that you like, while we are in town; that is to say, from early in March till the middle or end of July. Have you any objection to make to that proposal?”

“Only that it would altogether defeat my object,” answered Hope, smiling. “I want to be a professional artist, not an amateur; and I want something else, too, but I am afraid you won't like my saying so, Uncle Montague: I want to be independent.”

“My dear child, you might as well say that you want to be Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and Defender of the Faith. Not that you would be independent then. Great as the charms of independence are, very few of us—certainly very few young ladies—are permitted to enjoy them. Let us take comfort from the thought that perhaps it wouldn't be good for us if we were.”

“I should not wish to be independent if papa were living, or if I

were your daughter," Hope said. "I think you understand what I mean."

"I decline to understand. My position towards you is that of a father; I regard you as being, for all practical purposes, one of my daughters; and I can only say to you, as I should to Alice or Gertrude in a similar case, that your demand is outrageous."

"That is hardly fair, Uncle Montague," returned Hope, her color rising slightly. "I did not expect you to be pleased at my wishing to leave Helston; I know it must seem ungrateful, though I am not really ungrateful; but I can't see that I am asking for anything outrageous."

"Very well, I withdraw 'outrageous.' Nowadays I find that I can never open my lips in the House without being called upon to withdraw something: so that the sensation is not new to me. I will substitute 'amazing.' You can't object to 'amazing;' it is a term which may be applied to the noblest forms of ambition. My dear Hope, your ambition may be a noble one and a creditable one,—far be it from me to assert the contrary,—but it has the fatal defect of being impracticable. Girls of your age can't go off and set up house by themselves: that sort of thing isn't done."

"Yet, if I had been an heiress, it might have been done."

"Really, I don't think so. You would have been my ward, in any case, until you were of age, and I could hardly have consented to your living apart from us. However, we need not consider what might have been. Come, Hope; give up this extravagant project,—well, well, I withdraw 'extravagant,' the project can go without an adjective, since it is to be thrown overboard,—give up thinking about it, and, as I said before, I'll do the best I can for you. I'll speak to your aunt."

"Couldn't we speak to her now, Uncle Montague?"

"Heaven forbid! Do you wish to see Lady Jane stretched upon the floor in a fit? What I meant was that I would speak to her about your taking lessons in London."

But Hope, who had been tentatively sounding her aunt for some time past and had been surprised at the amicable spirit in which her hints had been taken, was less apprehensive than Mr. Lefroy; and at that moment, as luck would have it, Lady Jane herself walked into the room, bringing with her some letters as to which she wished to consult her husband. Hope at once opened the attack all along the line, without any preliminary skirmishing.

"Aunt Jane, do you see any harm in my going up to London to study painting? I should live with Mills, who would take the greatest possible care of me, and I know Mr. Tristram would put me in the way

of learning what people who adopt Art as a profession ought to learn. I *must* do something, and I *may* learn to be an artist: I feel that I shall never learn to be anything else."

Mr. Lefroy closed his eyes and waited for the storm to burst. He opened them again to their fullest extent at the first sound of his wife's voice, and fixed them upon her face, which, to his profound astonishment, was wreathed in smiles.

Lady Jane was shaking her head gently. "My dear child," said she, "you are far too sensible to have ever imagined that such a thing as this could be possible, and you need not tell me who put it into your head. It is Dick Herbert all over. Dick is a dear, good fellow; but you should beware of taking him too literally. He has defied conventionality all his life, and of course there is no reason why he shouldn't, if he chooses; but it is too bad of him to have given you the idea that you could do the same. However, he has most likely forgotten all about it by this time."

"It was not Mr. Herbert's idea, it was my own," replied Hope; "and it is quite the same thing to me whether he remembers or forgets it. Why should you say that I am defying conventionality? It is only as if I were going to school; and you would not mind my doing that if I were a year or two younger. Oh, Aunt Jane," she continued, laying her hand upon her aunt's arm and speaking with a little quiver in her voice, "please let me go! I can't stay here. You are all very kind; but—but—oh, don't you see that I *can't* stay?"

Lady Jane did not see it at all, and did not like the tone that her niece was taking up. "My dear," she answered, drawing away her arm, while the smile faded from her face, "you really must try to be more reasonable. Ask me for something that I can give you, and I shall be only too glad to make you happy; but you can't expect me to countenance this extravagant scheme."

"We don't withdraw 'extravagant' this time," murmured Mr. Lefroy; but his interruption was not heeded. Hope went on pleading, at first humbly, then passionately, then tearfully; but Lady Jane kept her temper and maintained her authority, and the end of it was that her niece had to withdraw from the field vanquished.

The girl's disappointment was very bitter. She had set her heart upon getting her own way, and experience had not taught her that those who get their own way in this world do so more commonly by circuitous than by direct means. The worst of it was that, upon reflection, she could not help seeing how much more plausible her aunt's case was than her own. She was to be allowed to take lessons during five months of the year, if she was so minded; all that was denied to her

was independence; and, as a matter of abstract theory, a girl of nineteen certainly should not wish to be independent. "I must wait until I am twenty-one, that is all," she said to herself; and the prospect was not a smiling one. To go on living as a stranger in her old home,—how could she endure it? A hundred little daily rubs and worries, which, for being quite inevitable in her position, were not the less galling, recurred to her mind, and she could no longer make light of them. She had nothing to set against them now, nothing to look forward to, for who can look two whole years ahead? Hope's disposition was naturally sweet and sanguine; she was determined not to sulk because she had been thwarted, and she tried to go about with as cheerful a face as usual. But in private she brooded and fretted until at last she made herself so ill that the doctor had to be called in.

The doctor was a cheery, good-humored little man who had known Miss Lefroy from the day of her birth. A very few questions and answers sufficed to show him what was the matter, and on being led into the library by Lady Jane he asked whether he might be permitted to suggest a moral prescription.

"Please suggest anything that you like," answered Lady Jane, resignedly. "I know what you are going to say: the poor girl is not happy. But how can I help it?"

"Oh," said the doctor, "I think you can help it. Do you know, Lady Jane, I was once summoned to attend a little boy in a humble rank of life who was consumed with anxiety to go to sea. He was not fit for it; he hadn't the constitution for it, and he had never been accustomed to being cuffed. He was the only son of his parents, who naturally couldn't endure the thought of his being flogged with a rope's end and possibly drowned. They reasoned with him, they scolded him, I am not sure that they didn't even give him a gentle whipping; but it was all no good. The boy literally pined away, and at last they got frightened and sent for me. I had a good deal of difficulty in prevailing upon them to let him do as he wished, but I succeeded in the end, and when a year was up he returned from his first and last voyage radically cured. He is now a respectable carpenter in a good way of business, and when he takes his wife and family for a day's holiday he goes anywhere rather than to the sea-side."

"That is all very well," said Lady Jane; "but suppose he had liked a seafaring life?"

"In that case I presume that he would have made a good sailor; and there are worse people than good sailors in this world. I am not competent to give an opinion as to whether Miss Hope will ever become an artist or not, but I don't hesitate to say that there is nothing like a

personal trial of the realities of life for dispelling visions and making young ladies and carpenters' apprentices contented with their respective lots."

Lady Jane stroked her chin with her eye-glasses. "Perhaps," she said, meditatively, "there may be something in that. For my own part, all I wish is to do what is right; and, if we do decide to follow your advice, I shall feel easier about asking down a few friends whom Mr. Lefroy wishes to have here for the covert-shooting, and whom we really ought to ask. While dear Hope is in the house I quite dread inviting anybody; because, although she says nothing, I can see that it is painful to her. On the other hand, if we send her away, people are sure to say that we want to get rid of her. Still, if you, as her medical attendant, are quite convinced that she ought to go to London——"

"I have not a doubt of it," replied the doctor, with a perfectly grave face and a twinkle in the corner of his eye. "It is true that your niece is at present free from organic disease, but I dare say you are aware that in every human body there is a predisposition towards one form of ailment or another, and Miss Hope's low, nervous condition is especially favorable to the development of—er—active mischief. In short, if she is vexed or crossed, I will not be answerable for the consequences."

"That," observed Lady Jane, with a sigh of resignation, "is conclusive. Health should be the first consideration, and, since you order Hope to London, I must not venture to disobey you."

Thus Hope obtained her freedom after all; not because she had asked for it, or because it was good for her, or because anybody really thought it desirable, but because young Lord Middleborough had paid a good deal of attention to Alice during the past season, because Lord Middleborough liked pheasant-shooting, because it was impossible to ask him to Helston without inviting a party to meet him, and finally because "the doctor ordered it" is, or ought to be, a sufficient answer to any ill-natured persons who might accuse a fond aunt of turning her niece out of doors. Let us hasten to add, in justice to Lady Jane, that she was quite unconscious of this string of motives; and, indeed, if we once begin prying either into our own or into other people's motives, we are likely to waste much time and gain little satisfaction. Hope did nothing of the kind. She was too much pleased with the result to care whether its causes were simple or complex, and the very same evening she wrote to Mills to ask for the accommodation that she required.

By return of post Mills expressed in glowing language her pride at having been selected to take charge of her young mistress, her delight at the thought of the meeting which was now so near, and her fears lest a first floor in Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square, should seem terribly

restricted in point of size and mean in point of furniture by comparison with the space and magnificence of Helston Abbey. She further intimated her surprise that the family should have decided to send Miss Hope to lodgings, seeing that the house in Eaton Square was standing empty, and that a few servants could very well have been spared "to make you comfortable, the same as your poor, dear papa would have wished." She added, however, that it was not for her to complain of the arrangement that had been made. "And if your own flesh and blood don't know your value, my dear, your old nurse does. So please tell her ladyship, with my respectful duty, that you will be took as much care of here as if you was at home."

Evidently Mills was one of those ill-conditioned persons, mentioned by Lady Jane, who would be sure to accuse Hope's relations of wishing to get rid of her. It did not, therefore, seem advisable to show her ladyship the whole of Mills's letter, although the above message was duly delivered and graciously received.

Lady Jane, indeed, appeared determined to be gracious. During the last week of her stay at Helston, Hope was troubled with no more remonstrances, and only had to listen to a good many homilies touching the conduct which it would behoove her to adopt in London. She might, of course, call upon such of her friends as happened to be in town; but it would be better that she should not do so too frequently, and on no account whatever was she to form fresh acquaintances. It was taken for granted that her absence would only be temporary and that she would be back before the end of the year, which impression she wisely did not attempt to correct. "I will certainly be with you at Christmas," she said, not adding that she proposed to allow herself no more than a fortnight's holiday at that time.

Nevertheless, she was unable to avoid a dispute with her uncle about money, her intention being to live upon the two hundred and fifty pounds a year provided for her, which Mr. Lefroy declared to be preposterous and impossible. Her knowledge of the subject was so limited that she was easily put to silence, and in the end had to accept, with a mental reservation, the additional sum stated to be absolutely necessary for her support during the next three months.

"I wish there was no such thing as money in the world!" she exclaimed, impatiently, at last; and perhaps there was some truth in the remark made by Mr. Lefroy to his wife as they stood watching the carriage which bore Hope away to the station:

"My dear, I am quite ready to admit that you are generally right, while I am generally wrong; but to all rules there are exceptions, and I can't help thinking that you have made a little mistake in allowing

that girl to get her head up. I shouldn't be surprised if she broke clean away from you, after this."

But Lady Jane said, "Montague, you do not understand girls. She will come back in a very different frame of mind, and before this time next year she will be married to Dick Herbert."

"Will she, indeed? When that event comes off I shall be more than ever convinced that you are a very superior woman."

"I hope you will. In the mean time, be thankful that you can now ask as many men as you wish down to shoot your pheasants."

Whereupon Mr. Lefroy, who knew very well that the men who would be asked to shoot his pheasants would not be men of his choosing, smiled, and returned to his study.

CHAPTER VI.

TRISTRAM, R.A.

THERE are more quiet houses in London than is, perhaps, generally supposed; and probably there would be more still if the majority of people did not secretly enjoy the din of which they so often complain. Such houses must, however, of course, be situated in a *cul-de-sac*, and this is apt to make them as dreary to those who like looking out of the window as they are delightful to persons of a studious turn or nervous temperament. The noise of the traffic comes to them from afar in a subdued, continuous roar, like the breaking of the sea upon a shingly beach; organ-grinders and costermongers shun them; often they have gardens attached to them,—somewhat grimy ones, it is true, still gardens; and the owner of one of these is to be seen by his neighbors on most summer evenings, pacing up and down, his pipe in his mouth, his soft felt hat on the back of his head, and his hands in the pockets of his shabby shooting-coat, until the darkness hides him.

The neighbors, peering inquisitively down at this tall, solitary figure, are wont to wonder what he is thinking about, and no doubt their inability to satisfy their curiosity saves them from disappointment; for, like the rest of the world, Wilfrid Tristram, R.A., frequently thinks about nothing worth mentioning. Yet, being, as he unquestionably is, a man of great and original genius, it is only natural that he should be an object of interest to those who dwell around him. He is famous, he is odd, and he is reported to be wealthy. His house, which was built from his own designs about ten years ago, and which stands in a short street not far from Rutland Gate, is as original as its master and by no

means as shabby as his coat. Constructed by an artist for an artist, it would be unfit for any other occupant, and unless Tristram leaves it to an artist at his death it will have to be pulled down. It possesses an entrance-hall of noble dimensions, a vast and admirably-lighted studio, a good-sized dining-room, a small smoking-room, and no drawing-room at all. There is said to be accommodation for one or two visitors upstairs; but, as Tristram never has a visitor to stay with him, this is space thrown away.

Friends, however, he has, and plenty of them. It is probably for their sake that he keeps an excellent cook, he himself being utterly indifferent as to what he eats and drinks. His dinner-parties, which occur on an average twice a week during the season, and to which only men are invited, are popular. There is no formality about them; a large proportion of those who attend them have achieved distinction in some way; they are enlivened by a good deal of merriment, and the company seldom separates until the night is far advanced. The host, when in the humor, can be as gay as the youngest of his guests, and will even indulge in a little horse-play upon occasion; but it is doubtful whether he does not prefer his own society to that of anybody else. There are men who, by nature, or by the force of circumstances, are doomed to be always alone, and such men are probably never more alone than when they are surrounded by companions. Tristram's history—or, if not his history, some approximate version of it which did as well—was known to his friends, and was considered by them to explain some of his peculiarities. Many years back, his wife, to whom he was said to have been passionately attached, had left him for the sake of a good-looking young fool, by whom she, in her turn, had been speedily deserted; and this was held to account for Tristram's dislike of women and for the roughness of his manner towards them, as to which many anecdotes were current.

"If you want to see my pictures," he said once, knitting his shaggy brows and glaring at a great lady who had sailed into his studio, "you can go to the private view at the Academy; if you want to buy them, you can communicate with me by letter; but if you only want to talk, I must ask you to repeat your visit some day when there is no light and when I can't work."

Yet there were a few ladies—the heroine of this story, among others—whom he did not hate. He admitted that good women, though rare, were to be met with occasionally; good men he believed to be, upon the whole (and if you did not fix your standard too high), more common than bad ones. What he could not and would not admit was the existence of a single capable art-critic. For many years the critics had

ignored or laughed at him; they had caused him an amount of suffering which would have astonished them very much had they known of it, and he was quite unable to forgive them now that they lauded him to the skies. It was against the critics that Hope used to hear him thundering in the days when her father used to take her to Tristram's studio. He would not even have their praise, which he averred to be as stupid as their blame. One of them, and one only, had had the luck to win a good word from him by declaring that it was "impossible to judge Mr. Tristram's works by any of the received canons of Art."

"Here," cried Tristram, when he read the above passage, "is a fellow who deserves to be better employed! He has found out that there are forest-trees which his little arms can't span nor his puny strength cut down, and in a moment of honesty he actually says so! There is hope for that man." And he incontinently asked the critic to dinner, but was disappointed with him on closer acquaintance, finding him less humble than might have been anticipated.

Humility was a virtue which Tristram felt to be more becoming in others than in himself. He could not help knowing that he was a great man; it was a pity that he could not help the littlenesses from which even great men are not always exempt. Confident in his own genius, but so sensitive to a breath of censure that the reading of the newspapers at certain seasons of the year was a daily penance to him, he made himself miserable over attacks at which other artists would have been content to smile, and it was always in the power of the merest criticaster to goad him into a fury.

However, not many people attacked him after his reputation was once made; and it must be said for him that his wrath, even against the critics, did not go beyond words. Had one of them been reduced to poverty and come to beg for his assistance, it is certain that five pounds would have found their way out of Tristram's pocket into his before he had been narrating his woes for five minutes. Persons in need of five pounds, and of greater as well as less sums, frequently visited Tristram, got what they wanted, and, as the lamentable practice of such persons is, returned a second and a third time. "The greatest painter of the century," as they were too apt to denominate him in their gratitude, opened his hands to them without stint and without putting many questions. He had known what it was to be poor and hungry, and had no desire that others should experience those sad sensations, if he could help it. True, he had never begged,—would probably have starved rather than beg,—but that was because he happened to respect himself. He did not expect everybody to possess

self-respect, or demand too much of poor human nature. Half child, half philosopher, he scattered abroad the money of which he now had far more than he required, only too glad that it should be picked up by those who cared more about it than he did.

One November morning he was in his studio, dashing off a study for a picture which afterwards became celebrated,—the sale of the Roman Empire by the Prætorians to Didius Julianus,—when some one was announced whose business was not of that simple kind which is disposed of by the careless gift of a handful of guineas. Tristram, who had not seen Hope since her father's death, and who was far from suspecting what had brought her to his house, dropped his brushes and hurried towards the door to meet her.

"Ah, my dear Miss Hope!" he exclaimed, taking both her hands, "I don't know whether I am most glad to see you or sad to see you alone. Your dear father was a kind friend to me: I think he was kind to everybody. Only he was always so quiet in his ways that perhaps we none of us knew how much we cared for him till we heard that he was gone."

Tristram was not a reticent man. It would never have occurred to him to pass over his old friend's death without allusion, or to express his sympathy with the orphan by silence and mournful looks, which is the more common method. He may have been wanting in delicacy; but Hope, at any rate, did not think so. His simple words went straight to her heart and brought the tears into her eyes.

"You really knew him," she said. "There are so few people who did."

So they sat down together and talked about bygone days, and Hope was able to speak more freely of her loss than she had as yet spoken to any one. "But I ought not to interrupt you like this," she said, at last.

"You don't interrupt me," answered Tristram, "or, rather, I like being interrupted. But I can go on with my work, if it will make you more comfortable." And he picked up his pallet and brushes again. "What are you doing in London? Are your uncle and aunt up?" he asked, presently.

"No," answered Hope: "I am living by myself,—at least, I am living with an old nurse of mine,—and I called to-day to have a serious consultation with you. You know that I have lost all my money?"

"Yes, I heard. It made me very sorry."

"You ought not to be sorry," returned Hope, smiling. "Do you remember once saying to me that it was a thousand pities that I was not obliged to earn my own living?"

Tristram stopped painting and looked at her, drawing his brows together.

"Did I say that?" he asked.

"Yes; and the last time I saw you—at that ball, you know—you told me that I ought to be thankful for having a pursuit to fall back upon."

"That I do remember; and I stick to what I said. Well?"

"Well, now I have fallen back upon my pursuit and I have to work for my living, and I want you to advise me as to the best and quickest way of doing so."

When Tristram was annoyed or perplexed he had a habit of combing his beard violently with his long fingers. He began combing his beard now. "Am I to understand that you are dependent upon your own exertions?" he asked.

"Not exactly that, because I have a small income still. I should have thought it would have been enough for me to live upon, but they tell me it isn't; and, anyhow, I should prefer its being larger."

"But I heard that your uncle—that you were to continue to live at Helston."

"Yes; but I couldn't. I know everybody would say that it was 'the proper arrangement,' and I know everybody will be horrified at my wanting to be an artist and lead an independent life; but you are not like everybody. I thought you would understand."

"Oh, I understand well enough," answered Tristram, who was walking about the room and was still causing himself much unnecessary pain by dragging hairs out of his beard; "I understand as well as anybody what the charms of freedom are; but then, my dear Miss Hope, I am a great big man, and I have always had to look after myself, while you are a young lady who has been brought up in cotton-wool."

"A woman may be an artist," said Hope.

"Oh, certainly: there is Rosa Bonheur, and there was Angelica Kaufmann."

"There have been plenty of others. Please don't talk to me as if I were a silly child. I don't aspire to be famous; but surely there is no great presumption in thinking that I may learn to paint pictures which some people will buy. Look at the rubbish that they do buy!"

"Would you be content to paint rubbish? I grant you that rubbish sells more readily than anything else; but even that popular article requires to be signed by a well-known name."

"Everything must have a beginning."

"Oh, excuse me; there are many things which had much better

not be begun." He paused abruptly in his walk and planted himself in front of his visitor, with his hand upon his hips. "Look here, Miss Hope," said he: "did you come to ask me for advice?"

"No," answered Hope, boldly, "I didn't; because my mind is made up. I came to ask you for information and help."

"Come," said Tristram, with a laugh, "I am glad you take up that line: it relieves me from responsibility. And now, if you will promise not to tell anybody, I'll let you into a secret: I believe that if I had been in your place I should have done exactly what you are doing."

Hope's face, which had grown rather grave, lighted up with smiles. "Oh, thank you!" she exclaimed, gratefully.

"Ah, but that doesn't alter the fact that you are doing a foolish thing. Now, how am I to help you? Do you want me to introduce you to the picture-dealers?"

"Of course I don't: how could you think such a thing of me? I want you to recommend a course of study to me. I am utterly ignorant about masters, and schools, and so on. The only master I know of is old Mr. Bluett, whom papa used to have down to Helston to give me lessons."

"And who taught you long ago all that he has it in him to teach."

"I dare say he did. Where ought I to go now, then?"

Tristram took a few more turns without replying, and then said, suddenly, "You had better come here, I think."

"Here?" repeated Hope, doubting whether she had heard rightly.

"Yes, I think so: it isn't as if you were quite a beginner. If you were, I should hesitate to undertake you, for I have very little patience and no experience as a teacher; but, as it is, I believe I can push you on more rapidly than you could be pushed on in a School of Art. No doubt you would learn something there; but the process is a slow one, and my object is——"

"But, Mr. Tristram," interrupted Hope, "I must not take up your time in that way. It is very good and kind of you to think of it; but I could not accept so much."

"I never met such an obstinate young lady as you are: you won't accept anything from anybody! Do you suppose I am going to let you interfere with my work, pray? What you are to do is to watch me in the first place, and to work in a corner by yourself in the second. Every now and then I shall take a look at you and tell you where you are going wrong. What I was saying when you interrupted me was that my object is to be able to let you know as soon as possible whether there is any use in your persevering. Mind you, it isn't worth your while to paint what you call rubbish. You sacrifice a great deal in

taking up Art as a profession. You lose sight of your friends, you drop out of society, you are called eccentric, and you miss opportunities which—which—in short, you leave your own class. If you have any chance of making a name for yourself, well and good. But you must not pay such a long price merely for the satisfaction of pocketing twenty or thirty guineas occasionally."

"You forget the freedom," remarked Hope, smiling.

"Oh, freedom!—that's a relative term. After all, what do you want with freedom?—and who is really free to do as he likes? Certainly you are not. Why, you can't even come here to study under a graybeard like me, unless you bring some sort of an old woman with you. I have an aged housekeeper somewhere about the establishment who might do. Or could you get your ex-nurse to look after you?"

"I will ask her," answered Hope, to whom this aspect of the case had not yet presented itself, and who began to realize the difficulties of independent existence. "But I am not sure that she can spare the time."

Mills, however, when informed of the service required of her, declared that all her time was at her young mistress's disposal, and that her first-floor lodgers must not expect to have their landlady at their beck and call from morning till night. It was bad enough, she said, that they should be on the first floor at all, while their betters were sent up to poky little rooms over their heads; but if they began to give themselves airs, why, the sooner they moved elsewhere the better.

As they had never given themselves airs, this was a little hard upon them; but Mills was not pleased with what she considered Hope's escapade, and, being vexed at things generally, had to find a scapegoat somewhere.

CHAPTER VII

THE OPINIONS OF MRS. MILLS.

INJUSTICE and misconception are rife in this world, and very good people often judge other good people with conspicuous lack of charity. It is even pretended by some that good people are more prone to err in this way than bad ones; but let that pass. Certain it is that at this time the worthy and faithful Mills formed an exceedingly low opinion of Mr. Montague Lefroy. Miss Hope, poor dear, might think it a fine thing to try and earn her own daily bread; it was natural that she should think so, bless her innocence! But what would her poor papa have said if he could have seen her tramping through the streets in all

weathers on her way to the house of a common artist, who was not over and above civil to her when she got there, and didn't seem to know his proper place at all? And as for that old uncle of hers, who was living in what ought to have been her home, and who should have known a great deal better than to permit such goings-on, Mills became so angry when she thought of his behavior that she was more than once driven to exclaim "Drat him!" aloud. However, she only did this in the solitude of her own room. Mills knew her place, if Mr. Tristram did not know his. She might have her own notions of what was right as betwixt relations, of what was due from the younger branch of a family to the elder, likewise of what was commonly decent; but far be it from her to utter them! She was well aware that it was not for her to make remarks about her superiors, and, that there might be no mistake as to her submissive attitude, she took care to say as much to Hope every morning of her life.

But neither with her lips nor in her heart did she murmur at the task imposed upon her of spending many a weary hour in the studio of the common artist above mentioned. She did not like it; she would have preferred to be keeping an eye upon her servants at home; but, on the other hand, she was proud of acting as Miss Hope's protector, and, having an unfailing supply of socks and stockings to darn, argued philosophically that she might almost as well be darning them in one place as in another.

Tristram, who was a good deal amused by her determined silence and by the grim impassiveness of her demeanor, found her, one day, gazing at a picture which he had just finished, and asked her what she thought of it.

"If you please, sir, I'm no judge," the old woman said.

"That is a very poor reason to give for not pronouncing a judgment. Come, let us hear your opinion."

"Well, sir, if I'm to say what I think," replied Mills, who perhaps was not sorry to say what she thought, "I prefer Miss Hope's pictures to yours."

"It would be a very good thing for Miss Hope if half a dozen people whom I could name agreed with you and had the courage to say so. Personally, I feel bound to give myself the preference. I think, if you will make a careful comparison, you will see that I have a rather bolder style."

"Maybe you have, sir, but it's too splashy for my taste," responded Mills, briefly.

"Mrs. Mills," said Tristram, "you ought to have been an art-critic. You have laid your finger upon my chief defect, and I dare say it

will astonish you to hear that that is the very thing for which I am most admired. Let me tell you, however, that there is no other artist in England who could make such splashes as those."

In this he spoke the simple truth, and he might have added that there was no artist in England less fitted to instruct a beginner. Tristram's method was his own, and could hardly be reduced to any set of rules for the guidance of others. Yet he took great pains with his pupil, and, though he could not impart to her the secret of his marvellous dexterity, of the assured sweep of his brush, and of his rapidity of workmanship, he did teach her something.

"Correctness," he told her, "is all very well, but it is not Art. What you want to do is to throw your soul into your work and to force people to see with your eyes. Unhappily, that is not easy."

Hope, who had never expected to find it easy, was not discouraged by the very small meed of praise which rewarded her exertions. Tristram would stand, with his hands behind his back, silently contemplating what she had done, and, when asked to point out faults, would reply that there were none to speak of. "You haven't got it yet, that's all," he would say, turning away. He did not explain what he meant by "it;" but Hope understood well enough.

On one occasion she was privileged to overhear an independent opinion of her performances. As visitors often dropped in during the day, and as Tristram did not think it desirable that they should be aware of Miss Lefroy's presence, he had made Hope set up her easel in a small room adjoining the studio, the door of which he usually slammed at the first sound of approaching footsteps. One day, however, he happened to push it to without quite closing it, and thus Hope was enabled to hear a voice (which, if she had known it, belonged to a celebrated painter) expressing unbounded admiration of "The Sale of the Roman Empire." Tristram responded somewhat gruffly,—it has already been said that he was a man whom it was difficult to praise to his satisfaction,—and after a time his friend, desisting from eulogy, began to walk about the studio, apparently examining one thing and another.

"This is fine, Tristram," Hope heard him say presently; "but it isn't altogether *you*, somehow. I never knew you work up your details so elaborately before."

"Glad you like it," replied Tristram: "it's by a friend of mine, a rising young artist, and you can buy it cheap, if you choose."

"Really?" said the other, who was well-to-do, and who sometimes purchased the works of rising artists, sometimes also disposing of them at a legitimate profit when the said artists had risen. "What does he want for it?"

"Oh, fifty guineas now. Next year it may be a different story; but we mustn't be too greedy at starting."

The stranger laughed. "I don't think I'll buy it," he said. "If I might offer your young friend a word of advice, it would be to make the most he can of his own powers and not try to imitate the inimitable. He has ruined his picture by putting in those bold touches, which he no doubt takes for a reproduction of your style. I was almost taken in for a moment; but a little closer inspection reveals the sham. Don't let the poor young man attempt that kind of thing again: it isn't to be done. There is only one Tristram in the world."

"But there are a great many asses," returned the ungrateful Tristram. "Every one of those bold touches that you mention was put in by this unworthy hand. Where are you now, my good friend?"

"It appears to me that I am in the house of a man who has been trying to palm off a fraud upon me," replied the other, good-humoredly. "Isn't it rather doubtful morality to get a young friend to paint a picture, touch it up yourself, and then ask fifty guineas for it?"

"That's right! grumble now! Why, man, have you no sense of shame? For that paltry sum I offer you a work which you yourself pronounced very fine so long as you thought that it was by me. When you found that it was neither by me nor by anybody else whom you had ever heard of, you began to sneer at it; and finally, when you are told that I added a stroke to it here and there, you talk about doubtful morality! Good Lord! what a world of ignorance and humbug we live in! Blindfold a man, and it is as much as he can do to distinguish between port and claret; give him a bottle of your best Château-Margaux after dinner, and he will go into ecstasies over it,—only if you tell him it is Médoc he will call it sour. Doubtful morality, indeed! And what sort of morality do you call it, pray, to praise what you don't really like and run down what you are afraid to own that you admire? Of all kinds of dishonesty, I do think dishonest criticism is the most contemptible, because it is so perfectly safe. Hang me if I believe that such a thing as an honest critic exists!"

He was still fuming after his friend had gone away, and when Hope, emerging from her ambush, confessed that she had been playing the eavesdropper.

"Well," said he, "I am not sorry that you should have heard what you did. It will show you what Art is as a profession, and the dog's life that we are made to lead sometimes for years. By fools, too: that's the worst of it. The man who has just gone away does at least know something about his trade, and, if he can be so blinded by prejudice as to talk the nonsense that he did a few minutes ago, what can you

expect from a fellow who only writes for the newspapers and probably couldn't paint a cow that anybody would know from a pig, except by the horns?"

"But he did think the picture good at first," observed Hope, alluding to the artist, not to the critic.

"Did he? Goodness knows what he thought: evidently he himself didn't. He said it was 'fine.' It isn't fine: he could hardly have said anything more absurd. And he couldn't recognize my touch, either, when he saw it. Ah, well, in future, when I want a candid judgment on my work, I shall apply to Mrs. Mills. Yours is an uncorrupted mind, Mrs. Mills: you don't deceive either yourself or others."

"I trust not, sir," replied Mills. "And, if you please, Miss Hope, it's past one o'clock."

Hope, as she walked away, was by no means so displeased with her unknown critic as Tristram had been. Secretly she was inclined to agree with him that the picture had been spoiled by those bold touches which she had not added to it. Tristram had spoken of fifty guineas, too, and had said that next year the price might be higher. That sounded promising. She had not altogether realized the meaning of his friend's laugh, and she was already beginning to realize the value of fifty guineas. That is a lesson quickly learned by such as attempt to live upon two hundred and fifty pounds a year, and Hope was resolved that her annual expenditure should not exceed that modest figure. She had gone into the matter in a thoroughly business-like spirit, and after setting aside fifty pounds a year for dress (for she could not conceive that any human being could be decently clothed upon less) had found that her rent and household bills averaged four pounds a week. Fifty-two multiplied by four gave two hundred and eight, or an annual deficit of eight pounds,—which was a pity; but by spending a few weeks at Helston during the summer some further retrenchment would doubtless be achieved. Obviously, however, the budget could not be framed so as to include any estimate for cab-hire; and thus Miss Lefroy, accompanied by Mills, had to walk across Hyde Park twice every day.

Hyde Park on a damp November afternoon is not the gayest place in the world, nor are its footpaths always found pleasant walking by those foolish pedestrians who will insist upon wearing patent-leather boots in London, no matter what the season of the year may be. But when one has the credit of one's battalion to keep up in the matter of dress one must not mind small discomforts, and the dapper young gentleman who stepped out of the mist to meet Hope and her protectress as they hurried homeward had turned up his trousers and was picking his way along as cheerfully as could be expected under the muddy circumstances.

But when he recognized the figure in deep mourning before him his cheerfulness increased into joy ; he pitched away his cigarette, took off his hat, and exclaimed, " Good gracious ! Miss Lefroy—how delighted I am ! I didn't know you were in London."

Hope bowed, coloring slightly and for the first time in her life feeling shy ; and the young man added, with a rather crestfallen air, " You have forgotten all about me, I see. If there is a thing that fills me with grief and humiliation, it is having to tell people who I am ; but there's no help for it, evidently, this time. My name is Cunningham. Now, don't say you never heard it before."

There was not much danger of her saying that ; nor had she ever forgotten the fascinating partner with whom she had once spent a happy evening and against whom she had been warned on the following day. Only he seemed to her to belong to some previous state of existence ; his name was written in a concluded chapter ; the change in her circumstances, she thought, had opened an impassable gulf between her and the world to which she belonged by birth ; and this—or some other reason which she did not specify to herself—made her feel embarrassed : so that she could find nothing to say, except, " Oh, I remember you quite well, Captain Cunningham."

" Are you going to be any time in London ?" he asked. " Where are you staying ? May I call upon you ?"

" Well, no ; I am afraid you can't do that," answered Hope, recovering her self-possession, " because I am living all by myself."

Then, as he looked much astonished, she explained : " That is, I am living with my old nurse. I don't know whether—perhaps you have heard of my—my—misfortunes."

The young man, assuming a decently lugubrious expression of countenance, replied that he had, adding something about " awfully sorry,—very shocking,"—and so lapsing into unintelligible murmurings.

" I am studying Art," Hope continued. " I hope to be able to support myself in that way some day or other."

She was moving on now, and Cunningham was walking beside her, Mills having dropped into the background.

" Support yourself ?" repeated the young man, in a tone of astonishment amounting almost to stupefaction. " I—I—never heard of such a thing !"

" It is my own choice," said Hope, smiling at his consternation and guessing what his thoughts were. " My uncle and aunt wanted me to stay on with them at Helston ; but I did not wish to do that. I felt that I must earn my own living. Don't you understand ?" she asked,

with a touch of impatience; for the young fellow was staring at her in undisguised surprise.

"Oh, yes," he answered, slowly, "I understand; only I don't sympathize. It is the sort of thing that you would be sure to do, and I admire you for it,—all the more because it is the sort of thing that I should be sure *not* to do."

"Would you not rather feel that you were living by the work of your own hands than upon an allowance made you by an uncle?"

"I shouldn't advise any uncle of mine to offer me an allowance unless he meant his offer to be jumped at. No, Miss Lefroy: it is my fixed principle never to do anything for myself so long as I can get somebody else to do it for me."

After making this scandalous confession, of which he did not appear to be in the least ashamed, Captain Cunningham walked on in silence for a few seconds. "I should like awfully to see your pictures," he remarked, presently. "Couldn't I manage to get a look at them somehow?"

"Not just at present," answered Hope, sedately. "When I have painted a sufficient number, I shall exhibit them in a gallery in Bond Street, and you will be admitted, with the rest of the public, upon payment of a shilling. But it seems possible that you may have to wait a year or two."

"And am I to wait a year or two before I see you again?"

This was a question to which Hope was not prepared to give a reply; but it struck her all of a sudden that the present interview had lasted long enough: so she came to a stand-still, and said, "I don't know. At any rate, I will not take you farther out of your way now."

Captain Cunningham looked very unwilling to accept his dismissal.

"Of course, if you tell me to go, I must go," he said, throwing a reproachful expression into those dark-blue eyes of his; "but, Miss Lefroy, do you never go anywhere where—where—your friends are likely to meet you?"

"Never."

"I suppose you go home sometimes,—to your uncle's, I mean?"

"Oh, yes: I shall be going down there at Christmas."

"Come, that's better!" cried the young man, cheerfully. "I'll get them to ask me down too." And, after shaking hands with somewhat unnecessary warmth, he departed.

As soon as he was out of hearing, Mills, whose face was bright with pleasure and excitement, and who during the above colloquy had found time to construct a complete romance, exclaimed, "My dear, what a beautiful young gentleman!"

Hope laughed. "He is a nice sort of boy," she said: "I don't think he is particularly beautiful."

Nevertheless, she did think so, and indeed could hardly have thought anything else. Also she had a suspicion that he admired her very much; and his admiration was not altogether disagreeable to her. Is there any woman living to whom the admiration of a beautiful young gentleman would be disagreeable? Hope was very far from setting possibilities before herself in the uncompromising fashion adopted by Mills; but more than once in the course of the next few days she found herself wondering when and where she would next meet Captain Cunningham, and by what means he proposed to get himself invited to Helston Abbey.

It was not by such mere details that Captain Cunningham was likely to be baffled. His acquaintance with Mr. Lefroy and Lady Jane was only a slight one, it was true; but, if he did not know them very well, he knew numbers of people with whom they were intimate, and his experience had taught him that an invitation to a country house may easily be obtained in many ways by a resolute man. He had, however, a conscience,—which conscience told him that he ought not to seek for this particular invitation. The fact that he had fallen profoundly in love with Hope Lefroy (he had been profoundly in love once or twice before) did not, he felt, justify him in pursuing her. He had no money worth mentioning, and it appeared that she was now in the same undesirable predicament. Conscience, therefore,—or was it prudence, perhaps?—waved him imperatively away from her. In this strait he followed the dictates of his nature and confided his trouble to a certain lady friend of his, whose advice was prompt and unhesitating.

"You will please not to make a fool of yourself," this worldly-wise lady said; "and, as I can't trust you out of my sight, I will take very good care that you spend your Christmas with us."

It is thus that worldly-wise ladies often succeed in preparing the way for all kinds of catastrophes.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. HERBERT ON MARRIAGE.

MAN is born to labor and sorrow, as the sparks fly upward. The majority of us have so many serious troubles and anxieties that we accept the minor miseries of suppressed gout, unpaid bills, tedious acquaintances, corns, and the like, as incidental to our mortal lot, and

have neither time nor disposition to grumble at them. But when a man has everything in the world to make him happy—when he is healthy and wealthy, and has a modest conviction that he is also wise, when his eldest daughter is about to be married to an altogether unexceptionable viscount, when his yearly bills are all made beautiful by receipt-stamps, and when he has not so much as a corn to complain of—it is but natural that he should resent very deeply any trifling worry that may intrude upon his bliss and think it hard that he should be afflicted with a wrong-headed niece.

This is why Mr. Lefroy, after welcoming Hope back to Helston with appropriate Christmas greetings, hastened to promote the merriment of the season by adding, emphatically, "And now I do trust that we have heard the last of this nonsense!"

Hope wished to know what nonsense.

"Why, this picture-painting and starving in frowzy London lodgings."

"Indeed they are not frowzy," said Hope.

"Very well, they are not frowzy; but they are lodgings, and you starved in them. Don't say you didn't, because I know better. You have actually paid back to my bankers the wretched little sum I gave you before you left us. Now, I must say I think that is rather too bad!"

"Please don't be angry, Uncle Montague: it is only that I do want to live upon my own resources, if I can."

"My dear, I am not the least angry; but I am bothered, and I can't for the life of me see why you should wish to bother me in this way. Do you think it is pleasant to be asked by every single person who comes to the house what my niece is doing, and to be obliged to reply, 'Oh, she is up in London, trying to keep body and soul together by painting pictures'? I put it to you as a sensible girl: do you think it is pleasant?"

"Is that the answer that you make, Uncle Montague?"

"No; but it's what they understand. And then they say, 'Poor girl!' and look pensive. You must admit that this is a little trying to a well-meaning uncle who only asks to be allowed to do his duty."

"There is a well-meaning niece in the case who wants to be allowed to do hers," observed Hope.

She was not going to give in; but she perceived that there were breakers ahead, and it was fortunate for her that her aunt and cousins were just now fully occupied with Alice's engagement and approaching marriage to Lord Middleborough. The bride-elect, to whose lot had fallen the rare privilege of pleasing her family and consulting her own

inclinations at one and the same time, was in an excusable condition of glee, and could hardly be expected to interest herself much at such a moment in her cousin's artistic career, which, indeed, neither she nor her sister had ever taken quite seriously. When, in the midst of a grave discussion as to the colors to be worn by the bridesmaids at the coming nuptials, Alice interrupted herself to remark, "Of course you will come with us to London in February, Hope?" and when Hope replied that she intended to return to London long before the date mentioned, both the girls laughed, assuring her that she could not do such a thing as that. The doctor having prescribed a total change of surroundings for her, there had been a reason to give for her leaving Helston in the autumn; but she was well again now, and it would never do for her to be living in Henrietta Street while her relations were in Eaton Square. People would think it so odd.

"Does it matter what people think?" Hope asked.

To which absurd question her cousins replied, wonderingly, "Of course it does, dear: it's the one thing that *does* matter."

The proposition was to them so self-evident that they were unable to understand how so talented a girl as Hope could fail to grasp it; while she, on her side, found it simply incredible that any human being should shape the course of his or her life in submission to the prejudices of a few careless gossips. The best plan was to say no more about it; and, luckily, there were many other subjects to be talked about.

A considerable number of visitors were already in the house, and more were expected. Lord Middleborough, an amiable, unremarkable young man, with large possessions, arrived on Christmas Eve, as did also various members of the Lefroy clan, who had been wont to consider Helston a dullish house in bygone days, and who appeared to be pleased with the new *régime*. But there was one person who did not come, and Hope could not help wondering why he didn't. She mentioned casually to Gertrude that she had met Captain Cunningham one day in London, and asked whether they had heard anything of him lately. The reply that she received was not wholly satisfactory to her.

"Oh, no," Gertrude answered: "we never hear of him when we are in the country, except sometimes from Dick Herbert, who is rather a friend of his. People said at one time that he was going to marry Dick's sister, who is an heiress. Captain Cunningham is the kind of man who is sure to marry an heiress some day; but I suppose he will put it off as long as he can."

"Things are made very hard for the poor heiresses," Hope remarked. "I am glad I am not one any longer."

"Things are much more often made hard for those who are not heiresses," rejoined Gertrude; and there seemed to be something to be said in support of that view.

But Hope trusted that things were not going to be made hard for her just yet. Her uncle, after his first little querulous outburst, left her in peace; and her aunt, as she fondly imagined, was too busy with her guests and future son-in-law to think about anybody or anything else. Lady Jane, however, was quite capable of thinking about a good many things simultaneously. She had received a hint from her husband, and was by no means so indifferent as she appeared to be.

"Well," she said rather sharply to the doctor, who was invited to dinner on Christmas-day, "your prescription has had no effect."

"Really, my dear lady," replied the man of medicine, blandly, "I don't think you ought to say that. Miss Lefroy is looking quite well and strong again."

"I don't speak of her bodily health. She is not cured of her complaint; and you promised that she should be."

"Oh, pardon me, I made no promises. And, if you remember, a year was the period of absence which was found successful in the case that I cited to you."

"It is utterly and absolutely impossible for me to send my niece away for a year," returned Lady Jane, pettishly.

"Then neither my prescription nor I must be blamed if the patient has a relapse. Seriously, I don't see how you can have expected her to become discouraged so soon. A month or two at sea may be enough to cure a lad of wishing to be a sailor; but a month or two in comfortable quarters in London is hardly enough to cure a young lady of aspiring to be an artist. You should have given her time to fail."

"But I am not sure that she would have failed. Besides, a girl's time is really too valuable to be wasted in that way. No; I am much obliged to you, but I shall try another prescription now."

The doctor smiled. He guessed what the prescription would be, and was not concerned to dispute its efficacy. Doubtless it would be better for the poor girl to marry than to fail or succeed in her effort to support herself. The only question was whether she would consent to accept a husband of her aunt's choosing.

Lady Jane wrote out her prescription and sent it off the very next morning. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR DICK,—I wish you would run down here for a few days. I say a few days, because I am afraid you will not be persuaded to remain longer; but I need not tell you how pleased we shall be if

you care to stay on. You can hunt three times a week easily from here, and Mr. Lefroy wishes me to add that he has stabling for as many horses as you like to bring. Hope is with us now, and that is one reason why I want you to come: because you seem better able than any one else to amuse her and draw away her thoughts from her father's death, which she has not yet got over, I fear. I took your advice and let her go up to London by herself for some time; but it was a dangerous experiment, and I don't think it has succeeded very well. Do let me have a line to say that you will come, and

“Believe me

“Always affectionately yours,

“JANE LEFROY.”

In due course of time Mr. Herbert telegraphed, “All right;” and Lady Jane, who had not been quite sure that her invitation would be accepted, considered this somewhat unceremonious reply as a good omen. Perhaps it would be all right, she thought: after all, why should it not be? A glow of legitimate pride came over her as she reflected upon the triumph of capturing so confirmed a bachelor as Dick Herbert. “He certainly admired Hope very much when he was here before,” she said to herself, “and I doubt whether he would come back again if he did not mean something. Oh, what a mercy it will be if he does!”

But the vexatious thing about this man was that, although he had an established character for plain dealing and practised plain speaking to an extent which bordered upon the offensive, it was not always as easy as it ought to have been to discover exactly what he meant. What, for instance, did he mean by such a speech as this?—

“I'm awfully glad that Alice is making such a good match, and I congratulate you with all my heart, you know; but at the same time I wish you hadn't asked me to come here until the business was over. It's enough to give anybody the blues to see poor Middleborough in his present deplorable condition.”

This was about the only remark that he addressed to Lady Jane on the evening of his arrival; and, having made it, he walked away, feigning not to hear her when she called out to him to come back and explain himself. To Hope, however, he deigned to unfold his sentiments at somewhat greater length.

“I do think,” he announced to her, “that to marry for love is about the most idiotic thing that anybody can do.”

He sank down, as he spoke, upon the sofa at the end of the long drawing-room where Hope was sitting alone, her hands lying idle in her lap and her eyes fixed pensively upon the betrothed couple, who

had withdrawn into a remote corner and were pretending to play chess. She turned, with a look of surprise, to her neighbor.

"Why is it idiotic?" she asked. "I should have thought there couldn't be a better reason for marrying."

"Oh, I've no doubt you would have thought so," answered Herbert, a trifle irritably: "at your age one does think so. After one has kept one's eyes open for a considerable number of years one knows better. To begin with, it's such a one-sided business. Nearly always it is the man who is in love, and if, by any chance, it happens to be the woman, so much the worse for her."

Hope made no reply, but glanced significantly at her cousin and Lord Middleborough and smiled.

"Oh, well," resumed Herbert, "I didn't say always: I said nearly always. It may happen that both are in love; but what then? What is falling in love? It's a pleasant sort of experience, taking it altogether, and of course it becomes delightful if your love is returned, or if you fancy that it is returned. But to marry because you are in love is illogical. A man who does that is very apt to wake up some fine morning and find that he has tied himself for life to a vixen or a fool or a flirt."

"What would you have people marry for, then?" inquired Hope. "For money?"

"I have known people who have done so and haven't regretted it. At any rate, they have got all that they expected, don't you see? The great thing is to have a clear understanding before you start; and if one of you or both of you are in love that's an impossibility."

"I don't think I should care to have the future put before me in that cut-and-dried way," said Hope. "I would rather take my chance of disappointment. If any one offered to tell me now exactly what prospect I have of becoming an artist, I should stop my ears. Some day or other I must know the worst or the best; but I don't want to know yet."

"Your character seems to be the opposite of mine," remarked Herbert: "I like to face things."

By and by he asked, "What do your masters say to you?"

"I have only one master,—Mr. Tristram,—and he says very little."

"Oh! And what does your uncle say?"

"Nothing encouraging. I am afraid I shall have to fight another battle before I go back to London."

Herbert stretched out his long legs and looked at his feet. "I rather think," said he, deliberately, "that you will get beaten."

"If you do think so, it is not very kind to say so," returned Hope,

with a flash of anger in her eyes. "I have won one battle: why should I not win another?"

"Only because in your particular case it is easier to win one victory than two. Why can't you stay here till February, and then go up with the others?"

"You know why; and I did not expect you to turn against me," answered Hope, still much incensed against her former supporter.

"Yes," said Herbert, with a sigh, "I know. But all the same I am bound to confess that if I were your uncle I shouldn't let you leave Helston again. People are sure to talk. In fact, they have begun talking already."

"I thought you didn't care what people said?"

"We all care, really. We may pretend that we don't; but we do. Young Cunningham told me the other day that he had met you in Hyde Park and that you were living in lodgings somewhere all by yourself, and he wanted to know the meaning of it. I dare say he has been asking everybody."

"I don't see why there need be any mystery about the matter," answered Hope: "it isn't disgraceful." She hesitated for a moment before adding, "Do you know Captain Cunningham well?"

"Yes; about as well as one knows a man with whom one has nothing much in common. Why do you ask?"

He opened his eyes a hair's-breadth wider than usual and fixed them upon his questioner, who, to her annoyance, felt herself coloring slightly.

"I don't know," she replied. "The girls told me that he was a friend of yours, and I wondered whether it could be true. As you say, you and he are—are—not at all like one another."

"He is a very pleasant sort of a fellow," said Herbert, briefly. He looked as if he were going to add something, but apparently thought better of it, and, having already talked a great deal more than he was wont to do in one evening, relapsed into silence.

It is proverbial that silence is often eloquent, and likewise that there are persons who sometimes shine by their absence. If Captain Cunningham had desired to be as much in Miss Lefroy's thoughts as she was in his own at this time, he could not have adopted a wiser course than to deny himself a visit to Helston Abbey, nor could Fortune have served him better than by sending thither a friend of his who never spoke ill of the absent, and who, when he could not say much good of them, held his tongue.

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

IN A GARRET.

IT happened only last September ; and I think you do not know her. I should not, but for my old aunt Abby ; but now I often look at her when I meet her in the street, in her faded black gown,—is it bombazine, or is it alpaca ?—that is so limp and dingy and worn-out and looks like mourning tired with too many years' wearing. Happily, her face belies its frame : she has a sweet face, still pretty, and very fresh and smooth and quiet. Aunt Abby says she is far from poor : she knows her as working in some old charities, to which she gives much money. I asked about her, when I heard it, and found out more than Aunt Abby knows. Indeed, these things are not usually known ; and I think I found out more than any one knows, although this is a true story.

You see, Garden Street is not a pleasant street, and very few people know of it, and still fewer would ever go there ; and to visit in Garden Street is more than one would do for a mere acquaintance. It was not out of any want of respect for Miss Allerton, but she was so very old that her friends were mostly infirm, or dead, or they had many descendants and engrossing family cares ; and she had no relatives, or, at least, none in Boston,—at all events, none near enough to expect to come in for any of her money ; and mere acquaintances, as I have said, could not be expected to go to Garden Street to see her. Then, Miss Allerton had no nephews or great-nephews to keep her name before people, and no pretty-faced nieces to bring her on the scene as aunt to Juliet and a person for Romeos to conciliate. Then, she lived on Garden Street,—in a court off Garden Street. Now, Garden Street is bad enough, but Garden Court is worse ; for court is not a courtly name, like square or avenue. I, for one, if I die rich, expect to end my days on a boulevard at least, as names go now in the Republic.

Thus even the mere geography of the thing was enough ; for few people having due self-respect and sense of their position, social and geographical, in Backbavia would care to be found north of Cambridge Street ; and there were still fewer people left in society of social creation sufficiently remote to remember that they should continue to know Miss Allerton simply because she was Miss Allerton and her father had been Judge Allerton, who was the son of Harry Allerton, Governor of the King's Province of Massachusetts Bay. But charity covers a multitude of sins ; a lady with a subscription-paper for soup can venture even to the end of Hanover Street in a coupé ; and that is why Miss Allerton's

calls had come to be mostly associated with subscription-papers. Lady and gentlemen almoners knew that Miss Allerton was sure for twenty dollars or so, which she always paid in a roll of clean bank bills, never by a check. Indeed, it was hard to imagine her respectable name at the foot of a national bank check : doubtless it would have been dishonored. In fact, Miss Allerton was a very musty and obsolete old person indeed, —though she still went on, like an old eight-day clock that has never been subjected to modern repairs.

The first time I went down there (*I went with a subscription-paper*) the venerable lady did not come to the door, and I asked the maid-servant if she were in. The servant herself, as a door-tender, showed signs of desuetude : she made one or two throaty noises, such as a mechanical toy would make if it attempted to execute a new squeak, and said that Miss Allerton was engaged. This reply seemed as difficult to her as a repartee to an echo, and the moment she had made it her skin turned browner with the blush that mantled over the enormity of the lie she had told. For Miss Allerton at that moment was sitting in her attic, doing nothing, and it was a falsehood most preposterous to say that she was not at home.

As I have said, the house was on a court ; but at least it had the court to itself. Garden Street leaves Hutchinson Street and runs down towards the water behind the jail, through what used to be the Mill-pond, a district now filled in with the scum of humanity. After you leave Cambridge Street you go between a line of houses, ordinary enough two-and-a-half-story bricks, with the door-way in an arched cell, and often a pasteboard placard in the window, "Rooms to Let, with Board." The basements are usually filled with shoemakers or grocers, and here and there an undertaker with a red ticket in the window, "Ice." By and by you see that the houses are older, by the "bind" of the bricks, laying the ends and sides of the bricks alternating, and not in our monotonous modern way. The basement windows make a display of round bundles of kindling-wood and square cakes of popped corn cemented with treacle. Even these houses have seen better days. Occasionally you may note a large arched front door with a fan-light of glass over it, or the frieze of a house moulded in little wooden squares ; there is an old wooden sign of a Saracen or other painted heathen perched on a bracket above a door where a negro politician keeps a pool-room. And just before you get to a corner where there is a gin-shop and a fashionable dress-maker, you turn up to the left into Garden Court, of which the wall on one side is made by a mossy wooden building skirting a discolored bit of grass, where there is an elm and a skinned and moribund sycamore. Miss Allerton's house faces upon this bit of grass, pre-

sending to it a yellow façade with two gables, and only an edge to the street. The house would seem to have turned a cold shoulder to the street since it took to evil company. In the southernmost of the two gables is the garret in which Miss Allerton sat. There is a bedroom in the end towards the street; the gable does not run clear through the house, but stops and sinks down into a sloping roof with a dormer window in it. This is the garret window: it looks towards the river; and you can still see a rood or so of green water between the piles of the drawbridge and the Fitchburg Railway-Station.

When the servant had shut the door in my face, I went back and told my uncle (who had sent me down with the subscription-paper) that Miss Allerton was engaged. He could not have been more surprised if I had said she was engaged to be married. He wondered who took care of the old lady now; and I asked if she lived up in that neighborhood all alone; and he said that he didn't know, but supposed she was rich enough to have some poor relation with her. I did not ask him then who she was, because I knew that Aunt Abby would be more likely to know; and, indeed, I was desirous of getting up-town, for I wished to get my ride that evening, and also had to go to a dinner-party.

I rode home along the quay, just before sunset; but there was no knowing the exact time, for the autumn mist was on the river, which might have been a sea for any sign that was visible of an opposite coast. A rod from the shore the smooth olive water faded to gray, and soon vanished, with no horizon-line, only the hull of a distant ship shadowed in. It was depressing; but the prospect of dinner and bright dresses was before me, and I rode the faster as the mist began to ravel out and a cold dash of rain came from the east. I even enjoyed the scene,—it was such a delicious contrast to an evening of gayety,—and I stopped a moment, when nearly home, to look again at the river, now ruffled by the wind that brought the rain. The same dash of rain pattered down on the roof of Miss Allerton's garret, and she sighed and turned her eyes back from the window to the littered floor and the dusty boxes. She had been doing nothing all the afternoon, and it was now nearly five.

It was almost as unusual for Miss Allerton to be idle as it was for her to be depressed: she had lived before boredom was discovered, and was too unfashionable to have learned it since. And, although Miss Allerton was somewhat sad at heart, sitting to-day in the garret, she was not at all a querulous old lady. So far was she from being unhappy that she had sat there and forgotten to leave the place, more in wonder at her mood than because of it. She was used to taking this world cheerfully, as having a heaven-sent meaning in it. She had not felt sorrow for so

many years : perhaps that was the reason of it. It had been rainy for a week, and her old servant had talked of leaving her, and one of her poor families had been found without sobriety. Not that there was very much in all this, but it troubled her a little ; and then she had gone up into the garret at one, just after dinner, and had opened an old trunk to get some old dress to give away, and the idle fit had come on her, and she had stayed there ever since.

A pleasant face had Miss Allerton,—a very pleasant face, with the soft gray hair and the kind wrinkles near the eyes. There was a spinning-wheel near her, and a row of old painted chests ; fire-irons, a pompous old cane, silk-worked samplers, a rubber fire-bucket, an old wig, and doubtless many other family relics, were stowed away in the boxes about her. The lozenge-shaped frame of some old dowager Allerton's hatchment was leaning with its face to the wall, falling to pieces, slowly, with the inseparable air of leisure and dignity that attaches to things which have outlived their use. Miss Allerton, too, had been thinking that she had outlived her use, and she looked vacantly at an old leather bag hanging on a nail in the wall, evidently empty. The leather bag had hung there many a year, but she had never noticed it before. Then she looked out of the little dormer window, and over to the wharves, and the factories, and the rows of wooden houses, and the dirty river slipping through its grove of piles, and all the horizon of huddled houses where she remembered green meadows and wooded hills and a blue river, when her eyes were blue, not gray, nor meant for use alone.

She paused to assure herself that she was not unhappy. Surely not,—even in the garret there, looking out on the damp, dull weather : a little lonely, that was all. And she had had so many friends ! Then she remembered—what woman ever forgets?—a fair girl she had known, about the time Lafayette came to town, who was very pretty, sweetly, dearly pretty. It was odd to think this girl had been herself. There was no vanity in remembering this, for it did not seem to be herself,—rather some daughter of hers who had long been dead. Only, she had never had any children. Then, her father, the judge,—the proud old gentleman whom all the little provincial city had known and liked to honor,—there were so few people left in the town now, although it had grown so large. Somewhat too proud indeed was he, she thought, with a sigh, in the days when the crowded wooden house was a mansion with a garden that stretched back to the square old stone houses of their friends in Bowdoin Square. After all, the time might come when she would have to leave the old house, old and unfashionable as it was, for the family fortune had grown out of fashion too, and the square brick warehouses were out of date and yielded little rent now ; and she had

never had the heart to cut down her list of charities. She had thought the fortune would outlast her time; but she had lived too long. Not that she cared much for the fortune, but her friends had often told her she must move: the street was no longer respectable. After all, though, it was not so very lonely there. She liked it better than another place. But it was a dreary September day; it was the equinoctial,—there was no doubt of that; just such a day as it had been in that September in 1832 when her father, the stern old judge, had come home and told her.

Yet it was strange; it still seemed as strange as it did on that first day. It had never been explained. He surely had loved her: she had thought so on that very first day of all, when the young stranger was introduced to her at her father's friend's, at a tea-party. How near, too, she had been to giving up the tea-party that night! She had a headache from the ball the night before, and she was a proud young beauty, and there was going to be no one there but a new clerk of Mr. Oliver's, some young man who had come North from the Carolinas, or from some sugar-plantation in Barbadoes. He certainly was attracted by her that night; and he asked permission to attend her home, and her father refused it. Yes, her father had been born among the colonial aristocracy, and he was very proud.

But she had tried to make it all up, so far as she modestly could: he was not used to her father's ways, but he was a frank, ingenuous young gentleman, who had won his way with every one. Only, he had been very shy, and very much afraid of her, and very modest. It had been a twelvemonth before she had blushed when they met, so gentle had he been in his wooing, and then a year again before he dared to take her hand and look at her and leave her as he did that night of the election. And then, of course, she had supposed that he would come to see her father the next day; and every one spoke well of him by that time,—every one, even her father, the old judge. But he had never come. And the next day (or was it a week after?) her father—it was just such a day as this, with the mist, and the damp, and the wind blowing the fog—her father had come home to tea, and had told her (he had said so casually, she remembered, in the hall, as she had been helping to divest him of his surtout)—had told her that young F— was gone to the Californias. And that same old mail-bag had been hanging in the hall.

She had been angry at first, but she had long since given over being angry; and it was not long after that when the old judge died and left her with one brother. He had not done very well in the world; and he had died too. And many years after she saw in the newspaper that

Mr. F—— had died in the Californias. (She had never mentioned the name to any one in fifty years, nor shall I do so.) She had seen F—— once after the time he had looked in her eyes on that election-day,—but only in the street, and she was in her carriage, and she was a little piqued and had feigned not to see him ; and it was the day after this that her father had come home and told her, in the hall. She was wondering even then why he had not come : it was already the beginning of that long wonder that was to make a puzzle of her life,—until, indeed, she grew middle-aged and had found her work to do ; and since then she had been very happy. Only, she wished that she might have had young relations : her brother had left no children. For many years she still had thought that he would write ; but he never did. Could it be that he had never loved at all ? It was very strange.

Here again she paused a moment in her thinking and looked again across the river. It had not always been fretted with so many bridges. They used to have to drive many miles around to the old house at Lechmere's Point, just across the stream. She wondered if the house was still there : now there were many high blocks about it, where the orchards had been, and a dozen long black bridges stretched out and away, like the arms of the great city reaching for the woods and fields. She got up and walked to the window, with a rustle of her clean silk gown, and looked out for the view of country highlands. But the mist and fog were too thick. You never would have thought her seventy-odd as she stood there with her pleasant face and her bright eyes peering as a girl's might do for some arrival. Then she looked back into the garret with the mass of old things stored away,—the outworn symbols of her quiet life. There was a lack of children's toys and little chairs ; most of the things were very old, from the locks in the chests to the old leather mail-bag on the wall. It was all hers,—hers alone. Half a thousand children passed by her windows every day, noisy, unkempt children, to a school near by, and they would look up to her windows and cry out at her. People thought she was a miser and hoarded more than memories. And the neighborhood was very sad and squalid, and people said it was not even safe for her to live there. She was very old. Had he died happily, she thought ? The paper said that he had never been married. And yet he had behaved so cruelly to her. He had pleasant brown eyes, and such a brave, manly way about him ! And then how tenderly he had taken the posy from her ! Why was it that she thought of him to-day ? And she remembered thinking, years before, that she would never have to cry again.

She felt that she was doing wrong, and tried to scold herself like a child. Wiping her old eyes with a girl's light touch to the eyes and

head, she got up and went to the window again resolutely. The fog and rain were still driving from the sea. Almost in the zenith was a little break of pale-blue sky, so pure, so cold, that it seemed like a memory of heaven; and its color showed that it was after sunset. She heard a crash behind her; it was a startling sound in the still garret, but she turned and saw that it was only the old mail-bag fallen to the floor. It had hung upon its hook half a century, and at last the ribbon had broken with the weight.

Miss Allerton remembered it well,—how it had hung upon the knob of her father's door and been carried by him to his office and back on days when foreign ships came in. It was very dusty, but she stooped to pick it up, and her hand slipped in through the leathern lips and drew forth a letter. It was a letter that had never been opened. It must have stuck in a wrinkle in the bottom of the bag and lain there all these years. It was too dark in the old garret to see more than that it was folded over and sealed with a great, careless seal, without a stamp. It was evidently written before the days of stamps. She walked with it to the little window: the little square of blue sky had grown larger, and gave just light enough for her old eyes to read the address,—to her,—to Madam Sarah Allerton.

It was a boyish, trembling handwriting, but the sight of it set her heart beating as it might have done a girl's. She steadied herself on the window-sill a minute before she broke the seal. The letter ran as follows:

Sept. the 8th, 1832.

“DEAR MADAM,—If I dare to write to you to ask your leave to lay my addresses before your respected father, it is only that I feel last night that you learned my secret. I am too unworthy of you not to deem this letter presumptuous: forgive me, dear Miss Allerton, if you cannot return my love. If you smile when next we meet, I will take it that you are not angry with me, although you cannot deign to love me. For I have loved you since that day we met two years ago. But if you can neither love nor pardon me, make no answer to this note, and I shall know.

“F——.

“Dearest, I do love you so !”

Miss Allerton dropped the letter from her hands and looked outward at the sky. The rain was driving now, washing the heavens clear; and the rain came also from her eyes, and tears unwonted fell upon the dusty garret floor. But he had loved her: that was all. A last time she looked over the old river: the clear rift of blue was wider now, and

the curtain of rain swept back across the bay, from where the long gray cloud-bank rose away from the clear horizon. The autumn storm was over, and under its clear blue rim there came the winter.

But I think of late Miss Allerton has been happier and less lonely than of old. And I do assure you she is a very dear old lady, young-looking for her years.

J. S. of Dale.

A SUMMER EVENING.

IN the soft pulsing darkness here
 We silent sit: my heart beats loud
 With joyous sense that thou art near,
 Yet dares not speak the thoughts that crowd
 And fill my soul, until I seem
 No more myself, but through the night,
 Like the pale shadow of a dream,
 To float and quiver, as the light
 Faint quivers on the wall.

The dim light from street-lamps below,
 That slanting strikes above thy head,
 The sound of footsteps to and fro,
 This summer night, unreal and dread,—
 All common things strike on my heart
 Like voices weird from bygone years:
 In some fantastic way a part
 Of my past life this night appears,
 And thou the soul of it.

Thy shadowy form across the room
 Seems stretching shadowy arms to me;
 Our souls embrace in the soft gloom,
 Not two, but one, they seem to be.
 Held breathless by this night's strange power,
 Which we may never feel again,
 Farewell and greeting, in one hour,
 We say to keenest joy and pain
 Which yet is but a dream.

Margaret Edson.

THE NEED AND NATURE OF CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

AT the request of the editor of this Magazine, I promised to answer in this number an article I had not read, which was published in the last number, under the title of "Civil Service Reform." It was contributed, as I now see, by that sprightly, kaleidoscopic, generally peppery and sarcastic, always illogical and consequently unanswerable writer who for some immaterial reason persists in using the pseudonyme *Gail Hamilton*. The sneers at the reform movement and the misconceptions of its whole spirit, which are the most striking features of the article, are as harmless, so far as well-informed people are concerned, as they are characteristic and ridiculous.

But the article has other peculiarities. It brands all the Civil Service Reformers as persons "impervious to facts," "who stuff the ears of foreigners with falsehood," as engaged in pressing a "humbug reform where none is needed," as guilty of having "maligned" General Grant, as men "who bear false witness and *know* they bear false witness," as "ungodly" men who (in the refined language of the owner of that pseudonyme) are "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, . . . filthy dreamers, not apostles, not actors manfully doing man's work, but evoking filth in idle dreams, . . . spots in our feasts, feeding themselves with fear," as "trees whose fruit withereth," as "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame," as "wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," as "complainers walking after their own lusts," and other things of the same sort, or worse, in metaphors as numerous as they are wild and incompatible.

It is, I suppose, too late for me to say that such an article answers itself; but I may suggest that no one—not even a maiden—who uses such language can be allowed to hide herself behind a pseudonyme. It is one thing to allow such a shield to modest worth, but quite another to concede it to aggressive misrepresentation and reckless slander. Nevertheless, I will allow Miss Abigail Dodge a part of it, by calling her G. H.; for these letters may stand also for the Great Humbug which she declares Civil Service Reform to be, and for the Greater Humbug which all well-informed readers know her presentation of it to be.

It is now about nine years, I think, since this same amiable writer, taking a contribution of mine to the *Atlantic Monthly* for her text, in which I predicted a not remote triumph for a reform policy, poured through the columns of the *New York Tribune* as many, I believe, as from ten to fifteen long letters, under the title, as I remember it, of

"D. B. Eaton's Path of Glory in the *Atlantic Monthly*," a few of which letters I read. She thought, as many short-sighted partisans thought, the disastrous refusal of a Republican Congress in 1875 to vote the appropriation requested by President Grant for continuing the salutary enforcement of his Civil Service Rules, to be an act of supreme wisdom.

Having never taken the slightest notice of these letters, I have thought, now that I am unwarily committed to answer her last diatribe upon reform, that I ought to explain a little why I have heretofore treated her writings as unanswerable, or as needing no answer, as the reader may interpret the matter. To be understood, those letters must be regarded as being, at least in the view of G. H., a joint, grand recital of funeral rites at the grave of Civil Service Reform, and of a *Te Deum laudamus* at the apotheosis of Ben Butler and Mr. Blaine; one of whom was, according to her philosophy, thereafter to rule the political skies, which that reform was to disturb no more.

For reckless sarcasm which spared not even the saints of the land, for bursting joy at a supposed victory which the English language was too barren to utter, for ecstatic assurance which even dithyrambic verse was not competent to express, over the everlasting death of Reform and the eternal exaltation of the Spoils System, and also for hyperbolic statements, irrelevant statistics, and pretended reasoning leading to nothing, there is not to be found in the partisan literature of the time anything to be compared with these letters. In solemn mockery she chanted dirges over the political death of reformers whose fame and good works have more and more honored the land ever since. In vaunting prophecy she foretold the rising glories of partisans—blind as herself to the better sentiments of the people—who now lie hopelessly stranded in the Spoils System bog whose praises she delights to sing. Poetry and eloquence from Mother Goose to Milton, from Ben Butler to Burke, were laid under contribution to adorn her attack and to show that all reformers are fools and false prophets, if nothing worse, that the partisan chieftains and their flunkies are the glory and salvation of the land, and that the whole theory and all the methods of Civil Service Reform are chimerical and impracticable,—mere aristocratic English exotics,—hostile to our institutions and pregnant with direful calamities. Week after week she drove nails into the coffin of Reform and stamped long and hard upon its grave, as if to make a resurrection impossible.

These letters were not, however, without some practical results fit to be noted here. They have at least made it certain how far G. H. has the gift of political insight. And—what is far more important—they doubtless did as much as anything else to cause the Independents of New York to be utterly distrustful of Mr. Blaine—her sole political

saint—on the reform question, and consequently to cause his defeat there for the Presidency. Had it not been for this old distrust, sown by G. H., a member of his family, I have good reason for thinking that Mr. Blaine's positive declarations of the need of a reform policy and his pledge to sustain it, in his speech at Brooklyn, which I shall cite,—though made too late,—would have secured him the less than six hundred additional votes in the great State of New York which would have made him President.

It is not the fault, but the misfortune of G. H. that, after experience has refuted all her theories and falsified all her prophecy in favor of the Spoils System and against the Merit System, she is now compelled either to be silent or to arraign the latter on these two grounds only: first, that no reform was necessary, and, second, that the reform attempted is trivial,—contentions which no one able to gain access to a first-class magazine ever made before, and so easily refuted as to require an apology to its intelligent readers. I must therefore claim the liberty, under my promise, of going much beyond the ground she covers.

In accepting her issues I must reject her standards. They are so different from mine that our chances of reaching the same conclusions are hardly greater than those of arithmeticians who should dispute over the multiplication-table. She says, "Man is compounded of men and women;" whereas I have regarded a man or a woman having much of the qualities of the opposite sex as an abnormal and almost invariably an eccentric character. She says, "Pecuniary power is the final standard of *confidence*," which I admit to be true for those who respect nothing higher than money; whereas I have regarded honesty, fidelity, and upright character as the true basis of confidence. She regards "one moment" of Matthew Arnold's observations of our politics as more to be trusted than the warning of our own statesmen and Presidents for a generation, giving a fifth of her article to him, and confounding parliamentary procedure, class, church, and Irish quarrels and hates in Great Britain with our own administrative questions; whereas I regard Mr. Arnold as knowing little of our political questions, and all she says about him as irrelevant and unworthy of notice. She presents Civil Service Reform as a "nosegay," a "button-hole bouquet which droops visibly," a "posy," a "upas-bloom," a "petty detail of national housekeeping," for which not even the "rights of society" should be neglected; whereas I have regarded that reform as a great political and moral issue between the politicians and the people, between all that is partisan and selfish and all that is patriotic and disinterested in each party, between those who would stand on the Constitution and the examples of its framers and those who would prostitute Executive power

and Congressional influence for personal and partisan ends,—as an issue which, at this moment, is for each party one of the most perplexing and vital before the country,—as an issue which, so far from waning, is widening and deepening rapidly, and is sure to be one of the most important and decisive questions in the next election, as it was in the last. But I admit that too much acceptance of the G. H. view of Civil Service Reform, however petty in itself, has secured for several persons, who otherwise might have had an opportunity for great things in “national housekeeping,” abundant leisure for the “rights of society.”

After establishing the profound truth that there can be no reform unless there is something to be reformed, G. H., in a way peculiar to herself, proceeds to prove by assumption that there can be by no possibility anything but corruption—by which she means only loss by speculation of the public moneys once collected—to be reformed. G. H. next flatly declares there was no corruption. Wherefore Civil Service Reform is shown to be a Great Humbug, and the reformers, according to her inexorable logic, are demonstrated to be “spots at our feasts,” “raging waves of the sea,” “wandering stars,” and various other things equally compatible and awful, for which she reserves them for the “blackness of darkness forever,”—a very difficult thing to bring about, one would think, during the time they are wandering stars.

Now, if G. H. had been better informed as to the administrative abuses charged by the reformers, and long recognized by both parties, by Congress and by every President and Cabinet for a whole generation, she would have known that her kind of corruption has hardly been mentioned among abuses needing reform. It does not occupy a score of pages in the thousands which make up the large and growing literature of the reformers. It is hardly mentioned in the various messages of the last four Presidents, who have so earnestly set forth the need of arresting abuses. Tweed, the phenomenal production of the Spoils System, was indeed guilty of that kind of corruption. The cases of the defaulting paymasters Howgate and Burnside, and the instances of defaulting postmasters which happen so frequently, show that corruption even according to G. H. is by no means rare. It is as nothing, however, compared with the great abuses which the reformers have attacked. Cashiers, treasurers, paymasters, postmasters, and other custodians of the public money are required by law to give bonds, and bondsmen are generally able to make up losses when they occur. If G. H. had gone a little deeper into the subject, and had become aware of that general distrust which causes treasurers, postmasters, collectors, and other officers to exact extra-official bonds to themselves as the condition of appointing subordinates from whom the laws require none, she would

have got a glimpse of one phase of the vast abuses to which no intelligent person but herself, so far as I know, is blind.

So far from corruption, according to G. H., being an evil which the "wandering star" and "raging wave" reformers have made special efforts to remedy in the Civil Service Rules and examinations, the fact is that the nineteenth rule expressly excepts cashiers, superintendents of money-order divisions, all direct custodians of money, and all disbursing officers who give bonds for themselves or for whom others give bonds, even down to and including assistant tellers,—being nearly every officer who can be guilty of her kind of corruption,—from the examination altogether, for the very reason that the old precautions against speculation have been found fairly adequate. It is sad to think what an amount of space filled with hyperbolic misrepresentation and rickety slander on this subject a little more information would have saved.

The petty cheats, like those in vouchers for naval supplies and in forage-accounts by judge-advocates-general, which are now or have lately been before the courts, the frauds in the collection of revenue, the wholesale squandering of the public moneys in the matter of ship-repairs and naval contracts, and those stupendous frauds in whiskey-tax collections and fast-mail contracts, involving the loss of so many millions, by which the public conscience has been shocked and the nation has been dishonored in every quarter of the civilized world, would none of them be corruption according to G. H. ; but they are a part of those alarming abuses which spring from a partisan public service of favorites and henchmen, and of that vulgar, despotic bossism in politics, according to which not only may the salaries of the humbler servants of the nation be robbed to pay party expenses, but under which official authority of various kinds may be used for corrupt and partisan purposes, without rebuke from those in high places, provided only a liberal portion of the plunder is secured to fill the party treasury and to carry the elections for the party in power.

As G. H. confidently stakes her theory and her case on the condition of the Internal Revenue Bureau in 1881 and 1882, I will meet her there ; and I affirm that its then condition was discreditable to the country, although its chief at that time, whose eulogy of it she adopts, had improved it since the days of the Whiskey Ring frauds, the infamies of which had come near overturning an administration. It was discreditable that one of the reports of the Bureau for that time advised a four years' term for its subordinates, for the express purpose of facilitating their appointment and removal on partisan grounds alone. It was still more discreditable that the same report declared that "being

honest, capable, and diligent . . . are not facts which will justify retention in office," and, further, "that the struggle at the polls is to change the policy of the government *by changing its officers*,"—bald utterances of the inmost spirit of that vicious old Jacksonian Spoils System which I must assume have the hearty approval of G. H.

Let us look into the facts disclosed by the report. The list of judgments on bonds of ex-collectors set forth in the report indicates more defalcations or frauds than had taken place in Great Britain in the twenty-five years last previous, though the British Internal Revenue collections had exceeded those of the United States by nearly one hundred millions annually.

The test of revenue administration, I hardly need say, is not the amount of money lost after collection, but property allowed to escape taxation, assessed revenue not collected, officers bribed, vast money interests and partisan combinations allowed to overawe officials and defraud the revenue.

Let us apply this test. The report tells us that in the then last year "811,466 gallons of liquors were reported as lost by leakage and evaporation"! Any one knowing the power of the whiskey and brandy interests in our politics will have a proper sense of the prodigious elasticity of the meaning of "leakage and evaporation" which could enable nearly a million gallons to escape through them in a single year.

This same report has a unique paragraph headed "*Ordnance in the Hands of Collectors*," and then follows a list of the fire-arms and other implements of destruction which constitute the Internal Revenue armory. The killing of twenty-eight persons and the wounding of sixty-four more during the past five years in Internal Revenue battles is very appropriately next reported as a part of the doings of this model service according to G. H. I believe that such an item in an Internal Revenue report, and anything approximating such an amount of arming and killing, are as absolutely unknown in the Internal Revenue administration of any other enlightened country as are the Spoils System theory and practice of appointment and removal which are in large measure the cause of such scandalous facts.

This report next tells us that in 1880 there were 7417 Internal Revenue suits or proceedings pending, of which the prodigious and disgraceful number of 6053 were *criminal*! But, worse than this, it is also stated that there were 3519 criminal suits or proceedings instituted in the single year 1881,—or more than at the rate of ten every secular day! It is safe to say, I think, that this amount of litigation and criminality is several times greater than that exhibited altogether in the same period in the three or four other foremost nations of the world,

and that it is not due to a lower morality or a less regard for law among our people, but to the distrust, hostility, and suspicion developed on the part of citizens, and to the corrupt and oppressive conduct on the part of officials, which naturally result from a system and a political theory which do not accept the facts of being "honest, capable, and diligent" as "reasons which justify retention in office," but which seek partisan manipulators for officers and subject every Internal Revenue official to arbitrary political assessments upon his salary, on the peril of removal, at the bidding of party managers, and also compel him to use his subordinates for keeping the party in power and his superiors in office, if not for getting them better offices. What more natural than that the people should see, or at least imagine, personal and corrupt enemies in such officials and hold it justifiable to cheat and resist those whom the nation has put over them in apparent connivance at such a prostitution of official authority?

But the report shows other facts hardly less significant. It declares that "frauds in the manufacture and sale . . . of tobacco have been rife;" that "bad laws and defective supervision of the vinegar trade . . . have opened the door to great frauds;" and that "investigations made the [then] last year showed large amounts of taxes due the government from banks."

After stating that large amounts have been found due upon capital brought into the United States, it further declares "that \$722,705 have been due and unpaid the United States on the part of seventy banks," in five cities which are named. The Commissioner further declares his belief that large additional sums are due from other banks, and that the investigation is still proceeding. When we remember that there were more than two thousand banks, and find that nearly three-fourths of a million has been found due from seventy of them, we can form some kind of a guess at the vast amounts in which all of them together were allowed to stand, for some inscrutable reason, indebted to the government.

Yet, for an Internal Revenue administration so defective and so condemned by litigation, crime, violence, and death, the Commissioner asks for \$5,000,000 to pay its estimated cost for the next year,—a sum from two to three times as great, I believe, as the cost of collecting the same amount of Internal Revenue in Great Britain.

Before leaving this G. H. paradise of good administration, let me say that there, as well as in every other part of the public service, the majority of the officials were, I think, and are now, worthy; but many of them were, and are now, unworthy; and I think no citizens so much lament the latter fact as the worthier portion in every large office who make

it possible to carry on the public administration and who are greatly overworked by reason of many drones and incompetent partisans. They are humiliated at seeing vicious influence and favoritism open the gates of the public service, which should yield only to merit. This better class of officials has been ready at all times to serve and has been most efficient in aiding, in the capacity of examiners and otherwise, the Civil Service Commission in carrying forward those reform methods which shut the gates of patronage-mongering and give character and capacity the power of entering the public service in their own name and by their own efforts.

G. H. quotes General Hawley to the effect that 450 of the 2207 employees in the Treasury Department have been there from *one* to five years, that 376 have held office above five years, that 281 have held office above fifteen years, and that from 18 to 20 have held office for thirty years. She gives some other similar facts of no significance. I would, in the absence of her figures, have readily conceded a more favorable showing than this for what she wishes to make out. The figures bear only on the question of the length of holding office. Curiously enough, she seems to regard this as a great merit, as an effective argument for the Spoils System. Let us not forget her position in that regard.

No great office can get along without a few persons of experience, and it will have them, however bad the general system. G. H., however, does not so much as attempt to make proof that those longest retained are generally the best, without which the mere fact of retention is pointless as an argument; and soon we shall find her proving much to the contrary. Now, in fact, the awful reformers have said almost nothing whatever, and the Civil Service Rules and laws say absolutely nothing, concerning the length of holding office. Nearly every unjustifiable removal is made not to get any particular person out, but to enable some favorite to be put in. The reformers have rested on the certainty that when mere partisan influence and official favoritism cannot fill the vacancies, few are likely to happen except for justifiable reasons, and, consequently, that the tenure of office will probably become as stable under the Merit System as the public interests require, though nothing is provided on the subject. The Civil Service Act and Rules leave the power of removal almost absolutely unaffected. The argument of G. H. is, therefore, utterly useless against those at whom it is aimed.

It hardly need be said that in any great firm or corporation conducted, not on a partisan theory, but on business principles, the average time of holding their places on the part of its employees would be found to be many times as long, in the aggregate, as is thus shown in respect

to the officials of the Treasury. Think of a great department of 2207 officials of which the most that can be said is that only 450 of them have held their places for from *one* to five years, and only 376 for more than five years! How vastly better if the average holding of all had been at least five years, as it would be in private business!

But let us not forget, what is far more important, that G. H. makes the most of her figures in trying to prove that a long holding of office is sometimes possible even under the old system, which result she presents as one of its virtues that greatly promotes the public interests. Having thus clearly condemned any system which defeats the acquiring of valuable experience, what does G. H. say of the Spoils System and politicians' theory that every officer should go out whenever a new administration comes in? What does she say of the theory of her favorite Internal Revenue Commissioner, who advised that all subordinates in his office should be given a four years' term, to facilitate the making of these places a part of the prizes to be fought for in every quadrennial election?

If an experience of more than four years is an advantage, why turn the clerical officers out or put them in for mere political reasons at all? If capacity to do the public work, and not to render partisan services as flunkies or henchmen, is the criterion for clerkships, why not have examinations which test such fitness and disregard political opinions altogether? But this way of reasoning would require competitive examinations, which are the horror of all the patronage-mongers and partisan-manipulators of the country. It may be stated here that the probabilities are that not many years hence, under the Merit System of examinations, now being enforced for all the Departments at Washington, G. H. will be able to make a much more favorable showing of the advantages that come from experience in office than is now possible; for that accession of a new party to power which under her favorite Spoils System would doubtless not have left up to this time even three or four hundred of the 2207 officials in the Treasury Department in their places, has been followed by the displacement of less than one hundred and fifty of them. Is not this a very real reform, even according to G. H.?

The ratio of displacement in the other Departments, and in the parts of the Postal and Customs service subject to the new examinations, has, I believe, been less, or not materially different. For example, in the customs offices at New York, with their more than twelve hundred officers subject to the examinations, it seems that only about seventy, or hardly five per cent., have been displaced. Will G. H. tell us whether she thinks it would have been better to have removed seven hundred?

This establishment of a new system in our administrative methods is something like a revolution within the range of the examinations, through which proscription, favoritism, and partisanship—in short, political barbarism and savagery—have yielded to justice, morality, and personal merit, with immense advantage to the public service and the people, at the expense of the politicians and the office-seeking classes.

That we may more clearly see what this revolution means in practice, I make this citation from the First Report of the U. S. Civil Service Commission :

“When Draper, a Republican, was collector at the port of New York, he removed a subordinate as often as every third day for a whole year. When Smyth, another Republican, succeeded Draper as collector in 1866, he removed 830 of his 903 Republican subordinates, or at the average rate of three every four days. When Grinnell, another Republican, succeeded Smyth as collector in 1869, he removed 510 out of his 892 Republican subordinates in sixteen months. When Murphy, another Republican, succeeded Grinnell as collector in 1870, he removed Republicans at the rate of three every five days until 338 had been cast out. It was the expectation of such spoils which gave each candidate for collector the party strength which secured his confirmation. Thus, during a period of five years in succession, collectors, all belonging to one party, for the purpose of patronage, made removals at a single office of members of their own party more frequently than at the rate of one every day. In short, in 1565 secular days 1678 such removals were made. Upon the appointment of Mr. Arthur as collector in 1871, a system of examinations, defective as it was, put an end to this disgraceful proscription.”

It was under Collector Arthur that competitive examinations began as required by the rules made by President Hayes. He removed less than one hundred and fifty in the about seven years he was collector. Such political barbarism as this extract shows seems now almost as incredible as slavery itself. I doubt if even G. H. would like to see the old proscription revived, especially against her own party. I could easily have answered all she has said about the Treasury Department without going beyond her own incriminating pages. She quotes, in apparent triumph, for her theory a chief of the largest division of the Treasury Department, who says, “We need most of all greater facilities for removal. He said it is harder to get a person out than to get him in. He has, for instance, five old men and two old women, the youngest of whom would have been retired long ago from any private firm, and all of whom together do not perform the work of two good vigorous

clerks. He says that he has, moreover, a dozen inefficient and lazy clerks, . . . who cannot or will not work."

Here, then, a believer in the model character of the best civil service under the sun declares that nineteen or more incompetent persons, some old and some young, whom no one will venture to remove, are to be found in a single division of a Department which has, I believe, more than eighty divisions! Are not these abuses to be reformed? I think G. H. must have misquoted her chief of division as to the authority to remove; for no such officer can be ignorant of the fact that the authority for removal is so absolute that every subordinate in the Treasury Department may be displaced any day of the year.

The real difficulty is that these incompetents, with some exceptions doubtless of worthy persons grown old, are dependants or *protégés* of Governors, great politicians, and Congressmen, or of their influential supporters, who have been foisted upon the public service by the coercive power of the Spoils System. The same vicious, extraneous influence which puts them in office keeps them there. The more good-for-nothing they become, the more anxious are their backers to make the government support them. Members of Congress very distinctly recognized the seriousness of this abuse and their share of responsibility for it, by forbidding, in the tenth section of the Civil Service Act, any member from making any recommendation for appointment under that law which should extend beyond the character and residence of the applicant.

When, however, applicants get into the civil service through good capacity and good character proved by the examinations, there is, save in very rare instances, no powerful influence behind to keep them there, and they can be readily removed. They feel that good work and good conduct alone will save them from removal. Yet such has been their superior merit that only four who came in under the rules are among the nearly one hundred and fifty displaced in the Treasury Department since March 4. I might further explain to G. H. that the superiority of the persons whom the Merit System of examinations brings into the public service, though of vast advantage, is by no means the most important aim or useful result of that system; but I have already given too much time to her rhapsody. Both parties by resolutions reiterated through a whole decade,—Congress by a comprehensive statute three years ago, for faithfully executing which it has made annual appropriations,—the popular voice by electing a President under pledges to a reform policy which he has faithfully executed,—and four administrations in succession by their official declarations, however faulty some of them in their practice,—have pronounced their judgment as to the

need and nature of Civil Service Reform ; and it is far, far indeed from the "nosegay," "upas bloom," "housekeeping" conception of G. H.

The spirit of that judgment is marching on, and will be more and more potential and unchallenged in every election of the future. New York and Massachusetts have wheeled into the line of the national reform policy, and no leader of either party in either State dares take ground against it. Other States are turning in the same direction. What does it matter, then, that here and there a doleful Bourbon cry is heard from the Spoils System bog for a retrograde movement towards political savagery, as Davis and Toombs continued to wail over the lost blessings of slavery? The minds which linger behind and fail to comprehend the spirit of an age are doomed never to lead it or to be important in it. A shrieking, garish blue-jay is no more able to bring back a winter than a graceful swallow is to bring forward a summer. There are conditions under which one may be a majority, and it is supremely noble to be in the right with two or three. But such things are possible only for lofty spirits with aspiring faith and prophetic insight, who, rising to the height of the nobler sentiments of their time, speak the wisdom of the next generation.

Before leaving G. H., let me set down, for the benefit of the few she may have misled, some extracts which show what experienced statesmen think of the nature and need of Civil Service Reform, and consequently what they think of her parody of it. I will first quote the words of a person under whom Mr. Blaine served as Secretary of State. In March, 1870, Mr. Garfield said in the House of Representatives, "We press appointments upon the Departments, we crowd the doors, . . . Senators and Representatives throng the offices and the bureaus until the public business is obstructed, . . . and men are appointed not because they are fit for their positions, but because we ask it. . . . There, Mr. Chairman, in my judgment, is the true field for retrenchment and reform ; . . . in this direction is the true line of statesmanship." And seven years later, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Mr. Garfield declared that "one-third of the working hours of Senators is hardly sufficient to meet the demands upon them in reference to appointments. . . . The present system . . . impairs the efficiency of the legislators ; . . . it degrades the civil service ; . . . it repels from the service those high and manly qualities which are so essential to a pure and efficient administration ; and, finally, it debauches the public mind by holding up public office as the mere reward of party zeal."

President Grant, in his annual message in December, 1870, says, "There is no duty which so much embarrasses the Executive and heads of Departments as that of appointment. . . . The present system does

not secure the best men, and not often fit men, for the public service. The elevation and purification of the civil service of the government will be hailed with approval by the people of the whole United States." And I may add here that my experience under him as a Civil Service Commissioner enables me to know how profound was his sense of the need of such a reform; and the last words, I believe, which he ever uttered officially upon the subject expressed his "mortification" that Congress had failed to give an appropriation for enforcing the Civil Service Rules, which in two messages he had declared to be beneficial, and for which he had asked twenty-five thousand dollars a year.

The language next quoted is from a report made by a committee of the Senate, of which Senator Hawley was a member, upon the Civil Service Bill, May 15, 1882: "It has come to pass that the work of paying political debts and discharging political obligations, of rewarding personal friends and punishing political foes, is the first to confront each President. . . . He is compelled to give daily audience to those who personally seek places or to the army of those who back them. . . . Instead of the study of great questions of statesmanship, of broad and comprehensive policy, . . . or the relations of this great nation to the other nations of the earth, he must devote himself to the petty business of weighing in the balance the political considerations that shall determine the claim of this friend or of that supporter. . . . There has grown up such a perversion of the duties of that high office, such a prostitution of its ends unworthy of the great idea of this nation, . . . that a change has already come in the character of the government itself which if not corrected will be permanent and disastrous. . . . The Chief Magistrate of this nation wears out his time and his life in the petty service of party. . . . The Executive mansion is besieged, if not sacked. . . . Every Chief Magistrate, since the evil has grown to its present proportions, has cried out for deliverance. . . . The malign influence of political domination in appointments to office is wide-spread, and reaches out from the President himself to all possible means of approach to the appointing power. It poisons the very air we breathe. No Congressman in accord with the dispenser of power can escape it. . . . When he wakes in the morning it is at his door, and when he retires at night it haunts his chamber. . . . It has come to be a wide-spread belief that the public service is a charitable institution, furnishing employment to the needy and homes to those adrift. The late Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Windom, is reported to have said that five-sixths of the applicants for office while he administered the Treasury based their claims not on merits, fitness, or character, but on their poverty and incapacity to otherwise obtain a livelihood."

These are some of the trivialities about which Civil Service Reform needlessly troubles the country,—according to the great prophet and sage G. H. As I understand her, she even presents General Hawley, the Chairman of the Committee which made the final report in favor of the Civil Service Reform Bill in 1883, as regarding all reforms as needless! All logic seems impotent for answering such audacity—such a reasoner.

But what says the one man whose opinion she respects? Even Mr. Blaine's far too non-committal letter of acceptance of July, 1884, recognized the Civil Service Act, not as a great-humbug device for sustaining a great-humbug reform, but as a necessary and salutary law whose provisions ought to be extended. In the October following, when public sentiment in favor of reform had been much more developed, he bore testimony to the good effects of the law in a speech at Brooklyn, New York, by declaring that the "encouraging improvement of the civil service of the United States will be continued and further developed as experience shall point the way," and that "what has been accomplished is but the foreshadowing of that which a more enlarged experience shall demonstrate to be wise and patriotic." Did G. H. then think so, or was there a division in the family? At that decisive hour it was the distrust she had sown years before which was fatal to Mr. Blaine. She was believed to have expressed the real views of the whole family. He had the quick sagacity to see the peril of his position in the strength of the reform sentiment in New York, but he had been too late in making an emphatic commitment to a reform policy.

As we mention the names of those brilliant Republican leaders Blaine and Garfield, we may well recall that awful tragedy at the railway-station in Washington, where they were together,—when the old Spoils System struck a blow, as fatal to itself as to its illustrious victim, which rang round the world. These words from the *Princeton Review*, written soon after, are worthy of repetition here: "It was no one man who killed Abraham Lincoln,—it was the spirit of treason and slavery inspired with despairing hate that struck him down," said President Garfield in the House of Representatives, the day after the assassination, applying the logic now strikingly applicable to his own case. In the case of Guiteau it needs neither logic nor the lessons of history to connect the bloody deed with its cause. It was not left with reformers or pessimists to discover it. The assassin himself has declared it. Every civilized nation has taken notice of it. . . . With marvellous promptness and unanimity, hardly less in foreign countries than among ourselves, the source and significance of Guiteau's act have been found in our Spoils System of administration. . . . It draws crowds of male and

female office-seekers to Washington, of whom Guiteau was one. It degrades the government and the morality of all who serve it in the estimation of the people. We have now before us many advertisements, cut from three different Washington journals within a few weeks, of this desperate office-seeking class. . . . Failing to get offices through members of Congress, they now openly offer to give a portion of their salaries—sometimes a fifth of it—for a place. These unprecedented facts disclose a nefarious traffic in office, none the less ominous because in a city where so many men are separated from their families and so many office-seeking women are in desperate circumstances. Want of space must exclude all but a single example of these strange and suggestive advertisements, which is as follows: ‘Wanted, by a lady who has Congressional influence, a position in one of the Departments. Will give twenty per cent. of her salary. Address F. M., *Republican Office*.’ . . . This reveals a deplorable state of things, analogous to that which existed in England in the times of Walpole and Newcastle.”

From a late article in the *North American Review* I will add this language, not less suggestive, on the same point: “Not many weeks since, a young lady in a great Department, amid sobs and imprecations, charged the head of the office there, in my hearing, with putting her out of a laborer’s place to make a place for *his own sweetheart*. The charge was not denied. That lady has since, by her own merits, in an examination, won a higher position.” The quick imagination of women will supply the more lamentable features which are hardly hinted at in these citations. But I must be allowed to say that to me it seems strange indeed, while men—reformers—are endeavoring to suppress such scandalous abuses, and to open a way by which women may enter the public service by their own merits, without compromise of their delicacy or self-respect, that a woman, who prefers to go by on the other side, is not content to be silent, but feels herself authorized to denounce these reformers as “murmurers, walking after their own lusts,” “ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness,” “filthy dreamers, evoking filth in idle dreams.” Who, or what, indeed, is our God, if we are conscious of our acts, when we can thus go on the other side in the presence of women thus exposed, belching such unwomanly words, and denouncing reform as dealing only with trivialities?

There is yet another grave abuse of the old system against which five sections of the Civil Service Act of 1883 are exclusively directed, of which G. H. seems unconscious. I mean that of political assessments, the degrading and corrupt consequences of which could not be adequately set forth in the entire space of this article. What injustice, what encouragement of partisan despotism, what sense of degrada-

tion and inducements to neglect of duty on the part of the humbler servants of the nation, what discouragement of all honesty, of all manly independence in politics, and of all disinterested efforts for principle, can be greater or more demoralizing than those which spring from a system which subjected to arbitrary extortion the salary of every officer and the wages of every employee of the government, at the bidding alike of their official superiors and of the party managers, on the pain of dismissal! The arbitrary extortions from the tens of millions paid in wages and salaries every year to the servants of the nation, more emphatically than the offices themselves, were the spoils for which parties fought and by which they were degraded, gaining thus vast sums, which were used to subsidize the press, to bribe voters, and to keep the dominant party in power. Though the act has by no means suppressed this abuse, it has so greatly curtailed it, and has so emboldened public condemnation of it, as to make assessment-extortion far more difficult and disgraceful than before. What has been accomplished marks an era in the purification of our politics. I think hardly more than a fifth part as much money was thus extorted at the last election as in elections before the act was passed.

I have space but for a glance at the Civil Service Rules and the examinations under them.

The main source of abuse, aside from assessments, was the power to bestow offices and salaries as mere favors, or as rewards for subserviency to parties, great politicians, and officers. So long as that power existed it was certain that offices would be sought through the use of every form of vicious influence and demoralizing solicitation. The most effective way of limiting that power was to enable worthy persons to enter the service on their own merits and through their own efforts. It must be made plain that public office is a public trust, and that the appointing power, being a part of that trust, is consequently neither an agency of the dominant party for its own ends nor for dispensing charity to office-seekers.

It was plain, on the other hand, that certain kinds and amounts of information are essential to the proper doing of the public work, and that those who offer, for the salaries, the best character and capacity for doing the public work, have the highest claim for an appointment. Legislative officers, from the very nature of their functions, ought to represent the interests and opinions of those for whom they act. Their political opinions in the matter of making laws are, consequently, relevant and important.

The President and his legal advisers,—members of his Cabinet,—and, to a certain extent, diplomatic officers, are bound to carry out the

political policy approved by the people at the elections. But the vast clerical force in the Departments and in the customs offices and the post-offices of the country are in no sense representative officers, and there is no policy, except that of honesty and fidelity in doing the public work, which they can have any part in directing. They are in no sense the advisers of any political or representative officer. Their duties are the same, and should be performed in the same way, whichever party may control the administration. There is no more need and no more legitimate sphere for political opinions or party activity in a Department, post-office, or custom-house than in a church, school, asylum, or college. Those offices are mere business agencies for doing the public work economically and efficiently, regardless alike of both political and religious opinions. Why, then, have a political or a religious test for entering such offices or for remaining in them? A party which cannot keep in power or get into power by reason of sound principles and worthy candidates—in other words, which cannot get or keep office save by converting the business servants of the nation into partisan henchmen—ought to fail. The country has no need of it.

From these facts the way is clear to the establishment of the proper tests of capacity and character, irrespective of political or religious opinions, through which applicants, without the aid of influence or the need of appealing to great politicians or officials, may work their own way into the public service.

It is plain that, to the precise extent to which they shall do this, patronage-mongering, the corrupt use of influence, demoralizing pressure and solicitation for office, and all the multifarious evils that spring from them, will cease. If five hundred or five thousand offices shall be filled by applicants winning them in a manly competition of merit as between themselves, it is plain that there will be so many the less to be wrangled for and raffled for, to be used as bribes for votes, to be secretly given away as official favors, or to be awarded for corrupt partisan work.

The abuses to which I have referred had become so intolerable in Washington even prior to 1855 that Congress was compelled, in that year, to establish a system of examinations, which were enforced until competitive examinations were established. But these first examinations lacked various safeguards needed to make them honest and effective; and, above all, they allowed the politicians and great officers to say who alone should be examined. Only those of one party, and generally only the favorites of the great officers and politicians of that party, could gain access to them. While, therefore, they kept out most of the mere dunces, they did not open the public service to merit irrespective of politics. They did, however, make it clear that through

examinations, properly organized and based upon sound principles, the government might easily secure the superior capacity and character which it needs.

The Civil Service Act of January 16, 1883, provided for free, open examinations, in which all apparently qualified, irrespective of their political or religious opinions, might take part. The questions, of various grades, were to take no notice of political or religious views, but were to call for the amount of information in the several parts of the public service which is needed there. They were, consequently, to be different for the different parts of the service.

Every person apparently qualified was to be allowed to take part in the examinations, without the least need of the consent or the influence of any party manager or great officer. Every person examined was to have his papers marked according to the merits of his written answers to carefully-prepared printed questions. Superiority of qualifications thus shown was to give priority in appointment in the order of merit. Such free examinations in which the comparative merits of those seeking any part of the service are fairly put in comparison are known as *competitive* examinations. It is only in their freedom and justice that they are peculiar.

They were not new. They had not only been tried with useful results under President Grant at Washington, but they had greatly improved, as we have seen, the administration of the Post-Office, the Naval Office, and the Collector's office at the city of New York. They had also, upon a long trial, proved to be beneficial in Great Britain. Colonel Burt at the Naval Office and Mr. Pearson at the Post-Office at New York City have been reappointed by President Cleveland, mainly by reason of their courage and public spirit in enforcing these competitive examinations of the people against the politicians, patronage-mongers, and spoilsmen who are their natural enemies, and who originate the malicious falsehoods afloat concerning the difficulty of the questions. The questions, save a very few technical ones for places where a knowledge of science or some language is required, do not go beyond the teachings of the public schools. They are doubtless, as they ought to be, beyond the capacity of most of the flunkies and bullies who press and clamor for office.

In more fully testing a new system, sure to be misrepresented and obstructed by its enemies, it was desirable to keep it at first within the limits of thorough supervision. Once proved useful within such limits, it could be easily extended. It was decided, therefore, to make the trial within about fourteen thousand places, nearly five thousand six hundred being in the departments at Washington, more than that number in the

twenty-four largest post-offices, and about two thousand six hundred in the twenty-three largest customs offices, extending from Portland, Maine, to New Orleans and San Francisco. That part of the public service in which vacancies can be filled only from among those examined under the Civil Service Commission is known as the *Classified Civil Service*. It extends to no laborer, to no elective officer, and to no officer subject to confirmation by the Senate. Separate examinations of several different grades are held for each post-office and customs office, and for the departments within that service. The Civil Service rules for enforcing the act of 1883 are under the direct charge of the Commission, the members of which are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The President, who alone makes the rules, can extend them to other Executive offices.

About fifteen thousand persons have been examined, and several thousand have been appointed from those examined, under the rules. More than seventy per cent. of all those examined have had only a public-school education, and their average age is almost precisely thirty years,—a very decisive answer to the oft-repeated charges of the politicians that only boys and college graduates can get offices under the Merit System. Out of about six thousand persons examined in the year prior to January 16, 1885, only four hundred and forty-nine had ever been in college; and the report for the last year, soon to appear, will show similar results.

But I have no space for further particulars. They are given in detail in the reports of the Commission, which are sent in answer to requests to be addressed to the Civil Service Commission at Washington.

The practical results of the new system have been salutary. Congressmen and the appointing officers have been relieved of a vast amount of demoralizing solicitation. Vicious intrigues and bargains for office have been greatly reduced. No one of these fourteen thousand places can now be promised for votes or given as a reward for work for a candidate. A worthy man can work his own way into office. The people, I think, are likely to have more respect for the public service now that they see these places are won by merit and not captured by influence and begging. Office is being regarded more and more as a trust, and less and less as a prize. The people as never before are taking notice that the government regards its salaries and honors as due to the most worthy, and not as rewards for the most partisan and subservient. The friends of public-school education are seeing more and more clearly that the Merit System is their natural ally, and that it is a barrier against demagogues and schemers. Patronage being lost, party managers must rely more on sound principles and superior candidates. Assessments being lost, they

must appeal to the people for money. Thus the people gain what the politicians lose.

In a special message sent to Congress in February, 1885, President Arthur congratulated the country upon the success of the new system. A committee of the House of Representatives, composed of eight Democrats and five Republicans, has commended its salutary effects. The administration of President Cleveland has enforced the law and rules with vigor and good faith, and his Cabinet has sustained him in that enforcement. No violation of the rules or limitation of their scope has been allowed. More and more of late the new system is being recognized as certain to be as permanent as it is salutary.

If Congress will make the needed appropriations, the examinations can be extended to additional offices in the Postal and Customs service, to consuls, to the District of Columbia, and to any other offices where they are appropriate, as the President may direct. The examinations now being enforced in the State service of New York and Massachusetts, and in the municipal service of New York City, Brooklyn, N.Y., Boston, and in nearly all the other cities of these States, indicate that it will not be long before there will be a great extension of the Merit System of office. I believe the time is not remote when the reform policy now being enforced in a limited sphere will prevail in the national, State, and municipal administrations of the country.

Dorman B. Eaton.

IRONY.

I SET my gaze upon two stars that seemed
Twin orbs of equal flame in heaven's dark height,
So close with interblended rays they beamed
From the deep dome of night.

"Oh, happy stars," I thought, "like this to bide
Through mighty changes, lovingly withstood,
Companioned each of each, whate'er betide,
In silver sisterhood!"

Then sounded to my sense, from night's great thrall:
"On either star, this hour, there dwells a race
That knows not if the other lives at all,
So vast their sundering space!"

Edgar Fawcett

THE GOLD WULFRIC.

I.

THERE are only two gold coins of Wulfric of Mercia in existence anywhere. One of them is in the British Museum, and the other one is in my possession.

The most terrible incident in the whole course of my career is intimately connected with my first discovery of that gold Wulfric. It is not too much to say that my entire life has been deeply colored by it, and I shall make no apology, therefore, for narrating the story in some little detail. I was stopping down at Lichfield for my summer holiday in July, 1879, when I happened one day accidentally to meet an old ploughman who told me he had got a lot of coins at home that he had ploughed up on what he called "the field of battle," a place I had already recognized as the site of the old Mercian kings' wooden palace.

I went home with him at once in high glee, for I had been a collector of old English gold and silver coinage for several years, and I was in hopes that my friendly ploughman's find might contain something good in the way of Anglo-Saxon pennies or shillings, considering the very promising place in which he had unearthed it.

As it turned out, I was not mistaken. The little hoard, concealed within a rude piece of Anglo-Saxon pottery (now No. 127 in Case LIX. at the South Kensington Museum), comprised a large number of common Frankish Merovingian coins (I beg Mr. Freeman's pardon for not calling them Merwings), together with two or three Kentish pennies of some rarity from the mints of Ethelbert at Canterbury and Dover. Among these minor treasures, however, my eye at once fell upon a single gold piece, obviously imitated from the imperial Roman aureus of the Pretender Carausius, which I saw immediately must be an almost unique bit of money of the very greatest numismatic interest. I took it up and examined it carefully. A minute's inspection fully satisfied me that it was indeed a genuine mintage of Wulfric of Mercia, the like of which I had never before to my knowledge set eyes upon.

I immediately offered the old man five pounds down for the whole collection. He closed with the offer forthwith in the most contented fashion, and I bought them and paid for them all upon the spot without further parley.

When I got back to my lodgings that evening I could do nothing but look at my gold Wulfric. I was charmed and delighted at the

actual possession of so great a treasure, and was burning to take it up at once to the British Museum to see whether even in the national collection they had got another like it. So, being by nature of an enthusiastic and impulsive disposition, I determined to go up to town the very next day and try to track down the history of my Wulfric. "It'll be a good opportunity," I said to myself, "to kill two birds with one stone. Emily's people haven't got out of town yet. I can call there in the morning, arrange to go to the theatre with them at night, and then drive at once to the Museum and see how much my find is worth."

Next morning I was off to town by an early train, and before one o'clock I had got to Emily's.

"Why, Harold," she cried, running down to meet me and kiss me in the passage (for she had seen me get out of my hansom from the drawing-room window), "how on earth is it that you're up in town to-day? I thought you were down at Lichfield still with your Oxford reading-party."

"So I am," I answered, "officially at Lichfield; but I've come up to-day partly to see you, and partly on a piece of business about a new coin I've just got hold of."

"A coin!" Emily answered, pretending to pout. "Me and a coin! That's how you link us together mentally, is it? I declare, Harold, I shall be getting jealous of those coins of yours some day, I'm certain. You can't even come up to see me for a day, it seems, unless you've got some matter of a coin as well to bring you to London. Moral: never get engaged to a man with a fancy for collecting coins and medals."

"Oh, but this is really such a beauty, Emily," I cried, enthusiastically. "Just look at it, now. Isn't it lovely? Do you notice the inscription,—'Wulfric Rex'? I've never yet seen one anywhere else at all like it."

Emily took it in her hands carelessly. "I don't see any points about that coin in particular," she answered, in her bantering fashion, "more than about any other old coin that you'd pick up anywhere."

That was all we said then about the matter. Subsequent events engrained the very words of that short conversation into the inmost substance of my brain with indelible fidelity. I shall never forget them to my dying moment.

I stopped about an hour altogether at Emily's, had lunch, and arranged that she and her mother should accompany me that evening to the Lyceum. Then I drove off to the British Museum, and asked for leave to examine the Anglo-Saxon coins of the Mercian period.

The superintendent, who knew me well enough by sight and repute

as a responsible amateur collector, readily gave me permission to look at a drawerful of the earliest Mercian gold and silver coinage. I had brought one or two numismatic books with me, and I sat down to have a good look at those delightful cases.

After thoroughly examining the entire series and the documentary evidence, I came to the conclusion that there was just one other gold Wulfric in existence besides the one I kept in my pocket, and that was the beautiful and well-preserved example in the case before me. It was described in the last edition of Sir Theophilus Wraxton's "Northumbrian and Mercian Numismatist" as an absolutely unique gold coin of Wulfric of Mercia, in imitation of the well-known aureus of the false emperor Carausius. I turned to the catalogue to see the price at which it had been purchased by the nation. To my intense surprise, I saw it entered at one hundred and fifty pounds.

I was perfectly delighted at my magnificent acquisition.

On comparing the two examples, however, I observed that, though both struck from the same die and apparently at the same mint (to judge by the letter), they differed slightly from one another in two minute accidental particulars. My coin, being of course merely stamped with a hammer and then cut to shape, after the fashion of the time, was rather more closely clipped round the edge than the Museum specimen; and it had also a slight dent on the obverse side, just below the W of Wulfric. In all other respects the two examples were of necessity absolutely identical.

I stood for a long time gazing at the case and examining the two duplicates with the deepest interest, while the Museum keeper (a man of the name of Mactavish, whom I had often seen before on previous visits) walked about within sight, as is the rule on all such occasions, and kept a sharp lookout that I did not attempt to meddle with any of the remaining coins or cases.

Unfortunately, as it turned out, I had not mentioned to the superintendent my own possession of a duplicate Wulfric; nor had I called Mactavish's attention to the fact that I had pulled a coin of my own, for purposes of comparison, out of my waistcoat-pocket. To say the truth, I was inclined to be a little secretive as yet about my gold Wulfric, because until I had found out all that was known about it I did not want anybody else to be told of my discovery.

At last I had fully satisfied my curiosity, and was just about to return the Museum Wulfric to its little round compartment in the neat case (having already replaced my own duplicate in my waistcoat-pocket), when all at once, I can't say how, I gave a sudden start, and dropped the coin with a jerk unexpectedly upon the floor of the museum.

It rolled away out of sight in a second, and I stood appalled in an agony of distress and terror in the midst of the gallery.

Next moment I had hastily called Mactavish to my side, and got him to lock up the open drawer while we two went down on hands and knees and hunted through the length and breadth of the gallery for the lost Wulfric.

It was absolutely hopeless. Plain sailing as the thing seemed, we could see no trace of the missing coin from one end of the room to the other. At last I leaned in a cold perspiration against the edge of one of the glass cabinets, and gave it up in despair with a sinking heart. "It's no use, Mactavish," I murmured, desperately: "the thing's lost, and we shall never find it."

Mactavish looked me quietly in the face. "In that case, sir," he answered, firmly, "by the rules of the Museum I must call the superintendent." He put his hand, with no undue violence, but in a strictly official manner, upon my right shoulder. Then he blew a little whistle. "I'm sorry to be rude to you, sir," he went on, apologetically, "but by the rules of the Museum I can't take my hand off you till the superintendent gives me leave to release you."

Another keeper answered the whistle. "Send the superintendent," Mactavish said, quietly. "A coin missing."

In a minute the superintendent was upon the spot. When Mactavish told him I had dropped the gold Wulfric of Mercia he shook his head very ominously. "This is a bad business, Mr. Tait," he said, gloomily. "A unique coin, as you know, and one of the most valuable in the whole of our large Anglo-Saxon collection."

"Is there a mouse-hole anywhere?" I cried, in agony,— "any place where it might have rolled down and got mislaid or concealed for the moment?"

The superintendent went down instantly on his own hands and knees, pulled up every piece of the cocoanut matting with minute deliberation, and searched the whole place thoroughly from end to end, but found nothing. He spent nearly an hour on that thorough search. Meanwhile, Mactavish never for a moment relaxed his hold upon me.

At last the superintendent desisted from the search as quite hopeless, and approached me very politely.

"I'm extremely sorry, Mr. Tait," he said, in the most courteous possible manner, "but by the rules of the Museum I am absolutely compelled either to search you for the coin or to give you into custody. It may, you know, have got caught somewhere about your person. No doubt you would prefer, of the two, that I should look in all your pockets and the folds of your clothing."

The position was terrible. I could stand it no longer.

"Mr. Harbourne," I said, breaking out once more from head to foot into a cold sweat, "I must tell you the truth. I have brought a duplicate gold Wulfric here to-day to compare with the Museum specimen, and I have got it this very moment in my waistcoat-pocket."

The superintendent gazed back at me with a mingled look of incredulity and pity.

"My dear sir," he answered, very gently, "this is altogether a most unfortunate business, but I'm afraid I must ask you to let me look at the duplicate you speak of."

I took it, trembling, out of my waistcoat-pocket and handed it across to him without a word. The superintendent gazed at it for a moment in silence; then, in a tone of the profoundest commiseration, he said, slowly, "Mr. Tait, I grieve to be obliged to contradict you. This is our own specimen of the gold Wulfric!"

The whole Museum whirled round me violently, and before I knew anything more I fainted.

II.

When I came to, I found myself seated in the superintendent's room, with a policeman standing quietly in the background.

As soon as I had fully recovered consciousness, the superintendent motioned the policeman out of the room for a while, and then gently forced me to swallow a brandy-and-soda.

"Mr. Tait," he said, compassionately, after an awkward pause, "you are a very young man indeed, and, I believe, hitherto of blameless character. Now, I should be very sorry to have to proceed to extremities against you. I know to what lengths, in a moment of weakness, the desire to possess a rare coin will often lead a connoisseur, under stress of exceptional temptation. I have not the slightest doubt in my own mind that you did really accidentally drop this coin; that you went down on your knees honestly intending to find it; that the accident suggested to you the ease with which you might pick it up and proceed to pocket it; that you yielded temporarily to that unfortunate impulse; and that by the time I arrived upon the scene you were already overcome with remorse and horror. I saw as much immediately in your very countenance. Nevertheless, I determined to give you the benefit of the doubt, and I searched over the whole place in the most thorough and conscientious manner. . . . As you know, I found nothing. . . . Mr. Tait, I cannot bear to have to deal harshly with you. I recognize the temptation and the agony of repentance that instantly followed it. Sir, I give you one chance. If you will retract the obviously false story that you just now told me, and confess that the coin

I found in your pocket was in fact, as I know it to be, the Museum specimen, I will forthwith dismiss the constable, and will never say another word to any one about the whole matter. I don't want to ruin you, but I can't, of course, be put off with a falsehood. Think the matter carefully over with yourself. Do you or do you not still adhere to that very improbable and incredible story?"

Horrified and terror-stricken as I was, I could not avoid feeling grateful to the superintendent for the evident kindness with which he was treating me. The tears rose at once into my eyes.

"Mr. Harbourne," I cried, passionately, "you are very good, very generous. But you quite mistake the whole position. The story I told you was true, every word of it. I bought that gold Wulfric from a ploughman at Lichfield, and it is not absolutely identical with the Museum specimen which I dropped upon the floor. It is closer clipped around the edges, and it has a distinct dent upon the obverse side, just below the W of Wulfric."

The superintendent paused a second, and scanned my face very closely.

"Have you a knife or a file in your pocket?" he asked, in a much sterner and more official tone.

"No," I replied, "neither,—neither."

"You are sure?"

"Certain."

"Shall I search you myself, or shall I give you in custody?"

"Search me yourself," I answered, confidently.

He put his hand quietly into my left-hand breast-pocket, and, to my utter horror and dismay, drew forth, what I had up to that moment utterly forgotten, a pair of folding pocket nail-scissors, in a leather case, of course with a little file on either side.

My heart stood still within me.

"That is quite sufficient, Mr. Tait," the superintendent went on, severely. "Had you alleged that the Museum coin was smaller than your own imaginary one, you might have been able to put in the facts as good evidence. But I see the exact contrary is the case. You have stooped to a disgraceful and unworthy subterfuge. This base deception aggravates your guilt. You have deliberately defaced a valuable specimen in order, if possible, to destroy its identity."

What could I say in return? I stammered and hesitated.

"Mr. Harbourne," I cried, piteously, "the circumstances seem to look terribly against me. But nevertheless you are quite mistaken. The missing Wulfric will come to light sooner or later and prove me innocent."

He walked up and down the room once or twice irresolutely, and then he turned round to me with a very fixed and determined aspect which fairly terrified me.

“Mr. Tait,” he said, “I am straining every point possible to save you, but you make it very difficult for me by your continued falsehood. I am doing quite wrong in being so lenient to you : I am proposing, in short, to compound a felony. But I cannot bear, without letting you have just one more chance, to give you in charge for a common robbery. I will let you have ten minutes to consider the matter ; and I beseech you, I beg of you, I implore you, to retract this absurd and despicable lie before it is too late forever. Just consider that if you refuse I shall have to hand you over to the constable out there, and that the whole truth must come out in court, and must be blazoned forth to the entire world in every newspaper. The policeman is standing here by the door. I will leave you alone with your own thoughts for ten minutes.”

As he spoke, he walked out gravely, and shut the door solemnly behind him. The clock on the chimney-piece pointed with its hands to twenty minutes past three.

It was an awful dilemma. I hardly knew how to act under it. On the one hand, if I admitted for the moment that I had tried to steal the coin, I could avoid all immediate unpleasant circumstances ; and, as it would be sure to turn up again in cleaning the Museum, I should be able at last to prove my innocence to Mr. Harbourne’s complete satisfaction. But, on the other hand, the lie—for it *was* a lie—stuck in my throat : I could not humble myself to say I had committed a mean and dirty action which I loathed with all the force and energy of my nature. No, no ! come what would of it, I must stick by the truth, and trust to that to clear up everything.

But if the superintendent really insisted on giving me in charge, how very awkward to have to telegraph about it to Emily ! Fancy saying to the girl you are in love with, “I can’t go with you to the theatre this evening, because I have been taken off to jail on a charge of stealing a valuable coin from the British Museum.” It was too terrible !

Yet, after all, I thought to myself, if the worst comes to the worst, Emily will have faith enough in me to know it is ridiculous ; and, indeed, the imputation could in any case only be temporary. As soon as the thing got into court I could bring up the Lichfield ploughman to prove my possession of a gold Wulfric ; and I could bring up Emily to prove that I had shown it to her that very morning. How lucky that I had happened to take it out and let her look at it ! My case was,

happily, as plain as a pike-staff. It was only momentarily that the weight of the evidence seemed so perversely to go against me.

Turning over all these various considerations in my mind with anxious hesitancy, the ten minutes managed to pass away almost before I had thoroughly realized the deep gravity of the situation.

As the clock on the chimney-piece pointed to the half-hour, the door opened once more, and the superintendent entered solemnly. "Well, Mr. Tait," he said, in an anxious voice, "have you made up your mind to make a clean breast of it? Do you now admit, after full deliberation, that you have endeavored to steal and clip the gold Wulfric?"

"No," I answered, firmly, "I do not admit it; and I will willingly go before a jury of my countrymen to prove my innocence."

"Then God help you, poor boy!" the superintendent cried, despondently. "I have done my best to save you, and you will not let me. Policeman, this is your prisoner. I give him in custody on a charge of stealing a gold coin, the property of the trustees of this Museum, valued at one hundred and seventy-five pounds sterling."

The policeman laid his hand upon my wrist. "You will have to go along with me to the station, sir," he said, quietly.

Terrified and stunned as I was by the awfulness of the accusation, I could not forget or overlook the superintendent's evident reluctance and kindness. "Mr. Harbourne," I cried, "you have tried to do your best for me. I am grateful to you for it, in spite of your terrible mistake, and I shall yet be able to show you that I am innocent."

He shook his head gloomily. "I have done my duty," he said, with a shudder. "I have never before had a more painful one. Policeman, I must ask you now to do yours."

III.

The police are always considerate to respectable-looking prisoners, and I had no difficulty in getting the sergeant in charge of the lock-up to telegraph for me to Emily, to say that I was detained by important business, which would prevent me taking her and her mother to the theatre that evening. But when I explained to him that my detention was merely temporary, and that I should be able to disprove the whole story as soon as I went before the magistrates, he winked most unpleasantly at the constable who had brought me in, and observed, in a tone of vulgar sarcasm, "We have a good many gentlemen here who says the same, sir: don't we, Jim? but they don't always find it so easy as they expected when they stands up afore the beak to prove their statements."

I began to reflect that even a temporary prison is far from being a pleasant place for a man to stop in.

Next morning they took me up before the magistrate, and, as the Museum authorities of course proved a *prima facie* case against me, and as my solicitor advised me to reserve my defence, owing to the difficulty of getting up my witness from Lichfield in reasonable time, I was duly committed for trial at the next sessions of the Central Criminal Court. I had often read before that people had been committed for trial, but till that moment I had no idea what a very unpleasant sensation it really is.

However, as I was a person of hitherto unblemished character, and wore a good coat made by a fashionable tailor, the magistrate decided to admit me to bail, if two sureties in five hundred pounds each were promptly forthcoming for the purpose. Luckily, I had no difficulty in finding friends who believed in my story; and, as I felt sure the lost Wulfric would soon be found in cleaning the Museum, I suffered perhaps a little less acutely than I might otherwise have done, owing to my profound confidence in the final triumph of the truth.

Nevertheless, as the case would be fully reported next morning in all the papers, I saw at once that I must go straight off and explain the matter without delay to Emily.

I will not dwell upon that painful interview. I will only say that Emily behaved as I of course knew she would behave. She was horrified and indignant at the dreadful accusation; and, woman-like, she was very angry with the superintendent. "He ought to have taken your word for it, naturally, Harold," she cried through her tears. "But what a good thing, anyhow, that you happened to show the coin to me! I should recognize it anywhere among ten thousand."

"That's well, darling," I said, trying to kiss away her tears and cheer her up a little. "I haven't the slightest doubt that when the trial comes we shall be able triumphantly to vindicate me from this terrible, groundless accusation."

IV.

When the trial did actually come on, the Museum authorities began by proving their case against me in what seemed the most horribly damning fashion. The superintendent proved that on such and such a day, in such and such a case, he had seen a gold coin of Wulfric of Mercia, the property of the Museum. He and Mactavish detailed the circumstances under which the coin was lost. The superintendent explained how he had asked me to submit to a search, and how, to avoid that indignity, I had myself produced from my waistcoat-pocket a gold

coin of Wulfric of Mercia, which I asserted to be a duplicate specimen and my own property. The counsel for the Crown proceeded thus with the examination :

“Do you recognize the coin I now hand you?”

“I do.”

“What is it?”

“The unique gold coin of Wulfric of Mercia, belonging to the Museum.”

“You have absolutely no doubt as to its identity?”

“Absolutely none whatsoever.”

“Does it differ in any respect from the same coin as you previously saw it?”

“Yes. It has been clipped round the edge with a sharp instrument, and a slight dent has been made by pressure on the obverse side, just below the W of Wulfric.”

“Did you suspect the prisoner at the bar of having mutilated it?”

“I did, and I asked him whether he had a knife in his possession. He answered no. I then asked him whether he would submit to be searched for a knife. He consented, and on my looking in his pocket I found the pair of nail-scissors I now produce, with a small file on either side.”

“Do you believe the coin might have been clipped with those scissors?”

“I do. The gold is very soft, having little alloy in its composition ; and it could be easily cut by a strong-wristed man with a knife or scissors.”

As I listened, I didn't wonder that the jury looked as if they already considered me guilty : but I smiled to myself when I thought how utterly Emily's and the ploughman's evidence would rebut this unworthy suspicion.

The next witness was the Museum-cleaner. His evidence at first produced nothing fresh, but just at last counsel set before him a paper containing a few scraps of yellow metal, and asked him triumphantly whether he recognized them. He answered yes.

There was a profound silence. The court was interested and curious. I couldn't quite understand it all, but I felt a terrible sinking.

“What are they?” asked the hostile barrister.

“They are some fragments of gold which I found in shaking the cocoanut matting on the floor of gallery 27 the Saturday after the attempted theft.”

I felt as if a mine had unexpectedly been sprung beneath me. How on earth those fragments of soft gold could ever have got there I couldn't

imagine ; but I saw the damaging nature of this extraordinary and inexplicable coincidence in half a second.

My counsel cross-examined all the witnesses for the prosecution, but failed to elicit anything of any value from any one of them. On the contrary, his questions put to the metallurgist of the Mint, who was called to prove the quality of the gold, only brought out a very strong opinion to the effect that the clippings were essentially similar in character to the metal composing the clipped Wulfric. No wonder the jury seemed to think the case was going decidedly against me.

Then my counsel called his witnesses. I listened in the profoundest suspense and expectation.

The first witness was the ploughman from Lichfield. He was a well-meaning but very puzzle-headed old man, and he was evidently frightened at being confronted by so many clever wig-wearing barristers.

Nevertheless, my counsel managed to get the true story out of him at last, with infinite patience, dexterity, and skill. The old man told us finally how he had found the coins and sold them to me for five pounds, and how one of them was of gold, with a queer head and goggle eyes pointed full face upon its surface.

When he had finished, the counsel for the Crown began his cross-examination. He handed the ploughman a gold coin. "Did you ever see that before?" he asked, quietly.

"To be sure I did," the man answered, looking at it open-mouthed.

"What is it?"

"It's the bit I sold Mr. Tait there,—the bit as I got out o' the old basin."

Counsel turned triumphantly to the judge. "My lord," he said, "this thing to which the witness swears is a gold piece of Ethelwulf of Wessex, by far the commonest and cheapest gold coin of the whole Anglo-Saxon period."

It was handed to the jury side by side with the Wulfric of Mercia ; and the difference, as I knew myself, was in fact extremely noticeable. All that the old man could have observed in common between them must have been merely the archaic Anglo-Saxon character of the coinage.

As I heard that, I began to feel that it was really all over.

My counsel tried on the re-examination to shake the old man's faith in his identification and to make him transfer his story to the Wulfric which he had actually sold me. But it was all in vain. The ploughman had clearly the dread of perjury forever before his eyes, and wouldn't go back for any consideration upon his first sworn statement.

"No, no, mister," he said over and over again in reply to my counsel's bland suggestion: "you ain't going to make me forswear myself, for all your cleverness."

The next witness was Emily. She went into the box pale and red-eyed, but very confident. My counsel examined her admirably; and she stuck to her point with womanly persistence, that she had herself seen the clipped Wulfric, and no other coin, on the morning of the supposed theft. She knew it was so, because she distinctly remembered the inscription "Wulfric Rex," and the peculiar way the staring open eyes were represented with barbaric puerility.

Counsel for the Crown would only trouble the young lady with two questions. The first was a painful one, but it must be asked in the interests of justice. Were she and the prisoner at the bar engaged to be married to one another?

The answer came, slowly and timidly, "Yes."

Counsel drew a long breath, and looked her hard in the face. Could she read the inscription on that coin now produced?—handing her the Ethelwulf.

Great heavens! I saw at once the plot to disconcert her, but was utterly powerless to warn her against it.

Emily looked at it long and steadily. "No," she said, at last, growing deadly pale and grasping the wood-work of the witness-box convulsively: "I don't know the character in which it is written."

Of course not; for the inscription was in the peculiar semi-runic Anglo-Saxon letters. She had never read the words "Wulfric Rex," either. I had read them to her, and she had carried them away vaguely in her mind, imagining no doubt that she herself had actually deciphered them.

There was a slight pause, and I felt my blood growing cold within me. Then the counsel for the Crown handed her again the genuine Wulfric, and asked her whether the letters upon it which she professed to have read were or were not similar to those of the Ethelwulf.

Instead of answering, Emily bent down her head between her hands and burst suddenly into tears.

I was so much distressed at her terrible agitation that I forgot altogether for the moment my own perilous position, and I cried aloud, "My lord, my lord, will you not interpose to spare her any further questions?"

"I think," the judge said to the counsel for the Crown, "you might now permit the witness to stand down."

"I wish to re-examine, my lord," my counsel put in, hastily.

"No," I said in his ear,—“no. Whatever comes of it, not another

question. I had far rather go to prison than let her suffer this inexpressible torture for a single minute longer."

Emily was led down, still crying bitterly, into the body of the court, and the rest of the proceedings went on uninterrupted.

The theory of the prosecution was a simple and plausible one. I had bought a common Anglo-Saxon coin, probably an Ethelwulf, valued at about twenty-two shillings, from the old Lichfield ploughman. I had thereupon conceived the fraudulent idea of pretending that I had a duplicate of the rare Wulfric. I had shown the Ethelwulf, clipped in a particular fashion, to the lady whom I was engaged to marry. I had then defaced and altered the genuine Wulfric at the Museum into the same shape with the aid of my pocket nail-scissors. And I had finally made believe to drop the coin accidentally upon the floor, while I had really secreted it in my waistcoat-pocket. The theory for the defence had broken down utterly; and then there was the damning fact of the gold scrapings found in the cocoanut matting of the British Museum, which was to me the one great inexplicable mystery in the whole otherwise comprehensible mystification.

I felt myself that the case did indeed look very black against me. But would a jury venture to convict me on such very doubtful evidence?

The jury retired to consider their verdict. I stood in suspense in the dock, with my heart loudly beating. Emily remained in the body of the court below, looking up at me tearfully and penitently.

After twenty minutes the jury returned.

"Guilty or not guilty?"

The foreman answered aloud, "Guilty."

There was a piercing cry in the body of the court, and in a moment Emily was carried out half fainting and half hysterical.

The judge then calmly proceeded to pass sentence. He dwelt upon the enormity of my crime in one so well connected and so far removed from the dangers of mere vulgar temptations. He dwelt also upon the vandalism of which I had been guilty—myself a collector—in chipping and defacing a valuable and unique memorial of antiquity, the property of the nation. He did not wish to be severe upon a young man of hitherto blameless character; but the national collection must be secured against such a peculiarly insidious and cunning form of depredation. The sentence of the court was that I should be kept in—

Five years' penal servitude.

Crushed and annihilated as I was, I had still strength to utter a single final word. "My lord," I cried, "the missing Wulfric will yet be found, and will hereafter prove my perfect innocence."

"Remove the prisoner," said the judge, coldly.

They took me down to the court-yard unresisting, where the prison-van was standing in waiting.

On the steps I saw Emily and her mother, both crying bitterly. They had been told the sentence already, and were waiting to take a last farewell of me.

"Oh, Harold," Emily cried, flinging her arms around me wildly, "it's all my fault! It's my fault only! By my foolish stupidity I've lost your case. I've sent you to prison. Oh, Harold, I can never forgive myself. I've sent you to prison. I've sent you to prison."

"Dearest," I said, "it won't be for long. I shall soon be free again. They'll find the Wulfric sooner or later, and then of course they'll let me out again."

"Harold," she cried, "oh, Harold, Harold, don't you see? Don't you understand? This is a plot against you. It isn't lost. It isn't lost. That would be nothing. It's stolen! it's stolen!"

A light burst in upon me suddenly, and I saw in a moment the full depth of the peril that surrounded me.

V.

It was some time before I could sufficiently accustom myself to my new life in the Isle of Portland to be able to think clearly and distinctly about the terrible blow that had fallen upon me. In the midst of all the petty troubles and discomforts of prison existence I had no leisure at first fully to realize the fact that I was a convicted felon, with scarcely a hope—not of release; for that I cared little—but of rehabilitation.

Slowly, however, I began to grow habituated to the new hard life imposed upon me, and to think in my cell of the web of circumstance which had woven itself so irresistibly around me.

I had only one hope. Emily knew I was innocent. Emily suspected, like me, that the Wulfric had been stolen. Emily would do her best, I felt certain, to heap together fresh evidence and unravel this mystery to its very bottom.

Meanwhile, I thanked heaven for the hard mechanical daily toil of cutting stone in Portland Prison. I was a strong athletic young fellow enough. I was glad now that I had always loved the river at Oxford: my arms were stout and muscular. I was able to take my part in the regular work of the gang to which I belonged. Had it been otherwise,—had I been set down to some quiet sedentary occupation, as first-class misdemeanants often are,—I should have worn my heart out soon with thinking perpetually of poor Emily's terrible trouble.

When I first came, the deputy governor, knowing my case well (had there not been leaders about me in all the papers?), very kindly asked me whether I would wish to be given work in the book-keeping department, where many educated convicts were employed as clerks and assistants. But I begged particularly to be put into an out-door gang, where I might have to use my limbs constantly and so keep my mind from eating itself up with perpetual thinking. The deputy governor immediately consented, and gave me work in a quarrying gang, at the west end of the island, near Deadman's Bay, on the edge of the Chesil.

For three months I worked hard at learning the trade of a quarryman, and succeeded far better than any of the other new hands who were set to learn at the same time with me. Their heart was not in it; mine was. Anything to escape that gnawing agony.

The other men in the gang were not agreeable or congenial companions. They taught me their established modes of intercommunication, and told me several facts about themselves which did not tend to endear them to me. One of them, 1247, was put in for the manslaughter of his wife by kicking: he was a low-browed, brutal London drayman, and he occupied the next cell to mine, where he disturbed me much in my sleepless nights by his loud snoring. Another, a much slighter and more intelligent-looking man, was a skilled burglar, sentenced to fourteen years for "cracking a crib" in the neighborhood of Hampstead. A third was a sailor, convicted of gross cruelty to a defenceless Lascar. They all told me the nature of their crimes with a brutal frankness which fairly surprised me; but when I explained to them in return that I had been put in upon a false accusation, they treated my remarks with a galling contempt that was absolutely insupportable. After a short time I ceased to communicate with my fellow-prisoners in any way, and remained shut up with my own thoughts in utter isolation.

By and by I found that the other men in the same gang were beginning to dislike me strongly, and that some among them actually whispered to one another—what they seemed to consider a very strong point indeed against me—that I must really have been convicted by mistake, and that I was a regular stuck-up sneaking Methodist. They complained that I worked a great deal too hard and so made the other felons seem lazy by comparison; and they also objected to my prompt obedience to our warder's commands, as tending to set up an exaggerated and impossible standard of discipline.

Between this warder and myself, on the other hand, there soon sprang up a feeling which I might almost describe as one of friendship. Though by the rules of the establishment we could not communicate with one another except upon matters of business, I liked him for his

uniform courtesy, kindness, and forbearance; while I could easily see that he liked me in return, by contrast with the other men who were under his charge. He was one of those persons whom some experience of prisons then and since has led me to believe less rare than most people would imagine,—men in whom the dreary life of a prison warder, instead of engendering hardness of heart and cold unsympathetic sternness, has engendered a certain profound tenderness and melancholy of spirit. I grew quite fond of that one honest warder, among so many coarse and criminal faces; and I found, on the other hand, that my fellow-prisoners hated me all the more because, as they expressed it in their own disgusting jargon, I was sucking up to that confounded dog of a barker. It happened once, when I was left for a few minutes alone with the warder, that he made an attempt for a moment, contrary to regulations, to hold a little private conversation with me.

"1430," he said, in a low voice, hardly moving his lips, for fear of being overlooked, "what is your outside name?"

I answered quietly, without turning to look at him, "Harold Tait."

He gave a little involuntary start. "What?" he cried. "Not him that took a coin from the British Museum?"

I bridled up angrily. "I did not take it," I cried, with all my soul. "I am innocent, and have been put in here by some terrible error."

He was silent for half a second. Then he said, musingly, "Sir, I believe you. You are speaking the truth. I will do all I can to make things easy for you."

That was all he said then. But from that day forth he always spoke to me in private as "Sir," and never again as "1430."

An incident arose at last out of this condition of things which had a very important effect upon my future position.

One day, about three months after I was committed to prison, we were all told off as usual to work in a small quarry on the cliff-side overhanging the long expanse of pebbly beach known as the Chesil. I had reason to believe afterwards that a large open fishing-boat lying upon the beach below at the moment had been placed there as part of a concerted scheme by the friends of the Hampstead burglar, and that it contained ordinary clothing for all the men in our gang, except myself only. The idea was, evidently, that the gang should overpower the warder, seize the boat, change their clothes instantly, taking turns about meanwhile with the navigation, and make straight off for the shore at Lulworth, where they could easily disperse without much chance of being recaptured. But of all this I was of course quite ignorant at the time, for they had not thought well to intrust their secret to the ears of the sneaking virtuous Methodist.

A few minutes after we arrived at the quarry, I was working with two other men at putting a blast in, when I happened to look round quite accidentally, and, to my great horror, saw 1247, the brutal wife-kicker, standing behind with a huge block of stone in his hands, poised just above the warder's head, in a threatening attitude. The other men stood around waiting and watching. I had only just time to cry out, in a tone of alarm, "Take care, warder! he'll murder you!" when the stone descended upon the warder's head, and he fell at once, bleeding and half senseless, upon the ground beside me. In a second, while he shrieked and struggled, the whole gang was pressing savagely and angrily around him.

There was no time to think or hesitate. Before I knew almost what I was doing, I had seized his gun and ammunition, and, standing over his prostrate body, I held the men at bay for a single moment. Then 1247 advanced threateningly and tried to put his foot upon the fallen warder.

I did not wait or reflect one solitary second. I drew the trigger, and fired full upon him. The bang sounded fiercely in my ears, and for a moment I could see nothing through the smoke of the rifle.

With a terrible shriek he fell in front of me, not dead, but seriously wounded.

"The boat! the boat!" the others cried, loudly. "Knock him down! Kill him! Take the boat, all of you!"

At that moment the report of my shot had brought another warder hastily to the top of the quarry.

"Help! help!" I cried; "come quick, and save us! These brutes are trying to murder our warder!"

The man rushed back to call for aid; but the way down the zigzag path was steep and tortuous, and it was some time before they could manage to get down and succor us.

Meanwhile, the other convicts pressed savagely around us, trying to jump upon the warder's body and force their way past to the beach beneath us. I fired again, for the rifle was double-barrelled; but it was impossible to reload in such a tumult, so, after the next shot, which hit no one, I laid about me fiercely with the butt-end of the gun, and succeeded in knocking down four of the savages, one after another. By that time the warders from above had safely reached us, and formed a circle of fixed bayonets around the rebellious prisoners.

"Thank God!" I cried, flinging down the rifle, and rushing up to the prostrate warder. "He is still alive! He is breathing! He is breathing!"

"Yes," he murmured, in a faint voice, "I am alive, and I thank

you for it. But for you, sir, these fellows here would certainly have murdered me."

"You are badly wounded yourself, 1430," one of the other warders said to me, as the rebels were rapidly secured and marched off sullenly back to the prison. "Look! your own arm is bleeding fiercely."

Then for the first time I was aware that I was one mass of wounds from head to foot, and that I was growing faint from loss of blood. In defending the fallen warder I had got punched and pummelled on every side, just the same as one used to get long ago in a bully at football when I was a boy at Rugby, only much more seriously.

The warders brought down seven stretchers,—one for me, one for the wounded warder, one for 1247 whom I had shot, and four for the convicts whom I had knocked over with the butt-end of the rifle. They carried us up on them, strongly guarded, in a long procession.

At the door of the infirmary the governor met us. "1430," he said to me, in a very kind voice, "you have behaved most admirably. I saw you myself quite distinctly from my drawing-room windows. Your bravery and intrepidity are well deserving of the highest recognition."

"Sir," I answered, "I have only tried to do my duty. I couldn't stand by and see an innocent man murdered by such a pack of blood-thirsty ruffians."

The governor turned aside, a little surprised. "Who is 1430?" he asked, quietly.

A subordinate, consulting a book, whispered my name and supposed crime to him confidentially. The governor nodded twice, and seemed to be satisfied.

"Sir," the wounded warder said faintly from his stretcher, "1430 is an innocent man unjustly condemned, if ever there was one."

VI.

On the Thursday week following, when my wounds were all getting well, the whole body of convicts was duly paraded at half-past eleven in front of the governor's house.

The governor came out, holding an official-looking paper in his right hand. "No. 1430," he said, in a loud voice, "stand forward." And I stood forward.

"No. 1430, I have the pleasant duty of informing you, in face of all your fellow-prisoners, that your heroism and self-devotion in saving the life of Warder James Woollacott, when he was attacked and almost overpowered on the 20th of this month by a gang of rebellious convicts, have been reported to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home

Department, and that on his recommendation Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to grant you a Free Pardon for the remainder of the time during which you were sentenced to penal servitude."

For a moment I felt quite stunned and speechless. I reeled on my feet so much that two of the warders jumped forward to support me. It was a great thing to have at least one's freedom. But in another minute the real meaning of the thing came clearer upon me, and I recoiled from the bare sound of those horrid words, a Free Pardon. I didn't want to be pardoned like a convicted felon: I wanted to have my innocence proved before the eyes of all England. For my own sake, and still more for Emily's sake, rehabilitation was all I cared for.

"Sir," I said, touching my cap respectfully, and saluting the governor according to our wonted prison discipline, "I am very greatly obliged to you for your kindness in having made this representation to the Home Secretary; but I feel compelled to say I cannot accept a free pardon. I am wholly guiltless of the crime of which I have been convicted; and I wish that, instead of pardoning me, the Home Secretary would give instructions to the detective police to make a thorough investigation of the case, with the object of proving my complete innocence. Till that is done, I prefer to remain an inmate of Portland Prison. What I wish is not pardon, but to be restored as an honest man to the society of my equals."

The governor paused for a moment, and consulted quietly in an undertone with one or two of his subordinates. Then he turned to me with great kindness, and said, in a loud voice, "No. 1430, I have no power any longer to detain you in this prison, even if I wished to do so, after you have once obtained Her Majesty's free pardon. My duty is to dismiss you at once, in accordance with the terms of this document. However, I will communicate the substance of your request to the Home Secretary, with whom such a petition, so made, will doubtless have the full weight that may rightly attach to it. You must now go with these warders, who will restore you your own clothes and then formally set you at liberty. But if there is anything further you would wish to speak to me about, you can do so afterwards, in your private capacity as a free man, at two o'clock in my own office."

I thanked him quietly and then withdrew. At two o'clock I duly presented myself in ordinary clothes at the governor's office.

We had a long and confidential interview, in the course of which I was able to narrate to the governor at full length all the facts of my strange story exactly as I have here detailed them. He listened to me with the greatest interest, checking and confirming my statements at length by reference to the file of papers brought to him by a clerk.

When I had finished my whole story, he said to me, quite simply, "Mr. Tait, it may be imprudent of me in my position and under such peculiar circumstances to say so, but I fully and unreservedly believe your statement. If anything that I can say or do can be of any assistance to you in proving your innocence, I shall be very happy indeed to exert all my influence in your favor."

I thanked him warmly with tears in my eyes.

"And there is one point in your story," he went on, "to which I, who have seen a good deal of such doubtful cases, attach the very highest importance. You say that gold clippings, pronounced to be similar in character to the gold Wulfric, were found shortly after by a cleaner at the Museum on the cocoanut matting of the floor where the coin was examined by you?"

I nodded, blushing crimson. "That," I said, "seems to me the strangest and most damning circumstance against me in the whole story."

"Precisely," the governor answered, quietly. "And if what you say is the truth (as I believe it to be), it is also the circumstance which best gives us a clue to use against the real culprit. The person who stole the coin was too clever by half, or else not quite clever enough for his own protection. In manufacturing that last fatal piece of evidence against you he was also giving you a certain clue to his own identity."

"How so?" I asked, breathless.

"Why, don't you see? The thief must in all probability have been somebody connected with the Museum. He must have seen you comparing the Wulfric with your own coin. He must have picked it up and carried it off secretly at the moment you dropped it. He must have clipped the coin to manufacture further hostile evidence. And he must have dropped the clippings afterwards on the cocoanut matting in the same gallery on purpose, in order to heighten the suspicion against you."

"You are right," I cried, brightening up at the luminous suggestion; "you are right, obviously. And there is only one man who could have seen and heard enough to carry out this abominable plot,—Mac-tavish."

"Well, find him out and prove the case against him, Mr. Tait," the governor said, warmly, "and if you send him here to us I can promise you that he will be well taken care of."

I bowed and thanked him, and was about to withdraw, but he held out his hand to me with perfect frankness.

"Mr. Tait," he said, "I can't let you go away so. Let me have your hand in token that you bear us no grudge for the way we have

treated you during your unfortunate imprisonment, and that I, for my part, am absolutely satisfied of the truth of your statement."

VII.

The moment I arrived in London I drove straight off without delay to Emily's. I had telegraphed beforehand that I had been granted a free pardon, but had not stopped to tell her why or under what conditions.

Emily met me in tears in the passage. "Harold! Harold!" she cried, flinging her arms wildly around me; "oh, my darling! my darling! how can I ever say it to you? Mamma says she won't allow me to see you here any longer."

It was a terrible blow, but I was not unprepared for it. How could I expect that poor, conventional, commonplace old lady to have any faith in me after all she had read about me in the newspapers?

"Emily," I said, kissing her over and over again tenderly, "you must come out with me, then, this very minute, for I want to talk with you over matters of importance. Whether your mother wishes it or not, you must come out with me this very minute."

Emily put on her bonnet hastily and walked out with me into the streets of London. It was growing dark, and the neighborhood was a very quiet one, or else perhaps even my own Emily would have felt a little ashamed of walking about the streets of London with a man whose hair was still cropped short around his head like a common felon's.

I told her all the story of my release, and Emily listened to it in profound silence.

"Harold!" she cried, "my darling Harold!" (when I told her the tale of my desperate battle over the fallen warder), "you are the bravest and best of men. I knew you would vindicate yourself sooner or later. What we have to do now is to show that Mactavish stole the Wulfric. I know he stole it: I read it at the trial in his clean-shaven villain's face. I shall prove it still, and then you will be justified in the eyes of everybody."

"But how can we manage to communicate meanwhile, darling?" I cried, eagerly. "If your mother won't allow you to see me, how are we ever to meet and consult about it?"

"There's only one way, Harold,—only one way; and as things now stand you mustn't think it strange of me to propose it. Harold, you must marry me immediately, whether mamma will let us or not."

"Emily!" I cried, "my own darling! your confidence and trust in me make me I can't tell you how proud and happy. That you should

be willing to marry me even while I am under such a cloud as this gives me a greater proof of your love than anything else you could possibly do for me. But, darling, I am too proud to take you at your word. For your sake, Emily, I will never marry you until all the world has been compelled unreservedly to admit my innocence."

Emily blushed and cried a little. "As you will, Harold dearest," she answered, trembling. "I can afford to wait for you. I know that in the end the truth will be established."

VIII.

A week or two later, I was astonished one morning at receiving a visit in my London lodgings from the warder Woollacott, whose life I had been happily instrumental in saving at Portland Prison.

"Well, sir," he said, grasping my hand warmly and gratefully, "you see I haven't yet entirely recovered from that terrible morning. I shall bear the marks of it about me for the remainder of my lifetime. The governor says I shall never again be fit for duty: so they've pensioned me off very honorable."

I told him how pleased I was that he should have been liberally treated, and then we fell into conversation about myself and the means of re-establishing my perfect innocence.

"Sir," said he, "I shall have plenty of leisure, and shall be comfortably off now. If there's anything that I can do to be of service to you in the matter, I shall gladly do it. My time is entirely at your disposal."

I thanked him warmly, but told him that the affair was already in the hands of the regular detectives, who had been set to work upon it by the governor's influence with the Home Secretary.

By and by I happened to mention confidentially to him my suspicions of the man Mactavish. An idea seemed to occur to the warder suddenly; but he said not a word to me about it at the time. A few days later, however, he came back to me quietly and said, in a confidential tone of voice, "Well, sir, I think we may still manage to square him."

"Square whom, Mr. Woollacott? I don't understand you."

"Why, Mactavish, sir. I found out he had a small house near the Museum, and his wife lets a lodging there for a single man. I've gone and taken the lodging, and I shall see whether in the course of time something or other doesn't come out of it."

I smiled and thanked him for his enthusiasm in my cause; but I confess I didn't see how anything on earth of any use to me was likely to arise from this strange proceeding on his part.

IX.

It was that same week, I believe, that I received two other unexpected visitors. They came together. One of them was the Superintendent of Coins at the British Museum; the other was the well-known antiquary and great authority upon the Anglo-Saxon coinage, Sir Theophilus Wraxton.

"Mr. Tait," the superintendent began, not without some touch of natural shamefacedness in his voice and manner, "I have reason to believe that I may possibly have been mistaken in my positive identification of the coin you showed me that day at the Museum as our own specimen of the gold Wulfric. If I *was* mistaken, then I have unintentionally done you a most grievous wrong; and for that wrong, should my suspicions turn out ill founded, I shall owe you the deepest and most heart-felt apologies. But the only reparation I can possibly make you is the one I am doing to-day by bringing here my friend Sir Theophilus Wraxton. He has a communication of some importance to make to you; and if he is right, I can only beg your pardon most humbly for the error I have committed in what I believed to be the discharge of my duties."

"Sir," I answered, "I saw at the time that you were the victim of a mistake, as I was the victim of a most unfortunate concurrence of circumstances; and I bear you no grudge whatsoever for the part you bore in subjecting me to what is really in itself a most unjust and unfounded suspicion. You only did what you believed to be your plain duty; and you did it with marked reluctance, and with every desire to leave me every possible loop-hole of escape from what you conceived as a momentary yielding to a vile temptation. But what is it that Sir Theophilus Wraxton wishes to tell me?"

"Well, my dear sir," the old gentleman began, warmly, "I haven't the slightest doubt in the world myself that you have been quite unwarrantably disbelieved about a plain matter of fact that ought at once to have been immediately apparent to anybody who knew anything in the world about the gold Anglo-Saxon coinage.—No reflection in the world upon you, Harbourne, my dear friend,—no reflection in the world upon you in the matter; but you must admit that you've been pig-headedly hasty in jumping to a conclusion, and ignorantly determined in sticking to it against better evidence.—My dear sir, I haven't the very slightest doubt in the world that the coin now in the British Museum is *not* the one which I have seen there previously, and which I have figured in the third volume of my 'Early Northumbrian and Mercian Numismatist.' Quite otherwise; quite otherwise, I assure you."

"How do you recognize that it is different, sir?" I cried, excitedly.

"The two coins were struck at just the same mint, from the same die, and I examined them closely together, and saw absolutely no difference between them, except the dent and the amount of the clipping."

"Quite true, quite true," the old gentleman replied, with great deliberation. "But look here, sir. Here is the drawing I took of the Museum Wulfric fourteen years ago, for the third volume of my 'Northumbrian Numismatist.' That drawing was made with the aid of careful measurements, which you will find detailed in the text at page 230. Now, here again is the duplicate Wulfric,—permit me to call it *your* Wulfric; and if you will compare the two you'll find, I think, that though your Wulfric is a great deal smaller than the original one, taken as a whole, yet on one diameter, the diameter from the letter U in Wulfric to the letter R in Rex, it is nearly an eighth of an inch broader than the specimen I have there figured. Well, sir, you may cut as much as you like off a coin, and make it smaller, but hang me if by cutting away at it for all your lifetime you can make it an eighth of an inch broader anyhow, in any direction."

I looked immediately at the coin, the drawing, and the measurements in the book, and saw at a glance that Sir Theophilus was right.

"How on earth did you find it out?" I asked the bland old gentleman, breathlessly.

"Why, my dear sir, I remembered the old coin perfectly, having been so very particular in my drawing and measurement; and the moment I clapped eyes on the other one yesterday, I said to my good friend Harbourne, here, 'Harbourne,' said I, 'somebody's been changing your Wulfric in the case over yonder for another specimen.' 'Changing it?' said Harbourne; 'not a bit of it: clipping it, you mean.' 'No, no, my good fellow,' said I: 'do you suppose I don't know the same coin again when I see it, and at my time of life too? This is another coin,—not the same one clipped. It's bigger across than the old one from there to there.' 'No, it isn't,' says he. 'But it is,' I answer. 'Just you look in my "Northumbrian and Mercian" and see if it isn't so.' 'You must be mistaken,' says Harbourne. 'If I am, I'll eat my head,' says I. Well, we get down the 'Numismatist' from the book-shelf then and there; and, sure enough, it turns out just as I told him. Harbourne turned as white as a ghost, I can tell you, as soon as he discovered it. 'Why,' says he, 'I've sent a poor young fellow off to Portland Prison, only three or four months ago, for stealing that very Wulfric.' And then he told me all the story. 'Very well,' said I; 'then the only thing you've got to do is just to go and call on him to-morrow and let him know that you've had it proved to you, fairly proved to you, that this is not the original Wulfric.'"

“Sir Theophilus,” I said, “I’m much obliged to you. What you point out is by far the most important piece of evidence I’ve yet had to offer. Mr. Harbourne, have you kept the gold clippings that were found that morning on the cocoanut matting?”

“I have, Mr. Tait,” the superintendent answered, anxiously. “And Sir Theophilus and I have been trying to fit them upon the coin in the Museum shelves; and I am bound to admit I quite agree with him that they must have been cut off a specimen decidedly larger in one diameter and smaller in another than the existing one,—in short, that they do not fit the clipped Wulfric now in the Museum.”

X.

It was just a fortnight later that I received quite unexpectedly a telegram from Rome directed to me at my London lodgings. I tore it open hastily: it was signed by Emily, and contained only these few words: “We have found the Museum Wulfric. The superintendent is coming over to identify and reclaim it. Can you manage to run across immediately with him?”

For a moment I was lost in astonishment, delight, and fear. How and why had Emily gone over to Rome? Whom could she have with her to take care of her and assist her? How on earth had she tracked the missing coin to its distant hiding-place? It was all a profound mystery to me; and, after my first outburst of joy and gratitude, I began to be afraid that Emily might have been misled by her eagerness and anxiety into following up the traces of the wrong coin.

However, I had no choice but to go to Rome and see the matter ended; and I went alone, wearing out my soul through that long journey with suspense and fear; for I had not managed to hit upon the superintendent, who, through his telegram being delivered a little the sooner, had caught a train six hours earlier than the one I went by.

As I arrived at the Central Station at Rome, I was met, to my surprise, by a perfect crowd of familiar faces. First Emily herself rushed to me, kissed me, and assured me a hundred times over that it was all right and that the missing coin was undoubtedly recovered. Then the superintendent, more shamefaced than ever, and very grave, but with a certain moisture in his eyes, confirmed her statement by saying that he had got the real Museum Wulfric undoubtedly in his pocket. Then Sir Theophilus, who had actually come across with Lady Wraxton on purpose to take care of Emily, added his assurances and congratulations. Last of all, Woollacott, the warder, stepped up to me and said, simply, “I’m glad, sir, that it was through me as it all came out so right and even.”

"Tell me how it all happened," I cried, almost faint with joy, and still wondering whether my innocence had really been proved beyond all fear of cavil.

Then Woollacott began, and told me briefly the whole story. He had consulted with the superintendent and Sir Theophilus, without saying a word to me about it, and had kept a close watch upon all the letters that came for Mactavish. A rare Anglo-Saxon coin is not a chattel that one can easily get rid of every day; and Woollacott shrewdly gathered from what Sir Theophilus had told him that Mactavish (or whoever else had stolen the coin) would be likely to try to dispose of it as far away from England as possible, especially after all the comments that had been made on this particular Wulfric in the English newspapers. So he took every opportunity of intercepting the postman at the front door and looking out for envelopes with foreign postage-stamps. At last one day a letter arrived for Mactavish with an Italian stamp and a cardinal's red hat stamped like a crest on the flap of the envelope. Woollacott was certain that things of that sort didn't come to Mactavish every day about his ordinary business. Braving the penalties for appropriating a letter, he took the liberty to open this suspicious communication, and found it was a note from Cardinal Trevelyan, the Pope's Chamberlain, and a well-known collector of antiquities referring to early Church history in England, and that it was in reply to an offer of Mactavish's to send the cardinal for inspection a rare gold coin not otherwise specified. The cardinal expressed his readiness to see the coin, and to pay one hundred and fifty pounds for it if it proved to be rare and genuine as described. Woollacott felt certain that this communication must refer to the gold Wulfric. He therefore handed the letter to Mrs. Mactavish when the postman next came his rounds, and waited to see whether Mactavish any day afterwards went to the post to register a small box or packet. Meanwhile, he communicated with Emily and the superintendent, being unwilling to buoy me up with a doubtful hope until he was quite sure that their plan had succeeded. The superintendent wrote immediately to the cardinal, mentioning his suspicions, and received a reply to the effect that he expected a coin of Wulfric to be sent him shortly. Sir Theophilus, who had been greatly interested in the question of the coin, kindly offered to take Emily over to Rome, in order to get the criminating piece, as soon as it arrived, from Cardinal Trevelyan. That was, in turn, the story that they all told me, piece by piece, in the Central Station at Rome that eventful morning.

"And Mactavish?" I asked of the superintendent, eagerly.

"Is in custody in London already," he answered, somewhat

sternly. "I had a warrant out against him before I left town on this journey."

At the trial the whole case was very clearly proved against him, and my innocence was fully established before the face of all my fellow-countrymen. A fortnight later my wife and I were among the rocks and woods at Ambleside; and when I returned to London it was to take a place in the department of coins at the British Museum, which the superintendent begged of me to accept as some further proof in the eyes of everybody that the suspicion he had formed in the matter of the Wulfric was a most unfounded and wholly erroneous one. The coin itself I kept as a memento of a terrible experience; but I have given up collecting on my own account entirely, and am quite content nowadays to bear my share in guarding the national collection from other depredators of the class of Mactavish.

Grant Allen.

A LOVER'S MOOD.

O LIPS, be still, and let the heart make speech :
 Her lightest thought is far beyond your reach.
 And, worldly wisdom, unto faith give sway :
 Your brightest light but darkens this dim day.

A place to rest in, tender sense of love,
 The heart that seeks still finds,—whate'er ye prove,
 Lip-speech, earth-lore, that men account so wise,—
 Still in the dark hears lovers' sweet replies,

All heedless of the distance that divides,
 Since in all space the lover's soul abides,
 And knows and trusts the heart against its own,
 As heart by tongue to heart is ne'er made known.

Sing, then, thy song, O heart whose beat I hear :
 She is not far when thought of her is near,
 And she must hear thy singing over all
 That world-lore saith or foolish lips let fall.

Edwin R. Champlin.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

AND so Fragoletta wants to go abroad to study. Her professor tells her that only in Germany can she find the atmosphere needed for her musical development, and all her friends agree that talent such as hers deserves every chance. A year or two of study, and she may turn out a Rivé-King and win renown as a concert performer. Has she not played "Home, Sweet Home" to general satisfaction at the last church festival, and Liszt and Chopin when she graduated last year? If only she can put the seal of foreign study and approval on her work, her future will be secure. And her cousin, who has a taste for art, will go with her to study the Old Masters and perhaps get a winter's instruction later in Paris. Her brother made the usual round five years ago, and he told wonderful stories of the charming artist-life in Munich and Rome. He gave wonderful figures, too, of the rates at which the poor devils lived, and Fragoletta and her cousin, whose chief funds are in the Bank of Futurity, of which Hope is cashier, are sure they can get on as cheaply. Every one knows how much more economical—reasonably economical—women are than men; and is there not the authentic story of one young American who made "the tour of Europe for one hundred and fifty-eight dollars in currency"? Privations which would be only vulgar at home become picturesque five thousand miles away; and in the larger life and hope which the Old World promises, what are a few practical disadvantages from limited funds? And so Fragoletta and her cousin join that increasing army,—American girls studying and travelling alone in Europe.

But before the two fathers send them off, with a small letter of credit and a boundless faith in the ability of their girls to take care of themselves anywhere and always, let us see what they will find. We will suppose that they go to Germany and enter one of the small *pensions* which abound there,—*pensions*, often, sacred to ladies, and where the landlady undertakes to supply conversation as well as the table, and often, indeed, provides regular instruction to her boarders. But if the two students have the courage of their convictions and desire the natural method in all its glory, they will go into a private family, and that one where no English is understood. For not only has the smallest *pension* its gossip, but a German who has for years had American boarders learns inevitably to overlook faults of grammar and pronunciation; and fluency at the expense of correctness is no such pre-eminence that one need go abroad to get it,—though a good many people do. The *pension* has a mixed flavor: it is the native idea as to cooking and custom modified to suit the American taste. In the private family she will feel herself a stranger in a strange land; she may often be lonely and heart-sick and ask if the play is worth the candle; but she will get much more German.

In either case the simplicity of which she has heard so much will be emphasized in the bare painted floor of her room, in small and uncomfortable beds, and in two meals a day instead of three. At table is her main chance for conversation. Usually there is a little box on the board, and a penny must be slipped in it for every English phrase. Sometimes the thrifty housewife adds a fine if her careless American boarder crumbles the bread or leaves her plate uncleared.

Once in three or six months the box is opened and the contents used for some little excursion for the *pension*. In this, as in other matters, she will find a careful reckoning of the pence, and none of that leaving at loose ends so common at home. One gives notice to leave at least a fortnight in advance; one pays by the month, though unexpected circumstances take one away before it is over. The *hausfrau* is usually good-hearted and kind, but she will not know what to do for you if you are sick, and at the first hint of serious illness she will pack you off to a hospital. But it should be added that these are usually excellent and moderate in price.

Since all instruction is given in German, the language is the first conquest to be made. There are private teachers, there are circulating libraries, where she can enlarge her vocabulary by novel-reading at two or more cents a week, and there is the theatre, which she is always exhorted to attend. This is a charming way of uniting business and pleasure, and—provided she goes high up—is the cheapest of lessons. The opera, too, is cheap, and in Leipsic or Dresden a lady can go alone without remark. Beginning at six P.M., the performance is over by nine or ten, so that she need not lose her beauty-sleep in the pursuit of knowledge. Sometimes, also, one can arrange for class-lessons in German history or literature. For there has come of late in the Fatherland a demand for higher education for women, and after—at sixteen or seventeen—leaving school it is quite the fashion for the blonde maidens to take a winter of private lectures. In Berlin this has taken shape in the Victoria Lyceum,—a sort of university annex under the patronage of the Crown-Princess. Latin and mathematics are still sealed books to them, but they know their own literature as few of our girls know English, and they carry modern languages to a much greater conversational facility. The American, who, having no use for French and German at home, has only a smattering of them, is often overwhelmed by her German friend's fluency; but, to balance, the *Fräulein* is often wofully ignorant of geography and scientific subjects. Her fluency in English, too, is often acquired at the expense of the American boarder. Our interest in her tongue is largely sentimental; hers in ours is practical and business-like. Yield her a coigne of vantage through indolence or good nature, and she will practise remorselessly on you. As for French, she studies it seven years or more in the girls' high school, and it would be a pity after that if she did not know something. So the small, spectacled boy who goes by every day to the gymnasium is being trained. Nine years he is at it: for eight of them—six hours a week at that—he studies Latin, and for six Greek; and then he is just ready for the university.

The same thoroughness is required in art-study, and the bubble of *Fragoletta's* talent will soon be pricked here. She finds herself sent back to first principles, and is fortunate if after two or three years of unremitting labor she can perform just once in a public recital. "They call it three hours a day," a young Conservatory pupil said, plaintively, "and they say you must practise four more. But with the recitals, and the lectures, and the counterpoint lessons, it's more than that; and as for getting the lessons they give, as they expect you to have them, eight hours a day wouldn't be enough." She had herself broken down under it, after having come from America expressly for Conservatory training. One does not fare much better under private teachers, who, masters of technique and devoted to art, know no mercy for the weak-backed American. Incessant practice is demanded, and the amount of work assigned is often impossible of achievement. The strain is too great: only the highest talent is worth the long strug-

gle. The rest would do better to stay at home, for in the pressure of this musical atmosphere health and peace of mind are too often lost.

And what will it all cost? It is not safe to reckon less than four hundred dollars a year for the daily bread,—lessons, pleasures, excursions, and the harmless necessary patch on shoes not counted. "One is well off in a garret at twenty," sings the light-hearted Béranger; but the newspapers tell other tales of the workers in the great art-centres. The cheapness of Europe is a delusion and a snare. It is so only on condition of going without things, of living abroad as one would not think of living at home. "The first time I went abroad," a lady once told me, "I had so little money that I lay awake nights planning how I could get through on it. I learned a great deal; but I should think any one a fool now who did as I did. Ignorance of the risks I ran was my excuse." But there are numbers of these poor students still in Europe, and the straits to which they are reduced are often pathetic. Especially the slender, black-robed maidens, with their pale, eager faces, their eyes so wide open to all the wonder and enchantment of this Old World, so veiled to misconceptions of their own character, are pathetic figures. Sometimes they are pretty; almost always they have a certain charm of bright-eyed independence. They are usually older than they look; but many are far too young for the exposed and peculiar life they lead. Henry James has sketched the type in his own fashion in "A Bundle of Letters": "She looks at everything, goes everywhere; passes her way, with her clear, quiet eyes wide open, skirting the edge of obscene abysses without suspecting them; exciting, without knowing it, the most injurious suspicions; and always holding her course, passionless, stainless, fearless!"

The Germans are kind to these strangers within their gates, but to themselves they make emphatic reflections on that barbarous America whose fathers so ship off their daughters, and they pass stern judgment on those who spend their all on instruction and trust to luck to get home. Sometimes their trust is vain; and I recall one charming young woman who had stranded in Paris and was earning a meagre living as a copyist. She had come abroad to study five years before, and she was not likely to return soon. She kept house like a bird, up four long flights, and she frankly admitted her economies in bread and beef. It was picturesque, that little room, with its sunny window, its brick floor, its walls lined with her pictures, but it required some philosophy not to call her isolation a tempting of fate.

A word, too, should be said on the growing fashion of sending girls abroad to travel alone, or with only a companion of their own age. It seems incredible that persons who can afford chaperonage for their daughters often send them without it, trusting to luck and the good nature of other American travellers to help them on. A gentleman told me not long since that in his year abroad he had always some one besides his wife on his hands. Now it was a countrywoman absolutely alone, now a pair of young girls, now an invalid with a pretty daughter whom she had no strength to chaperon. There is even a book recently advertised as the doings of two girls alone abroad. Now, we have no wish to recall the proprieties of thirty years ago, when a woman could hardly make a hundred-mile journey alone; but there is a limit here, as everywhere, of good sense and prudence. We should certainly think it peculiar if Fragoletta started out to make the tour of America all alone. We should not reflect on her morals, but we should on her taste. Yet that exploit would be far easier, since no differing tongues or social customs would complicate it.

BLOWING off the merely political and controversial element of Gail Hamilton's article in the January LIPPINCOTT'S, what does one find of a more real and tangible nature? That there "is no Civil Service Reform cause;" that "there is no organized, insistent Woman's Wrongs;" that "Civil Service Reform is a small and not a great matter;" that certain individuals have remained for many years in public office; that certain gentlemen have complimented our civil service; that Postmaster Pearson was appointed before the new system came into force, and was a product of former methods; that General Grant endured physical suffering, and perhaps some "mental anguish," before he died; that the flag was lowered on the Interior Department on the day of ex-Secretary Thompson's funeral; that President Cleveland (or the Democratic party, which?) is an "unwonted and unwilling wearer" of the reform; and that two counts of cash in the Treasury have shown no loss. From all these considerations it follows that the world should turn backward for a while, and the dilapidated old machine be repaired to assist the reaction. "Logic is logic, that's all I say."

The radical defect in this voluble and vigorous, if rather reckless, writer's understanding of the case seems to be a partial ethical blindness, which prevents her from seeing any need to reform any administrative evil except the crudest forms of theft and bribery.

No doubt the public service has been blamed for faults which it never possessed to any such extent as many supposed, and which it has been steadily outgrowing since the war and the extravagance which accompanied the first return of peace. Times of public disorder are naturally times of public demoralization; and the first human impulse after relief from hardship and anxiety is towards excess. But, as a rule, time cures such ailments both in the individual and the body politic; and it was inevitable that as the people at large grew saner and better the public service should improve with it. The grosser forms of evil were those which first gave way; and, after many years' acquaintance with certain bureaus at least of the Departments at Washington, I am happy to say that there is, and long has been, very little peculation, very little itching of palms, indeed.

But there is a dishonesty which does not take such universally reprobated forms,—a dishonesty which people of decency and good repute are sometimes heard to defend and even extol. I allude to the system of levying a tax on the servants of the whole people in order to provide a fund for returning to office those of one party only. This was—I suppose one may *now* say—obviously a robbery of the individual assessed, and indirectly, also, of nearly one-half the citizens of the United States. Is that dishonesty, or is it not?

Another form that the evil took, frequently accompanying the former, was an interference with the liberty of voting. Nothing, surely, can be clearer than that a man who sells his work and time to the people at large retains the same right to a free voice in the selection of officials and measures that he would have if he sold the same commodities to a bank or a magazine, and that to dominate and terrorize him into an insincere vote by the implied threat of discharge is simply a crime. Yet this was done, as the whole world now knows.

It is not possible for any one man to know how generally or strenuously these villainies were enforced; but he may know very well what happened to himself. I have still at hand the account which I wrote out at the time of my own collision with the machine, just before the State election in Connecticut preceding the Tilden *vs.* Hayes campaign. I was then an assistant examiner in the Patent Office, too much taken up with my work to trouble myself much about

politics. But when asked to assist the party then in power, one was forced to consider the situation and determine what he ought to do. My decision was in favor of the Democratic candidate; but I simply went on with my work. The requests became in effect demands, and I was worried and harried by frequent visits from an emissary of the State society,—still employed in the Interior Department, as I hope he will continue to be if he does his work well,—until at last I made my refusal emphatic enough to end that wretched persecution. Then they went to Secretary Chandler with a complaint against me. The chief clerk of the Patent Office sent for me and showed me a note, in Secretary Chandler's handwriting, stating that I would not "vote or pay," and calling for a "report." This report I made, stating my position clearly, emphatically denying that I owed anything, asserting that I could not conscientiously do as was desired, and embodying a positive refusal. This was just before the election. Immediately after it I received my discharge.

Now, it is very improbable that such instances could have been altogether exceptional. They were then a survival from an earlier period preceding the first attempt at introducing the competitive system, which in its partial application had already done great good. If President Grant had consistently adhered to and extended it, if he had added certainty of tenure to non-partisan qualifications, he would have had the credit which now must go to his present successor. The demand for Civil Service Reform on the lines I have indicated is not a matter of mushroom growth, as Gail Hamilton would have us think. Its roots run back to a time anterior to the Jenckes Civil Service Bill, and all the subsequent partially successful efforts and "abandoned experiments" have been in the line of solid and permanent growth. There is healthy sap in the tree, and sound fibre, and it will stand, whoever may rail against it.

Of course the reform is not complete; of course there are defects and inconsistencies in its practical working, especially in such matters of detail as must escape the eye of any President or head of a Department. The territorial division of the offices smacks of the old leaven. Logically, the best man should win, wherever he may be found; and there do seem to be instances of minor officials removed for political reasons, because the words of the law do not protect them. Besides, reforms in the methods of transacting business are not entered upon by some bureau officers as zealously as they should be. Some desirable changes have been made in such matters, but here and there the tendency still continues towards complexity rather than towards such simplicity as would reign in a well-ordered private establishment. But, after all, while we have so much to be thankful for, it is rather ungracious to play the part of the microscopist on the lookout for faults; and optimism is more wholesome than its opposite.

READERS of Tennyson's last volume may have noticed the likeness between his poem "To-Morrow" and that pathetic little story by "J. S. of Dale," "Mrs. Knollys," one of the very best of all the good things gathered together in Scribner's "Stories from American Authors." All such readers may not know that both poet and story-teller were simply infusing new life into an old legend. The story of a bridegroom or an expected bridegroom who is buried alive in a peat-bog, a glacier, or a salt-mine—that is, in some element which will preserve his body from corruption—and who years afterwards is brought to the surface and recognized by his sweetheart, she in her old age and he as fresh and juvenile as when she last saw him alive, is familiar to the folk-lore of many countries. It is

a tender and delicate offshoot from the stern old heathen myths of the underground sleepers who are to be awakened and revived at their country's call, and so, curiously enough, springs from the same parent stock as "Rip Van Winkle." Nor is the story entirely new to literature. In Germany, where it is still told as a truth in many salt-mines, it has been made the subject of a romance by Hoffmann and a short poem by Trinius. I give the latter in Baring Gould's translation.

In an ancient shaft of Falun
Year by year a body lay,
God-preserved, as though a treasure
Kept unto the waking day.

Not the turmoil nor the passions
Of the busy world o'erhead,
Sounds of war, or peace-rejoicings,
Could disturb the placid dead.

Once a youthful miner, whistling,
Hewed the chamber now his tomb;
Crash! the rocky fragments tumbled,
Closed him in abysmal gloom.

Sixty years passed by ere miners,
Tolling, hundred fathoms deep,
Broke upon the shaft where rested
That poor miner in his sleep.

As the gold-grains lie untarnished
In the dingy soil and sand
Till they gleam and flicker, stainless,
In the digger's sifting hand;

As the gem in virgin brilliance
Rests till ushered into day,—

So, uninjured, uncorrupted,
Fresh and fair the body lay.

And the miners bore it upward,
Laid it in the yellow sun:
Up from out the neighboring houses
Fast the curious peasants run.

"Who is he?" with eyes they question;
"Who is he?" they ask aloud.
Hush! a wizened hag comes hobbling,
Panting, through the wondering crowd.

Oh! the cry—half joy, half sorrow—
As she flings her at his side!
"John! the sweetheart of my girlhood!
Here am I, am I, thy bride.

"Time on thee has left no traces,
Death from wear has shielded thee;
I am aged, worn, and wasted,
Oh, what life has done to me!"

Then, his smooth, unfurrowed forehead
Kissed that ancient, withered crone;
And the death which had divided
Now united them in one.

The author of "Mrs. Knollys," it will be seen, has surpassed all his rivals in his loving portrayal of the faith and devotion of his heroine. But I wonder whether he has derived any hint from another old legend, an Irish one connected with Lough Corrib, a lake in Connemara, which runs as follows. A beautiful maiden residing on the bank of this lake was courted by two lovers. She eloped with one of them; the fugitives were pursued by the other, who caught up with them on the shores of Lough Mask, slew his successful rival, and threw the corpse into the water. Henceforth the maiden's only thought was to recover the lost body of her lover. The lake was dragged and searched in vain. A thought crossed her half-maddened brain: the body might be carried in course of time to Lough Corrib, through the subterranean streams connecting it with Lough Mask. She crossed the isthmus that divides the lakes, listened for the sound of waters, and where she heard them clearest grappled with the intervening rock and earth. The work begun by her own hands was completed by the succoring pity of others, and she sat down by the side of the deep-dug pool to watch the coming through of her beloved. Years passed on, old age overtook her, and finally, when all hope had gone, nature in its mercy transformed her into a trout, in which form she still haunts the waters and searches for her lover.

ON January 5, 1886, while the first pages of this number were passing through the press, news reached us of the death of Mr. J. B. Lippincott, the original projector of the magazine, and the founder of the firm which publishes it. The news was not altogether unexpected, as Mr. Lippincott had been seriously unwell for many months and it was known that his death might occur at any moment.

Joshua Ballinger Lippincott was born in Burlington County, New Jersey. He came to Philadelphia as a lad, secured a clerkship in a book-store, was rapidly promoted, and when barely eighteen had so thoroughly mastered all the details of the business that on the failure of his employer he was put in charge of the establishment. In 1836 he began business for himself, and in 1850 purchased the entire interest of Messrs. Grigg & Elliott, then the leading house in the Philadelphia book-trade, and steadily built up his business until it reached its present magnitude.

Mr. Lippincott's distinguishing traits were untiring energy and enterprise, keen insight into men and things, a wonderful fertility of resources, and a vigorous personality which impressed itself upon all who came in contact with him. He took an active interest in everything that affected his adopted city, was a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and a director of several railroads, trust companies, and banks, giving faithful personal attention to all.

The following resolutions were adopted at a meeting of the publishers and booksellers of Philadelphia, held to take action upon his death :

"In the death of Mr. Joshua B. Lippincott Philadelphia mourns the loss of one of her best known and most active citizens, and the book-trade her foremost and ablest member, to whose energy, determination, and foresight is due the building up of the great house which has aided in making Philadelphia known and respected not only in this country but also over the whole civilized world. As a business-man he laid the foundation of the house which bears his name upon the broad principles of commercial honor and personal integrity, and few did more to make the name of a Philadelphia merchant respected and trusted. As a citizen he was enterprising and public-spirited, and as a wise and safe counsellor he did much to promote many of the great enterprises in which our city is so deeply interested. Straightforward in all his dealings, frank and courteous to all, he ever held to the high principle that a merchant's word should be as good as his bond. His name will be one of the memories of the book-trade of Philadelphia, and the great house which he founded and which bears his name is a lasting monument to his memory."

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1886.

TAKEN BY SIEGE.*

CHAPTER IV.

THE first thing Rush Hurlstone did upon awaking the morning after his operatic experience was to turn to the amusement column of *The Dawn*, to see what the learned critic of that paper had to say about Miss Knowlton's performance. It was a most flattering criticism: even he could not have asked for anything better. When his eye reached the last line, however, he was astonished to catch the sub-head, "After the Opera: What the Prima Donna Thinks of her New Rôle," followed by a stout column of solid type describing the scene in the dressing-room, the Trojan soldier (Rush himself) who stood guard at her door, the appearance of the prima donna among her friends, with her three lines of conversation elaborated into a hundred, and what Mrs. Dick Griswold had said worked up into a most dramatic and pathetic incident. Altogether it was as lively a piece of reportorial ingenuity as Rush had ever met with. He cut it carefully out, and filed it away with the criticism of the opera; and he bought every other New York paper that day and read what it had to say, preserving the critiques for a scrap-book that he intended devoting exclusively to notices of his new idol.

Things were not as promising at the office of *The Dawn* as Rush had anticipated from his first interview with the city editor. His funds got lower and lower, and still no work came. But he fully determined to brave it out, for he knew his mother could not afford to send him any

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money from her limited income. He had plenty of clothes, and he had paid his lodging a month in advance, but the ready money for his meals was slowly disappearing. He had given up the seventy-five-cent dinners at the Italian restaurant, and was trying what fifteen cents would do in Wooster Street. Five cents served him for many a breakfast. At last he found himself reduced to ten cents, and still no "assignment." There was but one thing to do: he could pawn his watch. He didn't have to walk far along Chatham Street before he came to the establishment of an accommodating Semite, who lent him five dollars on his timepiece,—unfortunately an old-fashioned one. In the mean time he had called upon Leoni, and had been urged by her and both of her parents to share their savory Italian dinner. He could smell the odor of the spaghetti as he declined, but he did so because he could not bear to accept when he needed the food so sorely. The watch-money was soon eaten, and he was about to begin on his gold sleeve-buttons, when he thought he would call on Mr. Spar at his house and talk over the situation with him out of business hours.

He selected Sunday afternoon, and started out on a walk to the Spars' residence, in Ninety-third Street, with just five cents in his pocket. Hunger got the better of his pride, and he so timed his visit as to arrive just at the dinner-hour, six o'clock, as the good man had once told him to do when he offered his hospitality in a general way. The long walk had acted as a tonic, and Rush was nearly famished when he reached the house. He found Mr. Spar at home and delighted to see him. They had a very pleasant chat, but Rush could not quite make up his mind to tell him just how hard up he was. Perhaps he would feel more confiding after dinner over a bottle of wine. He heard the clock strike six, half-past six, and finally seven, when his kind host remarked,—

"I'm sorry you didn't come out to dinner. We always dine at four o'clock on Sundays, to let the servants have a good evening out. They need the rest, poor things, and we dine so heartily that we don't get hungry again until the next morning." (Rush really feared that Mr. Spar would see him change color.) "But my wife will be delighted to get you up a little supper; for it must be after your dinner-hour."

Rush wouldn't listen to such a proposition. Thanking his host, he soon bade him farewell, and went out into the street. His state of mind was not enviable. He was the possessor of five cents, and he was just four miles from his lodgings. Should he in his weak state walk home and spend the five cents for something to eat, or should he ride home and go without food? The cravings of his stomach answered the question, and, finding a German bake-shop open, he bought a five-cent

loaf of bread. Then he walked over to Central Park. Selecting a secluded seat, he ate half of the loaf, put the other half in his pocket for the next day, and walked wearily back to West Eleventh Street.

He made up his mind that night, as he tossed excitedly from one side of his bed to the other, that he had fooled away time enough in trying to get a position on *The Dawn*, and that he would try his hand at something else if he did not get an assignment next morning. He started listlessly down town, and his landlady, as she passed him on the steps, shook her head, and said to herself,—

“That young man is not getting enough to eat. I’ve suspected something ever since he stopped his coffee and rolls. If it was want of money, he need only have told me he was a little short. I’d trust that face for any amount. Poor young gentleman! he doesn’t look the same person he did six weeks ago.”

Rush was just about in front of the Astor House when some one slapped him on the back and called him by name, and, looking around, he saw his old college friend Archie Tillinghast. Archie Tillinghast was in a class ahead of Rush Hurlstone, and had graduated since Rush left Harvard. They had not been particularly intimate at college, but Rush had always liked Archie, because he was gentle in his manners and because the other students were rather inclined to poke fun at him. They called him a “cad,” and jeered him for reading De Musset when they wanted him to play foot-ball; and they moreover thought that he was too much of a dandy for every-day use. Archie Tillinghast was not brilliant, but he got along in his studies much better than some of his brighter companions, probably because his tastes were more studious and he was industrious. He belonged to an old and wealthy family, and was somewhat inclined to look down upon the “unwashed.” He would rather sit alone in his room than associate with men whom he considered coarse: so in revenge they called him a “cad.”

If Archie had been his dearest friend Rush could not have been more delighted to see him than he was just at this moment. He nearly shook his eye-glasses off in his heartiness.

“My dear boy,” said Archie, “I never was more pleased in my life. But how is it that you are in New York without letting me know?”

“I was waiting to get established, and then I meant to hunt you up.”

“And aren’t you established yet?”

“Well, not exactly,” said Rush, with a faint blush.

Archie noticed a slight embarrassment in his friend’s manner, and determined to find out what the trouble was,—if there was any. Rush at the same time remembered that Archie was a man of wealth, or at

least that his father was, and hesitated to talk over his affairs with him, lest he should think he wanted to borrow money.

"This is luck indeed," said Archie, taking his friend's arm and walking along with him. "It is not often that I am down-town so early in the morning, but this is pay-day at *The Trumpet* office, and I hadn't a cent to bless myself with. What's the matter? You look astonished."

"I was astonished for a moment," replied Rush; "but I suppose you are joking. I thought you were a bloated bondholder, Archie."

"So I was, dear boy," said Archie, with a sigh; "but I am so no longer. My father died—rascally executors—the old story—mother, the girls, and I left penniless; but the worst is over. Come have breakfast with me at Mouquin's. We'll have a devilled kidney and a bottle of wine, and I'll tell you what little there is to tell. It may amuse you. Then we'll talk over old times, and the present,—that is, if you are not otherwise engaged."

"Unfortunately, no: I'm quite the gentleman of leisure. My time's my own."

Rush would never have suspected from his appearance that Archie Tillinghast was not as rich as ever. He was faultlessly attired. Careful examination later on showed a little wear in his clothes, that had come from hard and constant brushing; but their fit was perfect and gave him the appearance of being better dressed than he really was. "You certainly *look* as much the man of wealth as ever," said Rush, regarding Archie's city style with admiration.

"Ah, my boy, I've made the study of economy a fine art. I can wear a coat about as long as any man you ever saw, but it looks well to the end, because—I don't mind telling you the secret—it fits me. I have a jewel of a tailor, who makes my clothes from a fashion-book that I furnish him. You smile. You will smile more when I tell you what the book is—*Punch*. Du Maurier's men dress like gentlemen, not like tailors' dummies. My clothes are the envy of the club. They think I get them direct from Poole. If I were not a journalist I should be a tailor. The art of dress is a great art. Think of the pleasure of creating a well-dressed man! But here we are at Mouquin's. I see they have my table ready for me. I breakfast here every Tuesday morning."

Archie entered the room with the dignity of a Lord Mayor at the great banquet of the year. As they seated themselves at the table, he said to the waiter,—

"The same breakfast, Louis,—only, enough for two; and don't let the cook burn those kidneys. I am very particular, you know; and

they were a little too brown last week.—Now, dear boy,” turning to Rush, “tell me something about yourself.”

“You have whetted my curiosity to hear your own story. Archie Tillinghast as a workingman is something I never dreamt of. You spoke of journalism: so that is your profession, is it, and you are on *The Trumpet*? What do you do?”

“What don’t I do, you might ask with greater propriety. Well, I do little odds and ends of everything; but my great day is Sunday. A page of the Sunday paper is given over to my pen.”

“A page! you must be making a fortune, Archie.”

“I’m not a ‘space-man,’ dear boy: it is the salaried men—the small-salaried man, I should say—who fill two columns a day, and a page on Sunday.”

“But what department gets a page to itself?”

“The one that least deserves it,—society. You know that I am connected by blood or marriage with half the society people of New York, and, notwithstanding the loss of my money, I am invited everywhere. Young men are scarce, and well-connected young men are at a premium, and I am invited none the less because I write the society notes for *The Trumpet*. Time was when an American gentleman objected seriously to having his balls and routs described in the newspapers; but it is done so much nowadays that his wife is afraid they will be called nobodies if their name is not seen in print in connection with the winter’s festivities. I am in great demand from Murray Hill to Mackerellvillé; they all want me. What it is to be popular!—eh, old fellow?”

By this time the breakfast was served. There were more than kidneys, and it was a most delightful repast; but Rush was not in a condition to do justice to it. He had eaten so little for a week past, and such plain food, that even the rich aroma of the kidneys, with their wine sauce, was almost more than he could digest.

“Where’s your appetite, old man? You’re not eating anything. Perhaps you had a late breakfast and are not hungry.”

“On the contrary,” said Rush, who was beginning to feel as though he were going to be ill, and that he need have no more pride in the matter, “I have had no breakfast, and I am very hungry,—too hungry, in fact, to eat.”

And he then made a clean breast of it, and told Archie just how he was situated. To say that that amiable young man was shocked would be doing injustice to his kind heart. He was genuinely distressed at his friend’s condition; but before he entered into particulars he ordered a bowl of beef tea, which was easier of digestion than the devilled kid-

neys, and he made Rush eat it and then drink a glass of brandy-and-soda. Then, when he had got him into better condition, he began by scolding him for not looking up his friends, after which they discussed the situation calmly.

"I made up my mind to give *The Dawn* one more trial," said Rush, "and then, if there was no work for me there, to try some other paper or break stones on the highway; but I certainly would not go back to Farmsted and sponge on my mother. If a chance does not occur here sooner it will later, and I'm young enough to wait for it."

"There is always the chance, but it is devilish slow in coming sometimes. Now, if you are not too proud, I'll put you in the way of a job that will bring you in fifteen or twenty dollars a week, and need not interfere with your work on *The Dawn*, if you get any. I'm not too proud to increase my limited income by the same means, but I tell you frankly, dear boy, I would not care to have it known among the rich and great with whom I hobnob out of business hours. Can you write poetry?"

"Hardly that; but I can make rhymes," said Rush, wondering what bomb his friend was about to burst.

"So much the better. A poet would scorn to engage in this business, but it is the fortune of the rhymester. Now, I am paid twenty dollars a week by the wealthy proprietor of the Damascene soap to write rhymes in praise of his wares. I do the New York morning papers; and he told me the other day that if I could get up a new batch for the evening papers he would like to have one, or, if I had not the time, perhaps I could suggest some one with a poetic talent who would take the job. He didn't know much about poets himself,—thought they were a rum lot,—and he would be obliged to me if I would bag a Byron for him. You're just the man. No one need know it, and it will keep your stomach from getting in such a condition again as it was in when I found you. You need not be particular about being original; you can work over your Tennyson or your Longfellow: only get in the word Damascene, and your duty's done. Meet me at the club to-morrow with a batch of verses. We'll dine together; and in the mean time I'll see old Pennypacker and have a check ready for you, from which I will deduct five dollars that I'm going to give you now."

"No, Archie, old man," said Rush, pushing away his hand, and with difficulty speaking for the lump in his throat. "Wait till I've earned it. Your kindness has completely upset me, but I can't take your money. I'll gladly try my hand at the soap verses and take my pay when they're written; but not till then."

"Nonsense! What is a friend for, if not to help one when he needs it? I shall really feel hurt, Rush, if you refuse me. I wouldn't treat

you as formally. It's only five dollars, and you will have earned it before midnight, I'll lay a wager. Come, old man, don't make me feel that I am asking you to do something dishonorable. Much more than a paltry five dollars has passed between us at college."

"Yes, to be sure there has, but neither of us needed it as much then as we do now. It is much easier to borrow money for tomfoolery than for food. But I'll do as I would be done by: I'll take your five dollars, Archie, and try to think that it is old times. I feel that this is the turning-point, and I can't thank you enough."

"Don't mention it, dear boy. I'm sorry you take a trifle so seriously. It all comes of the condition of your stomach. I think you can venture on eating a fairly hearty dinner to-night and a good breakfast to-morrow. And then you must dine with me at the club to-morrow night at half-past six sharp, for I have three receptions and a wedding on hand. By the way, put on your dress-coat, for I shall take you to one of the receptions with me at my uncle Archer's. I want you to know my cousin, Bessie Archer. She's an awfully jolly girl. I'll tell them I'm going to bring you. They will be delighted, for they've often heard me speak of you. Come, cheer up, man: you look fifty per cent. better already. 'So long;' and don't forget to-morrow night, 'Pow-Wow' Club, Fifth Avenue and Nineteenth Street." Archie put out his hand, and Rush took it with a grip that drove the rings on his friend's fingers into the flesh; but the latter was too polite to wince.

Before he could quite man himself to confront the people in the waiting-room of *The Dawn* office, Rush walked rapidly down Broadway as far as Trinity Church, where he stood for a moment looking through the iron railings of the fence into the grass-grown church-yard. The clock in the church tower struck three, which reminded him that the city editor would not be long at his desk: so, with his mind fixed upon the business in hand, the strain on his nerves relaxed, and he walked up the street and ran up the winding iron stairs at the office as lightly as on that hopeful first day which now seemed so long ago.

He had hardly put his foot on the threshold of the waiting-room door when the old messenger stepped up to him and said, "Just in time, sir. Mr. Musgrave sent out here for you only five minutes ago, sir, and I told him this was the first day you had missed in three weeks. I'll go at once and tell him you are here, sir,"—which he did, returning with the message that Mr. Musgrave would like to see him. "It never rains but it pours," thought Rush, as he walked eagerly to the little room.

"Ah, Mr. Hurlstone, how are you? Sorry not to have been able to do anything for you before, but we have been pretty well filled up. Just at this moment, however, we are short-handed, and I want to work

up a particular case at once. Do you know where the Academy of Music is?"

Rush looked at Mr. Musgrave to see whether he was joking; but he was busily writing, and not even looking at him. "In Irving Place, I believe."

"Quite right. Irving Place and Fourteenth Street. I have been informed that there is a strike in the orchestra. I want you to go up there and see Mr. Maxmann and get what he has to say about it, and then see some of the orchestra and get their story. 'What the Bass Drum Says,' 'How it Strikes the Cymbals,'—good head-lines, eh?"

Then, laying his pen down, ramming his hands into the depths of his pockets, and taking aim at Rush with one eye, he said, "Do you know Miss Knowlton?"

Rush felt that he started, and knew by the tingling in his cheeks that he blushed. Luckily, Mr. Musgrave was thinking his own thoughts, and, although his right eye was staring hard at the young man before him, his mind was upon something else.

"I must have an interview with Miss Knowlton on this strike: it would be immense. I'll give you an open letter from *The Dawn*, Mr. Hurlstone, and she cannot refuse: you're a persuasive young man, too, I fancy, and you must do your prettiest."

Seizing a pen, he wrote, in a quick, flowing hand,—

"Will Miss Knowlton do Mr. John Gasper Plummett the honor of giving his representative, Mr. R. Hurlstone, the bearer, her views on the recent strike among the musicians in Mr. Maxmann's orchestra, for publication in *The Dawn*?"

"There! I guess that will do it," said Mr. Musgrave, running his eye rapidly over the note. "Now see how successful you will be with your first assignment. Go to the Academy first. You are more likely to find Miss Knowlton in later in the day. Good luck to you!"

Rush stood a moment in the corridor and read Mr. Musgrave's note carefully over, word by word.

"I don't think I shall ever forget this day," said he to himself, as the glass door clicked behind him.

CHAPTER V.

RUSH HURLSTONE lost no time in reaching the Academy of Music. He was fortunate enough to find Mr. Maxmann in the little room behind the box-office, where he was wiping the foam of a fresh glass

of lager from his grizzled moustache. The day was a rather warm one for March, and Mr. Maxmann—a small, stout man, with a very red face—had removed his collar and necktie, which lay on the table in front of him, beside his beer-mug. His waistcoat was unbuttoned and thrown back, revealing a not too immaculate shirt-front. Rush, as soon as he announced that he was from *The Dawn*, was ushered into the manager's presence, but was about to retreat with an apology for intruding upon his *deshabille*, when the little man sprang to his feet and embraced him in the most affectionate manner.

"Gome ride in, mein dear young gendleman," said he, forcing Rush into a chair. "Sid town and make yourself ad home. A glass here, you young rascal." (This to the office-boy.) Then, filling the two mugs, "Your goot hel, my frient."

Rush drank the toast, and explained his business.

"Yes, you may call it a strike, a leedle one; but I don't tink we'll haf any more drouble. It all comes of tad flageolet of mine,—such a stupid vellow. He's a regular agidator, and he won'd be habby till he gets up a row. He's succeeded in making some of the odders tink that they wand more money for rehearsals, but they don'd, and they know it. But some mens are never satisfied. That's all there is: the performances will go on all ride. Do you care for music? Of course you do. I see you are a young gendleman of taste. Here are some tickets. Don'd refuse me. I nefer asked you a vavor before. Come, and bring her." And the manager winked his good-natured fishy gray eye at Rush, who smiled to himself as he thought who the only "her" was.

Rush thanked Mr. Maxmann for his courtesies, and had just risen to leave the room, when the door burst open and a gayly-attired young woman swooped in upon them. I beg the reader's indulgence for saying "swooped," but no other word would describe this young person's manner of entrance.

"Ah, here you are, papa!" said she, giving the manager a resounding kiss upon his bald head. "I was afraid you'd be gone before I got here; but I've been flying round like a hen on a hot griddle all the morning,—rehearsals and costumers; there's no rest for the wicked. Don't forget you're to take me out to dinner to-night. You must give me a good one, too. All the exercise I've had to-day has given me an appetite, and a thirst too; don't forget that, papa,—and a thirst too." Then, suddenly discovering Rush, who was tugging ineffectually at a spring-lock, "Who's the young gentleman? Why don't you introduce me?"

"You didn't give me time, paby. Mr. Hurlstone, of *The Dawn*."

Rush bowed politely.

"Happy to meet you, Mr. Hurlstone, of *The Dawn*," said the young woman, staring boldly into his eyes, as she put out her large hand, swathed in lavender-colored kids, for him to shake. "Hope you've had a satisfactory chat with papa, and that he's given you lots of items for your paper and tickets for yourself."

"Your father has been very kind," said Rush. But he had hardly said the last word when she gave vent to such a laugh as he had never heard from the mouth of woman before, and the old manager's face was actually purple in his efforts to keep from bursting.

"There! you've said enough," said she, as soon as she could control her laughter: "that's as much as I can stand for one afternoon."

The office-boy entering the room at this moment, Rush availed himself of the opportunity to escape, and bowed himself out. The manager was choking with suppressed laughter, and the young woman was pounding him on the back as Rush turned to make his parting bow.

"Good heavens!" said the young man to himself, as he stepped out upon the sidewalk. "I was just pitying Maxmann for having such a loud, vulgar daughter; and to think that she is a matter of choice! This is the stage, is it? This is the sort of man who comes in daily contact with Helen Knowlton. Well, she is an angel, so I suppose she can walk through fire without being scorched; but it's a pity she has to do it. If I had a million dollars I would send it to her anonymously and beg her to take it and retire into private life."

Standing by the stage door of the Academy, Rush saw a group of excited men gesticulating after the manner of foreigners. When he came up to them he knew at once that they were the striking musicians, among them being the belligerent flageolet, as Rush could see by the shape of the little leather case he carried in his hand. He at once began talking with the men, who were very glad to tell their story to a reporter. It was a very different one from that of the manager. He didn't want to pay them at all, they said, and vowed that he had no money.

"Mooch lika that," said the flageolet. "He hava *plenty* money. He spend him—oh, yes, he spend plenty fora his Bébé he calla her."

"Shall you play to-morrow?" asked Rush.

"Si, si," answered the spokesman. "He pay we play. We tella him he no pay we no play."

By further questioning Rush learned that there had been a close approach to serious trouble at the rehearsal that morning,—that the musicians, led by the flageolet, had refused to go on till they got their money, and that Maxmann had said positively he had not a dollar

in the bank, but would pay them in full on the first of the month, when he would get an assessment from the directors. They had heard that story before, and refused to put any confidence in it, and would have walked off with their instruments under their arms if Miss Knowlton had not come to the rescue and insisted that the orchestra should be paid with the money which was due her that day, and which she knew Maxmann would have ready for her, because he could not afford to treat her as he had treated the poor musicians.

"Noble creature!" said Rush to himself. "She is as good as she is great." And to think that he was going to see her, and that very day, too!

He learned from some of the people of the theatre that she drove out with her aunt every afternoon on the days when she didn't sing; and, as this was one of them, Rush concluded that he would not find her at home then, but that he had better call at her house just before dinner-time, when he would be pretty sure of finding her in. This would give him time to dress, as it was not quite five o'clock. So he hurried over to West Eleventh Street.

Never before did this young man dress himself with so much care. He had taken his usual bath in the morning, but he took another, and put on the best of everything he owned. He looked over his stock of shirts with the eye of a Brummel. The collar of one was too high, the collar of another too low. Finally he completed his toilet and set forth. His landlady met him in the hall. "*Bon jour, Madame Pinot,*" he said, gayly, as he ran down-stairs; but Madame Pinot was so struck with his changed appearance that she could not find words to return his salutation.

"Well," said she, in French, for she said it to herself, "something has happened: he doesn't look like the same person I saw this morning."

And indeed he did not. There was a color in his cheeks and a brightness in his eye that had not been there in many a day. His encounter with Archie Tillinghast and his assignment from *The Dawn* office would have been exciting enough without this great climax.

He lost no time in walking to West Twentieth Street; but when he turned into that street and the little Gothic houses stood in all their prettiness before him, he slackened his speed. For a moment he thought that he was ill; but he concluded that it was only the effects of an exciting day. Back and forth he walked in front of the house he was so soon to enter, and could not make up his mind to pull the bell-handle. "Rush Hurlstone, you're a fool!" he finally said. "Don't you know this is business?" Then he mounted the steps and rang the

bell. How musically it tinkled in the basement below! The door was opened by a man-servant in livery, of whom he demanded, "Is Miss Knowlton in?"

"I will inquire, if you will be good enough to send up your card," replied the man, with the evasive answer of the well-trained servant of a public person, at the same time ushering Rush, who handed him Mr. Musgrave's note of introduction, into a gem of a drawing-room. A grand piano stood in a middle room with a hard-wood floor and adorned with some rare portraits of distinguished singers. Flowers in baskets and in vases filled the room with a rich perfume. Easy-chairs and bric-à-brac abounded. The whole atmosphere of the place was one of luxury and good taste. "This is her room," thought Rush, looking about him; "these are the rugs her tiny feet tread upon; these are her books; there stands her piano, over whose ivory keys her ivory fingers glide." In this way he amused himself until he heard the rustling of a woman's gown on the stairs. His heart stopped beating, and seemed to grow so big that he was afraid he could not speak when she entered. Ten thousand thoughts flew through his mind. He arose from his chair, and, shutting his eyes, said to himself, "When that door opens I shall see the most divinely beautiful creature that treads this earth; one for whom I would lie down and die,—nay, more, for whom I would stand up and live."

A sort of ecstasy took possession of him. The door swung back on its hinges; he opened his eyes,—and Aunt Rebecca Sandford entered the room. Rush started. If he had been struck in the face he could not have had a harder blow. It took him a few seconds to recover his wits. If he had had to speak first, he would certainly have disgraced himself; but Aunt Rebecca began at once.

"She's very busy just at this moment" (Miss Sandford had an ugly way of saying "she" or "her" when she meant her niece, forgetting that there were any other shes or hers in the world), "and asked me to step down and see you. I'm very partial to press-boys myself, Mr. Hailstorm" (another ugly trick of hers was to get people's names wrong), "and I'm always glad to have a little chat with them. Take a seat, pray. You wanted to see her about that strike. Well, now, I really don't see how she could say anything on the subject. She doesn't want to pitch into Maxmann, because the man really means well; but, you know, Italian opera is an expensive luxury. That's why it's fashionable. It'll never be popular, though, mark my words. English opera is what'll fetch the people. If that child ever sings in English opera she'll make her everlasting fortune. I tell her so, too; but they all have a foolish pride about Italian opera. It's nonsense, arrant

nonsense. The biggest money is in the English opera, you mark my words."

Rush had no doubt that she was correct, but he hadn't come there to hear Miss Rebecca Sandford's opinion of the relative merits of English and Italian opera. He was a diplomatic young man, however, and when he found that the prospect of seeing Miss Knowlton looked dim, he tried all his arts. When Aunt Rebecca, who was an impulsive woman for all her shrewdness and brusque manner, learned that it was his first assignment, she took a personal interest, and said he should "see that child as sure as there was a Moses in the bulrushes," and she left the room to fetch her.

This time there was no mistake. Rush heard the clear notes of Miss Knowlton's voice as she descended the stairs, and in a moment she was advancing towards him with her hand extended. Such a beautiful hand, too! It felt like a rose-leaf as it lay in his for half a second.

"I am very glad to meet you, Mr. Hurlstone, and shall be most happy if I can be of any service to you."

Then she sat down on one side of him (Aunt Rebecca sat on the other), and "took him all in," as she afterwards told him. She saw a tall, well-made young man with brown hair, a clear, dark skin, and strong, white teeth that a budding moustache made no effort to conceal. He was certainly handsome, and he had an easy, natural manner, that was very attractive.

About the strike she would rather say nothing, but, as he had taken the trouble to find her and did not want to go back empty-handed, she would say that, although she did not believe in strikes, her sympathies were with the strikers in this instance.

"They did not strike for higher pay," she said, "but for what they had already earned. I do not, however, want to accuse Mr. Maxmann. He had no intention of cheating them out of their money: he only wants time. You see, Italian opera is very expensive, and the expenses are not properly apportioned. We *prime donne* are not paid in the right way. We should not get such large certainties. I have always held that a prima donna should be paid in proportion to her 'drawing' powers,—a small certainty and a percentage."

"Hear that child, now!" interrupted Aunt Rebecca; "you might know that she was an artist,—no head for business. A small certainty, indeed! Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Not a prima donna, I will venture to say," said Helen. "No manager would be bold enough to mention the subject in her presence."

So they chatted on for fifteen or twenty minutes.

“I have been very frank with you, Mr. Hurlstone,” said Helen, “and I leave it for you to draw the line between what I have said to you and what I have said to *The Dawn*. I think that I am perfectly safe in trusting myself in your hands.” And she gave him a look of such confidence that he was quite beside himself. Both Helen and her aunt were pleased with Rush. “When you are at the theatre come around and see us,” said Aunt Rebecca at parting. He was so young and so enthusiastic that she liked him; and then he was a “newspaper man!”

Rush had a column of *The Dawn* for his story, and it was a good one. The city editor complimented him upon it, and told him to come inside the next day and he would try to find him a desk. So at last he had got a foothold, and his prospects seemed to him simply dazzling. What a glowing letter he wrote home! It was to his mother, with whom he could be confidential, and the glowing was largely about Helen Knowlton.

“How young men will rave over women on the stage!” said that good lady. “But it will blow over. I won’t scold him yet, dear boy!” And she put the letter carefully away in her writing-desk, that “the girls” might not see it.

(To be continued.)

KILLDEE.

KILLDEE! Killdee! far o’er the lea
 At twilight comes the cry.
 Killdee! a marsh-mate answereth
 Across the shallow sky.

Killdee! Killdee! thrills over me
 A rhapsody of light,
 As star to star gives utterance
 Between the day and night.

Killdee! Killdee! O Memory,
 The twin birds Joy and Pain,
 Like shadows parted by the sun,
 At twilight meet again!

John B. Tubb.

SONG-GAMES AND MYTH-DRAMAS AT WASHINGTON.

IT is rather strange that so little attention has been given to the literary element in the games of American children, especially when one considers that it is all now remaining to us of the old unwritten poetry which once outweighed the written, and of the old popular mythology, too. Few people, indeed, have any idea what a mass of such material is in existence, even though they may be obliged to look right over its daily exhibitions to see less interesting things.

All who *have* read Mr. Newell's "Songs and Games of American Children" will doubtless remember that he traces the very familiar game of "London Bridge"—whose picturesqueness and stately rhythm always make it welcome to one's eyes and ears—back through the mediæval "moralities," that deal with the strife of angels and demons for human souls, to a still earlier belief. According to his hypothesis, the original kernel of the game was the pre-Christian belief in malevolent or jealous beings who destroyed bridges and who could be propitiated only by human sacrifice. It is at least curious that I find in use here at times a modification of the song, in which, after the usual lines "London Bridge has fallen down" and "What shall we take to build it up?" with their familiar repetition and refrain, the following passage occurs :

Here comes a hatchet to cut off your head,
To cut off your head, to cut off your head,
Here comes a hatchet to cut off your head ;
So fare you well, my lady love.

Here comes a wheelbarrow to roll over you,
To roll over you, to roll over you,
Here comes a wheelbarrow to roll over you ;
So fare you well, my lady love.

After this follows the usual enumeration of materials to be used in the new structure. I do not wish to insist on the theory that the above-quoted words are really even a modified survival ; but one meets with so few instances of recent invention in such matters, and there is so little apparent motive for it in the present instance, that one is inclined to regard their uncouthness as that of primitive times rather than of childish fancy. The refrain above given seems to be in almost universal use among us, instead of the prettier but perhaps less significant "Dance over my Lady Lee."

The ring-games, or "carols," are great favorites, as they once were

among the English court ladies, and even among the early Greeks. Some pleasant things, happily, never grow old or stale. During the warm season you can nearly always come upon a girlish group—for the girls are the great conservators of the literary element, the boys preferring harder games—circling and chanting around one of their number. Many of these “roundels” come into my study window as I write, and tempt one to sally out and secure them in exact shape. Some have persistently eluded me, others are not fresh enough to warrant repetition; but the following is, I think, new to print, and complete, as generally sung.

The child in the centre, at the utterance of the word “takes,” selects a companion, who joins her and makes a similar choice of a third at the first repetition of that signal. In this way they proceed, the latest chosen choosing the next, until the last verse of the song is reached, which explains the finale of the game :

The man in the cell,
The man in the cell,
High O! cherry O!
The man in the cell.

The man rings the bell,
The man rings the bell,
High O! cherry O!
The man rings the bell.

The man takes a wife,
The man takes a wife,
High O! cherry O!
The man takes a wife.

The wife takes the child,
The wife takes the child,
High O! cherry O!
The wife takes the child.

The child takes the nurse,
The child takes the nurse,
High O! cherry O!
The child takes the nurse.

The nurse takes the dog,
The nurse takes the dog,
High O! cherry O!
The nurse takes the dog.

The dog takes the cat,
The dog takes the cat,
High O! cherry O!
The dog takes the cat.

The cat takes the rat,
 The cat takes the rat,
 High O! cherry O!
 The cat takes the rat.

So we'll all stand still,
 And we'll all clap hands,
 High O! cherry O!
 We'll all clap hands.

This reads like a satire on the cumulative consequences of matrimony. Its refrain may very probably have been originally "Heigho! cheery O." The next is of a more sepulchral cast, though the children make it lively enough. It seems to be akin to the lyke-wake songs of the Celtic peoples and such as are still in use in the Greek islands. When perfectly performed, one of the party lies down in the middle of the circle at or before the fifth verse, to personate the corpse.

Johnny is his first name,
 His first name, his first name,
 Johnny is his first name,
 Among the lily-white daisies.

(*Surname*) is his second name,
 Second name, second name,
 (*Surname*) is his second name,
 Among the lily-white daisies.

Emma is her first name,
 First name, first name,
 Emma is her first name,
 Among the lily-white daisies.

(Second verse repeated with *her* surname.)

And now poor Johnny's dead and gone,
 Dead and gone, dead and gone,
 And now poor Johnny's dead and gone,
 Among the lily-white daisies.

And left poor Emma a widow,
 A widow, a widow,
 And left poor Emma a widow,
 Among the lily-white daisies.

With twenty-four children round her feet,
 Round her feet, round her feet,
 With twenty-four children round her feet,
 Among the lily-white daisies.

I am informed that in some versions there is considerably more of the narrative; but the above gives its limit so far as my own observation goes. Indeed, it appears to complete the story, unless the disconsolate

mother of this numerous family is to marry again,—which, under the circumstances, seems unlikely.

The same lugubrious topic recurs frequently in these childish merry-makings. Here is one such ring-ditty with a rather unaccountable opening :

Sweet Gravel, sweet Gravel,
Your true-love is dead :
He wrote you a letter
To turn back your head.

One in the ring turns her head over her shoulder. Then the lines are sung again, and a second turns her head also. This continues until all have turned.

Sometimes they vary the opening :

Now, while the grass is green,
All the true-lovers are ashamed to be seen.
Miss Lily, Miss Lily, your true-love is dead, etc.

There are other ring-games in which love does not divide the interest with death, but forms the sole subject-matter. In one of these what must have been originally a dialogue is blended into a continuous song, in which all join :

Here she stands, a lovely creature ;
Who she is I do not know.
Madam, I have gold and silver,
Madam, I have ships on the ocean,
Madam, I have house and land.
What care I for your gold and silver ?
What care I for ships on the ocean ?
What care I for house and land ?
All I want is a fine young man.

Then a member of the ring is selected by the one in the middle to take his or her place.

Here is another, which opens rather impressively, but ends crudely enough, without the *naïveté* of the last above :

The wind blows low, the wind blows high,
The stars are dropping from the sky,
And Jennie says she'll surely die
If she don't get a lover with a dark-blue eye.
He is happy, he is pretty,
He is the boy of Washington City.

During the utterance of these last words, "Jennie," the one in the middle, makes her selection.

Other games relate partly to other matters, though introducing an

element of courtship. In one a tailor-boy occupies the centre of the ring. All sing,—

Here comes a jolly, jolly tailor-boy,
 Just lately come from town ;
 He makes his work in a very pretty way,
 As we go marching round,
 As we go marching round and round,
 As we go marching round.
 He takes his partner in a very pretty way,
 And kisses her on the ground.

Then he selects one and kisses her.

More often the "tailor-boy" is a "sailor-boy." As played last summer at the sea-side in this latitude, chiefly by children from Washington, Baltimore, and certain Maryland villages, it began as what I may term a *vis-à-vis* game, the sailor-boy facing the others. Then they sang,—

Here comes a jolly, jolly sailor-boy,
 Just lately come on shore ;
 He spends his time in a merry, merry way,
 Just as he did before.
 He fell in love with a very pretty girl,
 And kissed her kneeling down.
 Swing around and around and around,
 Swing around and around.

At the fifth line the sailor-boy selected one of the girls in the line ; at the sixth he kneeled and kissed her, then rose, and at the word "swing" the pair took hold of each other's hands and swung around. Then the girl selected a boy or another girl in the same way, and the game continued, with repetitions of the song, till all were circling in a ring. I am inclined to think this the orthodox version.

There is a very popular game turning on the subject of theft, which differs from most others of the ring form in that the selected one is outside the ring, instead of inside. She marches round, striking them successively with a handkerchief, crying,—

I lost my handkerchief Saturday night,
 And found it Sunday morning.
 Lost ! lost ! lost !

This she continues till she drops the handkerchief at the feet of one of them. Then she runs, and the one thus selected chases her.

In another form the chant is,—

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
 Katy Gray found it.
 Lost ! lost ! lost !

Another variation makes it,—

Lady Locket lost her pocket,
 Lady Fisher found it,
 And every night she went to bed
 And dreamt her cows were drowned.
 Lost! lost! lost!

I fancy the last was the original and authentic form. The refrain, by the way, is that used by the goblin page in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel."

In another game (of rather mythological aspect) there are three characters in the centre of the ring: first, a tree, upright; second, Humpsy, crouched below; third, an old woman gathering apples. All sing,—

Old Humpsy was dead and laid in his grave,
 Laid in his grave,
 Laid in his grave.
 Heigho! heigho! heigho!

There grew a large apple-tree over his grave.
 (*Repeat as before, with refrain.*)

The apples grew ripe and began to fall.
 (*Repeat with refrain.*)

There came an old woman a-picking them up.
 (*Repeat with refrain.*)

She stoops down and begins to pick. Humpsy rises as she approaches, and knocks her in the back, while they sing,—

Old Humpsy gets up and gives her a knock.
 (*Repeat with refrain.*)

He made the old woman go hippity-hop.
 (*Repeat with refrain.*)

This she does. Then each of the three selects a substitute, and the game begins again.

Most of these ring-games deal exclusively with the ordinary problems of human life. They have a dramatic element; but the chorus so overlies everything else as to give them a narrative form. In the *vis-à-vis* games—such as the Three Dukes and the Old Woman from Barbary—the subject-matter is generally more remote and romantic, but still free from any supernatural element, and the form is wholly dramatic. The song goes on, but as dialogue. As the former has a different refrain from any given by Mr. Newell in his interesting chapter on this historic

and changeful game, and varies also in other respects, an account of it may be welcome.

The children are all in line, except one, who dances up to the line, singing,—

Here comes one duke a-riding,
A-riding, a-riding,
Here comes one duke a-riding,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek.

The refrain is sung as he (or she) dances backward to his place. He then stands still, while the line in like manner dances up to him and back, singing,—

What are you riding here for,
Here for, here for,
What are you riding here for,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek ?

He replies in the same style,—

I'm riding here to get married,
Married, married,
I'm riding here to get married,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek.

They answer, singing and dancing with great show of derision,—

You're too black and dirty,
Dirty, dirty,
You're too black and dirty,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek.

I look as good as you do,
You do, you do,
I look as good as you do,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek.

Well, who do you think will have you,
Have you, have you,
Well, who do you think will have you,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek ?

I think Miss Lucy will have me,
Have me, have me,
I think Miss Lucy will have me,
Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek.

The final syllable, which I have endeavored to spell as it sounds, may be *teague*. There are sometimes slight changes, but the refrain is always the same. Sir Ransom's supposition ordinarily proves to be correct, and presently the lady of his choice becomes strangely metamorphosed into a second duke. Then the game takes a new start, with "here come

two dukes a-riding," and so on to three dukes. With the choice which they collectively make the game seems properly to end, though in practice it is continued without much regard to fitness of name or exactness in numbers. In spite of some vulgarizations in grammar and its peculiar style of compliment, it makes a very pleasing and spirited spectacle. It is the most popular game of its type.

In the Old Woman from Barbary (*not* Barbary Land, as reported in Mr. Newell's collection) the line advances towards one who stands alone. As they do so, the "mother," who is in the middle of the line, sings,—

Here comes an old woman from Barbary,
Barbary, Barbary,
Here comes an old woman from Barbary.
Oh, who'll take one of my daughters?
One can bake, and one can spin,
And one can make a lily-white cake.
Oh, who'll take one of my daughters?

The recipient of this offer chooses and retains one, and the line dances back, singing,—

Now poor Nell has gone away,
Gone away, gone away,
In her pocket a thousand dollars [pounds?],
On her hand a solid gold ring,
Solid gold ring.
Good-by, Nell, good-by.

This is repeated till all have been chosen but one, who assumes the character of husband-elect, and the child who filled that rôle before now becomes the Old Woman from Barbary in turn, till the daughters have been traded back again.

In one of these games we have obviously the survival of knight-errantry, or at least feudal chivalry, in love-making and marrying; while the other preserves the old savage idea of selling girls into matrimony. It is something more than amusing to find alongside conceptions brought from such remote and diverse periods a bit of more modern ballad sentiment, in which the inducements are offered simply, but to the sweetheart herself. This is one of the ring-games; but I put it with the above on account of their similarity of sentiment.

The ring and the child in the centre all sing together,—

As I was going up yonder hill,
Yonder hill, yonder hill,
As I was going up yonder hill,
One cold and frosty morning.

I met my true-love on the way,
 On the way, on the way,
 I met my true-love on the way,
 One cold and frosty morning.

And what do you think he said to me,
 Said to me, said to me,
 And what do you think he said to me,
 One cold and frosty morning?

He said, "Will you marry me,
 Marry me, marry me?"
 He said, "Will you marry me?"
 One cold and frosty morning.

"If you will, I'll give you a gay gold ring,
 Gay gold ring, gay gold ring,
 If you will, I'll give you a gay gold ring,"
 One cold and frosty morning.

The succeeding offers admit of considerable latitude and variety. At last one is accepted, and simultaneously the child in the centre chooses a companion.

The games of courtship, such as

King Arthur was King James's son,
 And of a royal race he run,

have often degenerated into sad nonsense, and are too well known to need quoting. I have met *very* small children bidding one another to choose

The one that's fairest in your sight,

with the response,—

The fairest one that here I see
 Is Julia (*surname*) to walk with me.

The games imitative of work do not in most instances differ from those described by Mr. Newell. I have noticed in one of them a rather odd illustration of the way in which verbal corruption often proceeds. The city children about us sing,—not having the names of "oats, pease," etc., frequently in mind, and seeking, where not guided, the line of least resistance in sound,—

You nor I nor nobody knows
 How *O sweet* beans and barley grows.

They have also converted it into a refrain, inserting again at the end of the first five lines,—

O sweet beans and barley grows.

It is reasonable to suppose that the refrains which now seem so

meaningless have all been subjected to similar treatment. It would be worth the while of Professor Max Müller, or some other philologist, to trace as far as possible their original meaning.

After all, though, it is surprising that so many old expressions and turns of thought should remain, and still more that the rhythm of verse which has seldom or never been written out should continue for the most part so smooth and accurate. Compare these children's verses with the wretched jumble of unscannable lines and worse phraseology in the obituary column of any daily paper, or with the little ones' own halting attempts at poetical invention. Some one devised "Heigh O! cheery O!" and "The Lily-white Daisies," the "Gay Gold Ring" and the "Old Woman from Barbary," who knew how to write poetry, if he knew how to write at all; and they have been preserved by the children in their freshness as adults would never have preserved them without pen and ink.

In only two or three instances have I found even uncertain traces of recent acquisition. One is the mouse game. Four players form a trap. Another, representing the mouse, is within, and pretends to nibble bait. They sing,—

O mousie dear! O mousie dear!
Take my advice and run away!

I have heard the little negroes singing this in the twilight, but am informed that it is also a kindergarten game. Which party borrowed it, let those say who know. I am told the words have found their way into a "reader."

I have also met a formidable array of very small children shouting, in high glee,—

Here we go, two by two,
My little sister, jinktum joo!
Hither, hither!
Because she's afraid of the bugaboo!

This is said to be of school derivation likewise. But, on the whole, it would do more credit to the pupils than to the teachers.

Here is another, which is hardly yet naturalized in Washington, having been lately introduced from down the river. Two children, holding hands, march towards two others, similarly linked, all vociferating, "Bow, wow, wow!" Then they clasp hands all round, and circle, singing,—

Swing over the gate, Volinsey!

It has a singularly fragmentary and meaningless sound and aspect as we have it here. Perhaps there may be more of it somewhere else.

Before leaving the *vis-à-vis* games, I must not forget "Blackberry Wine," which I think has never been reported, though it contains a Revolutionary allusion to the "red-coat men," and a rather odd refrain.

Two girls, hand in hand, face two others. The first pair advances, singing,—

Have you got any blackberry wine,
Blackberry wine, blackberry wine,
Have you got any blackberry wine,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie?

The last line is sung in retiring. The other pair then advance and retire, singing, in like manner,—

Yes, we have some blackberry wine,
Blackberry wine, blackberry wine,
Yes, we have some blackberry wine,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

Then the song proceeds, the couples singing alternately :

Will you lend me a pint of it,
Pint of it, pint of it,
Will you lend me a pint of it,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie?

No, I won't lend you a pint of it,
Pint of it, pint of it,
No, I won't lend you a pint of it,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

Then I'll break your dishes up,
Dishes up, dishes up,
Then I'll break your dishes up,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

Then I'll break your tumblers up,
Tumblers up, tumblers up,
Then I'll break your tumblers up,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

Then I'll send for the *red-coat men*,
Red-coat men, red-coat men,
Then I'll send for the red-coat men,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

What care I for the red-coat men,
Red-coat men, red-coat men,
(*With great flaunting of defiance.*)
What care I for the red-coat men,
Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie?

Then I'll send for the blue-coat men,
 Blue-coat men, blue-coat men,
 Then I'll send for the blue-coat men,
 Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

What care I for the blue-coat men,
 Blue-coat men, blue-coat men,
 What care I for the blue-coat men,
 Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie?

Well, are you ready for a fight, fight, fight,
 For a fight, fight, fight, for a fight, fight, fight,
 Well, are you ready for a fight, fight, fight,
 Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie?

Yes, I'm ready for a fight, fight, fight,
 For a fight, fight, fight, for a fight, fight, fight,
 Yes, I'm ready for a fight, fight, fight,
 Miss Oorie and Miss Aurie.

All four roll up their sleeves and make a pretence of a general and furious engagement. Advocates of "action" in literature ought to be satisfied with this pugnacious, if rather prosaic, little piece.

Here, as elsewhere, in their games, children use "counting-out rhymes" of many sorts.

Passing over the commoner forms of "Enee menee," "Fillisy fol-lacy," and "Intery mintery," the following seem to be novel :

Dr. Franklin whipped his scholars
 Out of Scotland into Spain,
 And—then—back—a—gain.

Hayfoot, strawfoot,
 Specklefoot, crawfoot!
 Some flew east, some flew west,
 Some flew over the cuckoo's nest.

One, two, three;
 Nannie caught a flea.
 The flea died; Nannie cried—
 Out goes she.

Enee, menee, tipsy toe,
 Catch a nigger by his toe.
 If he hollers, let him go.
 O, U, T,
 Spells out goes he
 Right in the centre
 Of the dark-blue sea.

This last has a sinister sound like a reminiscence of the Middle Passage.

In the couplet

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
All good children go to heaven,

we meet with an orthodox and wholesome recognition of religious teaching ; but it is rather startling to learn that

William T. Trinity
Was a good waterman.
He had hens
And kept them in pens.
Some laid eggs, and some laid none.
Whitefoot, specklefoot, trip and begone.

This last formula (sometimes with "William the waterman" for its first line) is in use in some parts of Maryland, but has not, I think, actually invaded the city. All the others are in use here.

In the game of Jacks, Washington children use the following, which is known to be old in the surrounding country, though I do not remember to have seen it in print :

Jack was nimble, Jack was quick,
Jack jumped over the candlestick ;
The candlestick was made of brass,
So, Jack, I've caught you now at last.

Here is a Hallowe'en charm that still lingers in the capital :

I shape my shoes in the shape of a T,
And my true-lover I hope for to see,
The color of his eyes, and the color of his hair,
And the color of his clothes that he every day wears.

The girl puts her shoes in the shape stated, says the above rhyme, goes to bed, and does her best to dream accordingly,—results not guaranteed. This comes from Maryland, where it was considerably in use not many years ago, in a spirit of jest, and on other nights besides Hallowe'en.

From the swinging of a hammock the following rhyme often comes up, used as a measurement to make sure that no occupant shall get more than a fair share of dizziness :

Charlie Buck
Had money enough
To lock himself in the store-room.
So when he dies
He shuts his eyes,
And never see Charlie no more.
High swing !
Low swing !
Die off—Charlie—this—day.

I give it as I hear it, with all its imperfections on its head. My juvenile friends have learned it by oral tradition, and can throw no further light on it.

Here is an old bit of rigmarole which may be described as the game of thoughts chasing words. The second rhyme-word in each instance determines the distorted sense of the next couplet, turning the production, as a whole, into rambling nonsense. It is a curious illustration, carried to an extreme, of the admitted fact that the verse-maker's utterance is under bondage to his rhyme.

'Deed 'n' 'deed 'n' double 'deed!
 I sowed my garden full of seed.
 When the seed began to grow,
 Like a garden full of snow;
 When the snow began to melt,
 Like a garden full of hemp;
 When the hemp began to peel,
 Like a garden full of steel;
 When the steel began to rust,
 Like a garden full of dust;
 When the dust began to fly,
 Like an eagle in the sky;
 When the sky began to roar,
 Like a lion at my door;
 When the door began to crack,
 Like a hickory at my back;
 When my back began to smart,
 Like a penknife at my heart;
 When my heart began to bleed,
 'Deed, indeed, I was dead indeed.

There is probably no way of getting at the origin of this. It was in use in Maryland a generation ago. It is in use in the nursery and playground here to-day.

The little girls are constantly practising augury with their skipping-ropes. Curiously, most of these soothsayings take for their subject marriage, its incidents and its consequences. "Silk, satin, velvet, calico, rags," they repeat at each jump, and the word that is uttered when they fail is supposed to determine their wedding-apparel. They apply the same test to equipage, husband's occupation, the number of children, and much else. I have even heard them shouting, "White, red, black, brown, yellow," in time to their leaps.

Here we have the literary element reduced to the minimum. The simplest form of dramatic game is not much beyond this, being mostly pantomime. One girl says to the others, "Let us put on our clothes;" and they pretend to dress for church. Then they start out in Sunday

procession. This suddenly meets another child, who personates a fierce bull-dog. They dance at him and from him, crying, "Bull-dog! bull-dog!" till in some one of his rushes he makes a capture. The prisoner then becomes "bull-dog" in turn.

"Old Mammy Topsy Toe" is more common, here as everywhere, and like it in rather barren simplicity.

Another homely game, involving a little more conversation, is known as "Rotten Egg." The *dramatis personæ* are a mother and her children. She sends one of them after another to find out whether the bread is done. Each in turn reports affirmatively. She replies, "I don't believe it," then pretends to go and test it for herself. She declares, "It isn't done," then pretends to beat them, swinging each child successively with one hand and the switch with the other. Then each child is compelled in turn to assume a squatting posture, with hands clasped under the thighs. The mother and an assistant take her by the arms and raise her off the ground. If her hands give way, she is set on one side and said to go into "the apple-barrel;" if not, she is set on the other side and said to go into "the sugar-barrel." There are some modifications of this game which seem to have more direct reference to its unpleasant name.

Not unlike it in general structure is the least imaginative of the mythical games, known as "The Devil in the Bandbox." In this, one child, personating the devil, hides in a corner. Another, the mother, sends her sons and daughters successively in that direction, saying, "Get me a piece of ribbon," or "candy," or whatever comes to mind. The messenger pretends to make a frightful discovery, and comes rushing back shrieking, "The devil's in the bandbox!" The mother replies to each, "I don't believe you," and sends another. At last she goes in person, accompanied by all her tribe. Catching sight of "the devil," she cries, "Oh, sure enough he is!" and they all run. The devil springs out in pursuit, and the one caught becomes devil in turn.

In "Birds"—quite a popular game—the occult knowledge of supernatural beings seems to be the central idea. There are a number of "birds," a namer, and an angel. The namer, unheard by the angel, whispers to each bird his or her special name, such as bluebird, redbird, yellowbird, etc. These stand in a row, with the namer in front facing them. The "angel" comes up and touches her on the back.

Namer.—"Who is that?"

Angel.—"It's me."

Namer.—"What do you want?"

Angel.—"I want some birds."

Namer.—"What color?"

Angel.—"Blue" (for example).

Namer.—"Run, blue!"—the angel having guessed the color chosen for one of them. A chase ensues. If the angel touches bluebird before she reaches a certain spot, bluebird becomes an angel, and the angel becomes a bird. If the bluebird reaches the spot of safety, she goes back to her place in the ranks, and the angel must try again.

Of course it frequently happens that the angel's guess is incorrect, especially as unusual tints are often chosen to bring about that result. Then the namer answers, "I haven't got any." The angel has three guesses. If the third is a failure, the namer responds, irreverently, "Go back and learn your A B C's." The angel returns to her post, and soon comes forward as before. This continues till she has guessed correctly and caught a bird.

In "Ribbons" there is a devil as well as an angel. The duty of the one who names is the same as in "Birds," and the ribbons behave like the latter. The angel and devil alternate in their guessing and chasing. One of these games would seem to be an outgrowth of the other. All into which supernatural beings enter are notable for the mediæval unceremoniousness with which they are treated.

The semi-human mythical games must close the series. One or two of these preserve a reminiscence of cannibalism,—which surely is going a long way back. In "Gypsy," a mother and child go to sleep. The gypsy enters and steals the child. The child opens her eyes and goes with the gypsy to the latter's home. There she is named "blackberry pie," or something else that is edible. The mother raps on the gypsy's back (which seems to do duty as a door), and the gypsy asks,—

"Who's there?"

Mother.—"Jack Frost."

Gypsy.—"What do you want?"

Mother (for example).—"Raspberry tart."

Gypsy.—"It's in the oven baking,"—this guess being an approximation.

Mother.—"Then custard pie."

Gypsy.—"We haven't got any."

Mother.—"Blackberry pie."

Gypsy.—"Here she is."

Mother.—"Let me taste it." (Touches the child with a stick, and puts the latter to her mouth.) "Why, that tastes like my Julia,"—or whatever the child's real name may be. Then she asks the child,—

"Who brought you here?"

Child.—"My big toe."

Mother.—"Well, take your big toe and march yourself home." Which is done.

In another, which I may call "The Old Man and his Pipe," there is a mother who has children named for all the days of the week, Monday being the youngest. The mother, going out, cautions Sunday, the eldest, "Take care of Monday and all the rest, and don't let them get hurt. If you do, you know what I'll give you."

After the mother has gone, the old man, or witch, comes in (he goes indifferently by either title,—the latter suggesting descent from times when the one word did duty for both sexes), and says,—

"Little girl, please go" (pointing) "and get me a match for my pipe. There's a bull-dog over there, and I am afraid to go."

She goes for the match. He snatches up Monday, and makes off.

The mother returns.

Mother.—"Where has my Monday gone?"

Sunday.—"The old witch has got her."

Mother.—"Do you know what I told you? I am going to beat you." She makes a pretence of doing so.

This programme is repeated till all the children are stolen except Sunday. At the next visit the witch says,—

"Little girl, little girl, come with me, and I'll give you some candy." She goes with him.

All the children are supposed to be shut up in the witch's house. The mother breaks into it during the witch's absence, and carries them off.

What is this male being who appropriates "Sunday," "Monday," and all the days of the week, and from whom they are finally rescued at one stroke? It certainly has a very mythological sound.

A more elaborate and tantalizing drama of this sort is known as "Chickamy, cramery, crow," from its strange refrain. With various modifications, it is found in many if not all parts of this country, and can be traced to distinct importations from England at least as far back as the last century. It is played in the city of Washington as follows :

Dramatis personæ.—Witch (this time feminine), mother, and children.

Witch discovered making a fire. Enter mother, with children behind her, each holding the clothes of the one next in front, marching in a circle, and singing,—

Chickamy, chickamy, cramery, crow !

I went to the well to wash my toe :

When I came back my chicken was gone.

"What time is it, old witch?" This question is asked as the mother pauses opposite to her.

The witch replies, "One o'clock."

The march and song are resumed. On coming round again, the question is repeated, and the answer is "Two o'clock." This is continued until the twelfth round. After the answer "Twelve o'clock," the following conversation ensues.

Mother.—"What are you doing there?"

Witch.—"Making a fire."

Mother.—"What are you making a fire for?"

Witch.—"To roast chickens."

Mother.—"Whose chickens?"

Witch.—"Those of your flock."

With the last words, which are uttered suddenly and fiercely, she springs for the children, and they scatter.

This is the simplest and seemingly the oldest form of the play. It was no doubt derived from the neighboring State of Maryland, where, with scarcely the change of a word, it has been in use for a hundred years at least. About the only difference between the Washington version and that still played on the Eastern Shore of that State is that in the latter the mother responds, "Then you must fight for them," and spreads her arms to protect the chickens, who dodge about behind her, while the witch tries to get to them.

Sometimes the inquiry "What are you doing there?" is repeated, after the question as to time, with every round. Sometimes the children circle twice for two o'clock, thrice for three o'clock, etc. This latter variation is hardly regarded as orthodox, however, and must make the game nearly interminable. There are no other modifications that I know of in this region.

In Salem, Massachusetts, there is a slight extension of the chant after the second line, as follows:

And my chickens followed me, pecking brown bread,
Pecking brown bread, pecking brown bread.

In Western New York the witch becomes a "buzzard," though keeping, incongruously enough, to the old business of making a fire. It is needless to go into the other forms which this very ancient childish sport has assumed in different places. Mr. Newell thinks that even "blindman's-buff" is an offshoot of it, the witch becoming successively witch, wizard, buzzard, blind buzzard, and blindman. However this may be, the versions which use the chant above quoted and the line "I went to the *well* to wash my toe" are sufficiently numerous.

The use of the latter word as an equivalent for spring, and *the* spring of the house-supply, would be enough to indicate a very respectable antiquity. The cannibal witch has an older look still. Her omnivorous tastes may give a hint as to the original meaning of the refrain, which is now such gibberish. By comparison of the forms which it takes in various parts of the country, I find that *n* in a large majority is preferred to *m*, and that the last word but one is sometimes "crany" and sometimes "cranary." Now, "chickeny, chickeny, cranary, crow" would be made very readily by childish lips out of "a chicken, a chicken, a crane, or a crow."

We may suppose the original wonder-drama to run thus. A mother and housekeeper in some primitive region is supposed to go to the spring near her home to bathe her feet. While absent, one of her chickens disappears. She sets out in search, followed by her children, and discovers a half-human crone making or tending a fire in the woods, with some sort of fowl, which is not distinctly seen, lying near. The searcher exclaims, "A chicken? a chicken? a crane? or a crow?" the children imitating her, and proceeds to bewail her misfortune, but does not dare to directly demand the fowl from the dreadful creature before her. She hovers around the latter undecidedly, but can bring herself to do no more than inquire the time of day. Once away from the witchly presence, however, she feels the impulse to demand and reclaim her property, and keeps trying again and again, with the same result. This conflict between superstitious fear and self-assertion in defence of her rights continues, until at last she braces herself to the point of pursuing a regular cross-examination. But now the wizard hour of twelve has arrived, and the evil being that she addresses makes a sudden swoop for a human victim. Then the mother fights for her children, while they scatter, or all fly together. Perhaps this outline indicates more psychological analysis than one would look for in the unlettered dramatist. It is offered as a mere suggestion. The play is, at any rate, one of the oldest, most widely spread, and most interesting that we have. Any light thrown on it (or, indeed, on any of the others) would be most welcome.

W. H. Babcock.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER IX.

AN ALTERNATIVE.

HELSTON ABBEY would accommodate some thirty visitors or more, and indeed had frequently done so in former times. Under the rule of its late owner, as has already been said, the greater part of its bedrooms had remained unoccupied from year's end to year's end; but now it was beginning to recover its ancient character for hospitality. Not, of course, that a renewal of the revels of a bygone generation, when guests were considered to be slighting their host if they displayed anything like hurry in their departure, was possible or desired. The present Mr. Lefroy and his wife had always been smart sort of people, mixing in smart society, and their hospitality was of the modern kind. The friends who partook of their excellent dinners, shot their pheasants, and danced in the picture-gallery, which had been converted into a ball-room, would have been bored, perhaps, if they had been pressed to prolong their visit beyond three days: at any rate, they could not have yielded to pressure, because they were always going on somewhere else. Arrivals and departures took place every day; strange faces were forever appearing and disappearing; husbands came without their wives, and wives without their husbands, which seemed to Hope an odd thing, and the general effect of it all was to her very fatiguing and bewildering.

She asked her uncle once whether he did not find it so; but he said, "Oh, no; I'm accustomed to it, you see, and it doesn't go on all the year round. We can put up more lodgers here than we could at Southcote, so I dare say it will come to an end sooner. Besides, I never bother myself. If I don't remember people's names I avoid calling them anything until I find out who they are, and your aunt tells me if there is something particular that I ought to say to them."

Mr. Lefroy rather overstated the case against himself. He had a pretty good memory, and generally managed to say the right thing to the right person, without being prompted. If he did not put himself much out of the way to entertain his guests, he was always genial and pleasant and welcomed them as if he were glad to see them; and, for that matter, so he was. He liked society; he liked talking at certain hours of the day; only it made very little difference to him whether the person with whom he was conversing was called Peter or Paul; nor

did he, as a rule, notice of what units the crowd around his dinner-table might chance to be composed.

One thing, however, he did end by observing, and that was that, while others came and went, Dick Herbert remained immovable. This discovery rather pleased him; for he knew very well that Dick Herbert would not stay so long without a reason, and it was easy to surmise what that reason must be. It would indeed be a good thing if Dick and Hope should take a fancy to one another; but Mr. Lefroy, who had seen a great deal of the world and whose character had a strong vein of good-humored cynicism in it, was aware that men frequently take fancies to girls without going the extreme length of proposing to them. Moreover, he suspected that Hope would require to be very decidedly in love with a man indeed before she would consent to marry him. He had the curiosity to watch the pair, and was forced to the conclusion that, although they were constantly together and seemed to enjoy each other's company, they were not as yet lovers. As to Dick one could not speak with any certainty, because he was such an undemonstrative fellow; but Hope had little power of hiding her feelings, and her feeling for this very worthy gentleman and large landed proprietor was too evidently one of friendship only.

"Nothing will come of it," Mr. Lefroy said to himself, and sighed; for it would have been most convenient in every way if something could have been made to come of it.

Lady Jane was far from sharing his despondent view. She was too busy to pay attention to details: the fact that Dick Herbert had stayed a whole fortnight in the house was sufficient for her, and, when she had time to think about her niece at all, she thought of her with fond affection. The dear girl had seemed disposed to be odd and troublesome at first; but she was clearly bent upon doing the right thing now, and her aunt's blessing awaited her. She had only to come and ask for it, coupling with her request that announcement which Lady Jane conceived that she had now every right to expect.

All the more profound, therefore, were her ladyship's disgust and disappointment when, one evening towards the middle of January, Hope followed her into her bedroom, after the party had broken up for the night, to say—not that she was engaged to Mr. Herbert, but that she proposed returning to London forthwith.

"I wish," Lady Jane exclaimed, somewhat sharply, "that you would not talk such absurd nonsense! You will go to London with us next month; but sooner than that you cannot go. I thought your uncle had explained it all to you."

"It is very kind of you to wish to keep me, Aunt Jane," answered

the girl, preserving an appearance of calmness, though she was inwardly a good deal alarmed; "but I ought not to waste any more time. I really must go to-morrow or the day after."

"My dear, 'must' is hardly a proper word for you to use. It is an ugly word, and I would much rather not use it myself: I prefer to ask you why you are so anxious to leave us all of a sudden. It seemed to me that you were enjoying yourself here. Has anything occurred to—distress you?"

Lady Jane was not going to make the mistake of mentioning Dick Herbert's name; but she thought that if there had been a lovers' quarrel she had better find out about it, with a view to effecting a reconciliation.

But Hope was apparently unconscious of her meaning. "I have no reason except the old one," she answered: "I want to get on with my work, and I want to earn my daily bread as soon as I can."

"Really, Hope, you have no business to say such things, and I sincerely trust that you don't say them to other people. There is not, and there never was or will be, any question of your earning your daily bread. I don't for a moment suppose that you could do it, if you tried; but your uncle will certainly not allow you to try. I think you are apt to forget that he is your guardian."

Hope did not forget it at all; nor did she forget who ruled her guardian. She sank on her knees beside the arm-chair in which Lady Jane was sitting, and pleaded as eloquently as she knew how to be permitted to have her own way in this thing. She believed that she had some talent for painting, she said; if she had not, Mr. Tristram would soon tell her, and then she would promise to give up all thought of becoming an artist. Only let her have a few more months of probation; that was all she asked. She was convinced that if her father were alive he would approve of her intentions; and surely Uncle Montague might be brought to consent!

She was very much in earnest; her pleading was pretty and pathetic; and Lady Jane, who was not more hard-hearted than another, was touched by it. But one must not neglect one's duty because one is touched, and everybody knows that good-natured weakness is often more cruel than severity. For these reasons Lady Jane straightened herself in her chair, knitted her brows, put up her eye-glasses, and said, "Hope, do you know what is your greatest fault?"

"Yes," answered Hope: "it is pride."

"No, my dear; selfishness. You say, 'I want this,'—'I want that:' you don't consider what the effect of your following your fancies would be upon others. Why, if your uncle and I allowed you to live

apart from us and paint pictures for a livelihood, as though you were a pauper——”

“I am a pauper,” interjected Hope.

“That is not the question; and please allow me to finish. I say that if we did that, we should be simply execrated! Even as it is, disagreeable things have been said. That horrid old Lady Chatterton has gone about telling everybody that I won't have you in the house because you are prettier than Gertrude. I do think it is hard upon me!”

“But, Aunt Jane, nobody would believe such falsehoods.”

“That is exactly where you are mistaken, my dear: everybody believes falsehoods.”

And from that startling position Lady Jane declined to be drawn. Hope exhausted argument and entreaty in vain. Her aunt listened to her, but was always ready with the same conclusive reply. What she asked for could not be given to her. Her request was unreasonable; but, even if it had been reasonable, that would have made no difference: the one important thing was that Lady Chatterton should not be given an excuse for being ill-natured. She closed the interview by saying, “Believe me, my dear, there is no cure but marriage for girls who are bitten with a longing for independence. Marriage does not make them independent; but, if they have good husbands, they learn to be content with dependency.”

Hope went away defeated and dejected, and from that evening she began to look forward to the future with less confident eyes. She might think that her aunt was at least as selfish as she was, but she was obliged to admit that an impartial person would probably pronounce her aunt to be in the right. Mr. Herbert was an impartial person, and she could get no comfort out of him. When she told him of her troubles and fears, he looked distressed, but did not seem to think that there was anything for it but submission. More than once she said to herself that it might be better, after all, to give up crying for the moon. Her lot was the common lot, and how was she to escape from it if nobody would back her up? To live on at Helston all her days would be intolerable; but there always remained the alternative of the good husband. A good husband, she supposed, meant a rich husband. Johnson's dictionary defines “good” as “fit; proper; convenient,”—a definition which would doubtless be concurred in by Lady Jane. Love, fancy, ambition,—all these things are very well for such as can afford to indulge in them; but they are not fit, proper, or convenient for young ladies of limited income. Life is hard; life is practical; “most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly;” and noth-

ing signifies very much, except that one should cease to be a burden upon one's relations and that the mouth of Lady Chatterton should be stopped.

This gloomy survey of existence was encouraged by many little unintentional slights, by continual unavoidable reminders of the changed order of things, by a sense of utter loneliness for which nobody was to blame. It may even be that a few careless words, overheard one evening at the dinner-table, had something to do with it.

"So little Mrs. Pierpoint has established herself at Melton this year, I hear," somebody said. "Pierpoint's abroad,—gone away for his health."

"Leaving Bertie Cunningham in charge, eh?" said somebody else, with a laugh.

"Well, he is riding Pierpoint's horses, anyhow. How far he replaces him in other ways I don't know."

"The woman is old enough to be his mother," remarked a third.

"Oh, not quite that. And she has a long string of hunters. I dare say Bertie gets a holiday every now and then and consoles himself."

Now, the doings of Captain Cunningham and little Mrs. Pierpoint, whoever she might be, could, of course, be no concern of Miss Lefroy's; only when one has allowed one's self to feel a certain interest in and regard for an individual, it is dispiriting to learn that he is an entirely worthless person, and if one happens to be young and impatient one is apt to be led by such discoveries into judging a whole class from a single specimen. So Hope thought that she was making acquaintance with the world, and that the world, taking it as a whole, was a poor sort of place. It is not at the age of nineteen that one can admit the existence of intermediate shades between black and white.

In the course of a few days it came to pass that Mr. Lefroy gave a great hunt-breakfast. He himself was no longer a hunting-man, but most of his guests were: besides, many people may be invited to such entertainments to whom it is difficult to show civility in any other way. Therefore the county at large was asked, and responded with alacrity. The celebrated pack assembled on the lawn and was admired from the windows; and the Master of the Hounds made himself agreeable to Hope by saying, cheerily, "Well, Miss Lefroy, this is more like; isn't it? I never expected to see such a lot of pink coats inside Helston. And pray why haven't you got your riding-habit on?"

Hope had not put on her riding-habit because she was not going to hunt; and she was not going to hunt for reasons which the worthy M.F.H. might have divined if he had not been just a little bit dense.

In old days hunting, or at least riding to the meet and seeing something of the hunt, had been one of her chief pleasures during the winter months; but then in the old days her father had been with her, and she had had horses of her own. She had, indeed, horses of her own still; only she did not choose to consider them so. Perhaps her uncle was justified in thinking this perverse and silly of her, and perhaps her cousins had a right to express their annoyance with her for preferring to stay at home when everybody else was going to the covert-side. Lady Jane said nothing, but Lady Jane happened to know that her niece was not going to stay at home.

The hounds and hunt-servants had moved away, the field had followed, and Hope was standing at the window, watching, rather disconsolately, the last of the carriages as it disappeared round the bend of the drive, when a voice behind her remarked, "I suppose we might as well be starting now, might we not?"

Hope turned round, and saw, to her surprise, Mr. Herbert, in his ordinary dress, standing at her elbow. "You here!" she exclaimed. "Aren't you going to hunt?"

"No; going to drive you in a pony-trap," he replied, laconically. "The old lady's orders," he added, by way of explanation.

"Do you mean to say that Aunt Jane asked you to take me?" cried Hope. "How nice of her!"

She went away to put on her hat with a more cheerful countenance than she had worn of late. She was glad that she was not to be left behind, and still more glad that any one should have been considerate enough to understand that she might like to see the meet, though she could not quite bring herself to go thither on horseback, as of old. "Poor Aunt Jane!" she mused: "I suppose she means to be kind."

Lady Jane undoubtedly meant to be kind; but if Hope had had any suspicion of what her aunt's motives were for depriving Mr. Herbert of a day's hunting, she would have felt less grateful. She was, however, very far from guessing the truth. It had never crossed her mind that Mr. Herbert could be the potential good husband to whom Lady Jane had made allusion. She liked the man, preferring his society to that of any one else in the house, and believing him to be sincerely her friend; she was always willing to walk or drive with him, and the more so because their intimacy had now reached that pleasant stage at which the making of conversation is no longer necessary, and silence is permissible.

Of this privilege Herbert was accustomed to avail himself extensively. He never opened his lips after Hope had seated herself beside him in the little two-wheeled basket-carriage, but devoted his attention

to sending the pony along at a pace rapid enough to enable them to overtake the rest of the party, who had got a considerable start. Hope, for her part, did not care to talk. She was content to sit still and think her own thoughts, as she was borne past the familiar trees and fields and hedge-rows which she loved so much, and which sometimes seemed to her to be stonily indifferent, and sometimes tenderly regretful, according as her own mood might chance to be. It was one of those still, misty, silver-gray days when all outlines are indistinct, and the earth gives out a pleasant, fresh smell, and every twig has its tiny crystal dew-drop. The smoke rose straight from the cottage chimneys, the windmill on the common was motionless, even the jackdaws that lived in the gray church tower were silent. Hope had an inward greeting for them all: "Good-by, church; good-by, jackdaws; good-by, dear old mill." She was always saying good-by to these old friends, though it was likely enough that she would see them many times again. Perhaps it was not so much to them as to her old life that she was bidding farewell,—to the old life which was slipping away from her—the very memory of it even growing dim—and upon which she was ineffectually trying to keep a lingering hold.

She was sorry when the drive was over, and when she was once more among the spruce, well-turned-out men and women who looked as if they would have been so much more in their proper place in Belgravia than at Helston. But she was not detained long in the company of the dowagers; for Herbert got somebody to open a gate for him and drove her across the grass to the side of the spinney in which the hounds were, and whither the heavier vehicles could not follow. They had not arrived upon the scene a minute too soon; for almost immediately the fox broke cover: the field, a somewhat large one, went streaming away down-hill, and the pony, excited by the thunder of hoofs and profiting by the inattention of his driver, plunged suddenly forward and made a bolt for it. However, he was pulled up, after a good deal of bumping and jolting, by the strong arms of Dick Herbert, who did not appear to think the episode worthy of comment, but only asked, "Are we to go home now?"

"I suppose so," Hope answered, rather reluctantly.

"Do you want to go home?" he inquired; and when she said, "No," he rejoined, "All right, then: we'll make a round. I dare say you know the roads hereabouts well enough to tell me if I go wrong."

After this he did not speak again for a long time. It was not until they had traversed some miles of road, and the pony had been eased up a hill, that he turned to his companion and said, abruptly, "Well?"

Hope started out of a day-dream and looked up at him smiling. "Well?" she returned.

"I mean, how are you getting on? Are you at all more resigned to things than you were?"

"No," answered Hope, becoming grave again,—“not yet. I feel that there is just the shadow of a chance that I may be able to talk Uncle Montague over. When that is gone, I dare say I shall realize that what can't be cured must be endured.”

"Oh, *he* won't be talked over," said Herbert: "your chance was with Lady Jane, and I'm afraid that is disposed of now."

"I am afraid so," assented Hope.

There was a pause of a minute or two, and then Herbert resumed: "Miss Lefroy, I have a proposition to make to you. I don't know whether it will startle you or not; but there is really no reason why it should. I take it that what you want is to get away from Helston,—if possible, by setting up an establishment of your own, but anyhow to get away. Well, as I told you before, the only way in which you can manage that is by marrying somebody; and what I was thinking was; how would it be if you were to marry me?"

This most unexpected proposal, and the perfect composure and slight drawl with which it was enunciated, took Hope so much aback that she hardly realized the meaning of the words. "What?" she ejaculated.

"I say, how would it be if you were to marry me? You might just think it over. I wouldn't suggest it if I could see any other way out of the difficulty; but I can't. We have been capital friends from the first; you would be allowed to have your own way pretty well in everything, and I believe I am a very easy sort of fellow to live with. Besides, I dare say I should be a good deal away from home."

Hope burst out laughing. "I never heard anything so funny!" she exclaimed. And then, becoming suddenly serious, "Mr. Herbert, do you really suppose that I should allow you or anybody else to marry me out of charity? I don't quite know whether I ought to be angry or grateful; but I think I am grateful to you. Only, of course, I can't accept your offer."

"There's no need to be angry, or grateful either," said Herbert, placidly. "It's a sort of mutual accommodation business, don't you see? I have always felt that I should have to marry some day, and if you won't have me I shall probably fall into the jaws of some London girl who will—well, play the deuce generally. As for you, depend upon it, you won't be able to remain unmarried much longer. You may think you will, just as you thought you might live in a studio in London; but you'll find that circumstances and Lady Jane will be too

many for you. And I can't help thinking that you might chance upon a worse husband than I should be."

"But, Mr. Herbert," objected Hope, half laughing, and coloring a little, "I may be old-fashioned, only it does seem to me that there can be no happiness in marriages where there is no love."

"Yes, I know; but I differ from you there, and you'll allow that I have seen more of the world than you have. There ought to be *liking*, I admit: people ought to be able to get on together when they are married. But you may be furiously in love and yet not get on together a bit: I've seen it scores of times. The fact is that that kind of thing seldom lasts. After a year or so it is just as if you had never been in love at all; and where are you then, you know? It's a regular cat-and-dog sort of life very often. I give you my word," he added, with more earnestness, "that I would never dream of asking you to do this if I didn't believe that it would be for your happiness in the long run."

Hope made no reply. Should she reject this helping hand that was held out to her, or not? A few weeks ago she would have laughed to scorn any one who should have suggested that she could hesitate in such a case. She, of all people in the world, to make a marriage of convenience!—"a sort of mutual accommodation business"! She would have shuddered at the bare thought. But she did not shudder now. Her eyes had been opened, or she thought they had; she had lost confidence in herself and in the future. Romance was not for her. It was by no means unlikely that some day circumstances and Lady Jane might, as Herbert predicted, force her into marrying a man for whom she did not care; and, as far as mere liking went, she certainly did like her present dispassionate wooer very much.

"What do you think of it?" he asked, after giving her plenty of time for reflection.

"I don't know," she answered, with a deep sigh. "Even if I wished to accept, I am not sure that I ought."

"Well, don't accept and don't refuse: that's the best way. I'll tell you what you might do," he added, presently: "you might make it conditional. Suppose you were to go back to London for a time and see whether there is really any chance of your succeeding as an artist? If you find that there is, you can afford to wait until you are of age, and the engagement shall be off; if not, you might take me as a *pis-aller*. I would arrange it all with your people. They won't like to prevent your going, because I shall explain to them that, if they do, I shall look upon your refusal as final and not repeat my offer. Do you see?"

Hope began to laugh again, though there were tears in her eyes. "Do you know," she said, looking up at her companion, "that you are very odd? You seem to be thinking only of me; you don't consider yourself."

"I beg your pardon; I am considering myself the whole time. I want you to marry me. Indeed, I may say that I want it very much. It appears to me that we are suited to one another in many ways."

"And you are quite sure that—that you don't expect——"

"Expect you to be in love with me? Certainly not. I know that that is impossible."

"There is nothing impossible about it," returned Hope, with a touch of impatience; "only *it isn't so*. Do you quite understand that it isn't so?"

"Quite, thanks. Now let us talk about something else."

And during the remainder of the drive they actually did converse much as usual, parting at the hall door without any further reference to the half-contract into which they had entered.

CHAPTER X.

AN UNKNOWN PATRON.

THE very first thing that Hope did, when she woke up in the morning and recalled the events of the previous day, was to take herself to task for her want of resolution in not having at once and decidedly refused Mr. Herbert. It was true that she had not accepted him; but she had as good as promised that she would do so, given certain conditions which were by no means unlikely to arise. And of course she could not marry him. She marvelled at herself for having thought for one moment that she could.

This was her first impression; but, while she was dressing, her mind passed through various other phases. The thought that this engagement—if it could be called an engagement—would enable her to escape, at least for a time, and to return to London, work, and liberty, almost made her waver. If she sent Herbert about his business, what would there be to look forward to and to live for? Nothing. But, on the other hand, supposing that Mr. Tristram should tell her that she could never hope to rise above mediocrity in her art? Could she then go back from her word and inform her suitor that, all things considered, she found it impossible to become his wife? Well, if she did, he would not break his heart, she supposed. An odd, and yet not un-

natural, feeling of irritation took possession of her when she remembered how cool Herbert had been over it all, and how he had not thought it worth while even to hint that there could be any question of his being in love with her. "Am I so very unattractive, then?" she asked herself.

She was sitting before her looking-glass, which answered her question in language that could not be mistaken. And then, all of a sudden, there flitted before her the vision of a beautiful youth with dark hair and violet eyes. What made her remember Captain Cunningham at that moment?—and what had he to do with the subject about which she was thinking? These were questions which she would have preferred to shirk; but, under the circumstances, she felt that she must not allow herself to do so. Fortunately for her peace of mind, Pride came to the rescue, and enabled her to give Captain Cunningham a contemptuous dismissal. She had only thought of him because he was so good-looking, and because he was a sort of embodiment of youth. If she were ever to fall in love, it might be with somebody like him; but he, as an individual, would certainly never touch her heart. A mere boy,—and a very silly and wicked sort of boy, too, by all accounts,—no! she was in no danger of cherishing too fond a recollection of him. Mr. Herbert was, at any rate, a man; in all his words and habits he was thoroughly manly, and no one need ever be ashamed of such a husband. However, he was not to be her husband. She summed up with that conclusion, and resolved that immediately after breakfast she would take him aside and let him know of it.

But Fate had decreed that this opportunity of drawing back should be denied to her. Dick Herbert, who was less given to vacillation than she, had formally laid the case before his host on the preceding evening, and thus Hope, instead of taking her suitor aside when breakfast was over, was herself taken aside by Lady Jane and led into Mr. Lefroy's study, where she was embraced and congratulated before she could get her breath.

Lady Jane was radiant. "My dear, I am so very, very glad! I quite anticipated this, and I am sure we could not wish to see you more happily established. Such a charming place! And, although he has not a London house at present, there will be no difficulty about that, so far as money is concerned. Not that money signifies nearly as much as his being such a dear, kind fellow, and so high-principled. Poor Lady Chatterton! She used to try hard to get him for one of her daughters, and I am afraid she will be inconsolable now."

"But, Aunt Jane," interrupted Hope, in dismay, "you talk as if it were all settled; and it isn't settled a bit. I had no idea that Mr.

Herbert had spoken to you. Didn't he tell you that there were conditions?"

"Most senseless conditions, in my opinion," observed Mr. Lefroy, who had seated himself at his writing-table, and who did not seem quite to share his wife's rosy view of the situation.

"Such as they are, Mr. Herbert agreed to them," returned Hope, fixing bayonets to receive the enemy.

"Yes, yes; we quite understand," said Lady Jane, soothingly, while she patted her niece on the shoulder. "We may think it rather a pity, but—well, never mind! No doubt all will come right in the end; and if you are so tired of us that you want to go off to-morrow, you can go. We shall not prevent you."

The fact was that Lady Jane was under no apprehension of her niece's turning out to be a genius, nor did she fear that, even in that improbable event, there would be any rupture of the engagement; for she was a firm believer in the proverb of *Château qui parle et femme qui écoute*.

"Well, now, you know, Hope," said Mr. Lefroy, with his hands in his pockets, "all this is great bosh; but, as you and Herbert seem to be of one mind about it, I suppose we must give in. I beg, however, to say that we, on our side, have a condition to impose."

"A very little one," broke in Lady Jane: "it is only that you come to us in Eaton Square next month. Now, my dear, we cannot hear any objection to that; we cannot, really. You must allow your uncle to be the best judge of what is right and proper for his ward, and I think you will admit that he is stretching a point in letting you leave us at all. As for your living apart from us in London, that is out of the question. It would create a positive scandal; and I am sure you would regret it afterwards as much as we should. After all, what difference can it make to you? You will go on with your lessons just as before, if you choose, and you will not be interfered with in any way. Well, then, that is arranged, and we need not bother your uncle any longer."

Mr. Lefroy rubbed his hands and looked thankful, and Hope felt that she could not, without extreme ungraciousness, refuse to do as she was told. Nevertheless, she saw that her feet had become entangled in toils from which there might be very great difficulty in extricating them. "Of course," she said, turning to her aunt, "you won't say a word about this to anybody."

"Really," answered Lady Jane, "I don't see why we should make a secret of it. I hate mysteries."

"But it is not settled!—it is not in the least settled!" cried Hope, vehemently. "It is only a thing that *may* come to pass some day; and

if people are told about it now, it shall never come to pass. Nobody can force me to marry."

"Very well, my dear, you need not be so fierce about it. My lips shall be closed until you give me leave to open them. Please remember that poor Mr. Herbert considers himself quite bound to you, that is all."

"I don't wish him to consider himself bound in any way," Hope declared; and later in the day she found an opportunity of saying as much to Mr. Herbert himself, who laughed and replied, "All right. If I meet with a more suitable person, I won't fail to let you know."

"And I am to be free too," insisted Hope.

"That is of course," he answered. "I'm sorry you didn't like my speaking to your uncle. My only reason for doing so was that you wouldn't have been allowed to go away unless I had."

This was undeniable, and Hope took some comfort to herself from the thought that she had at least gained a short spell of liberty. Being anxious that it should be no shorter than could be helped, she resolved to take Lady Jane at her word, wrote a hurried note to Mrs. Mills, spent the afternoon in packing, and came down-stairs early the next morning, prepared to catch the first train to London.

She was not suffered to depart without some remonstrance, and there was a good deal of kissing and significant whispering to be gone through in the hall; but, fortunately, the majority of the guests had not yet left their rooms, so that there were few witnesses of these demonstrations. Herbert's leave-taking was characteristic. He sauntered down the steps as Hope was getting into the carriage and shook hands with her, saying, "Good-by, Miss Lefroy, and good luck to you! If you should feel inclined to drop me a line at any time to say how you are getting on, I shall be much honored. My address is Farndon Court, Windsor. Good-by!" And that was the last of Dick Herbert for the present.

Readers of novels are found among all sorts and conditions of men. It must not be suggested that any one whose eye may chance to fall upon this page can ever have been let out of prison; but he may possibly remember to have been liberated from a fine old-fashioned quarantine station; or he may, years ago, have driven away for the holidays from a private school at which the fare was hard and the discipline vexatious (there are no such schools nowadays, it is said); or he may have set foot on shore after eight-and-forty hours of dire sea-sickness. It is at such times that one experiences the rare and delightful sensation of happiness in the present without thought for the future. Hope's reflections during the whole of her journey to London might have been summarized by a reiterated ejaculation of "Heaven be praised! I am out of that."

She was—if anybody likes to say so—a little ungrateful to people who were doing their very best for her, according to their lights. She was wholly out of sympathy with them; the restrictions which governed their lives were new and galling to her; she could do justice to them in theory, but she could not, without misery, dwell with them in her old home. The little rooms in Henrietta Street were a great deal more like home to her now. It was a joy to her to get back to them, to see Mills's friendly, ugly face again, to sit down to tea and boiled eggs instead of dinner, to have to study economy once more, and to be delivered from the hands of officious maids. Even when she was sitting over the fire late at night and was beginning to take in the fact that to-morrow was at hand, and that to-morrow would be succeeded by twenty-nine other morrows, more or less, after which thralldom must recommence,—even then she could not subdue the elasticity of her spirits. If we were all logical and reasonable in youth we might just as well be born old; in which case there would be a sad diminution of the sum of earthly happiness. To Hope at that moment all things seemed possible. Dick Herbert and his whimsical offer were left behind,—a long way behind; her own misgivings were shaken off. Why should she not be a second Rosa Bonheur? Great female artists do arise every now and then, and, according to the law of averages, it was about time for one to make her appearance. That oft-quoted and terribly misunderstood dictum about genius being the capacity for taking infinite pains recurred to her mind and encouraged her: she longed for the morning to come, that she might hasten to Tristram's house and set to work with all the power that she possessed.

The patient Mills was hurried off at an earlier hour the next day than was quite compatible with the comfort of her first-floor lodgers; and Tristram, who had been informed by a note of his pupil's return, was waiting in his studio to receive her. "I am quite well, thank you," he said, in answer to her inquiries; "also I am extremely busy, and there is every appearance of our having a yellow fog this afternoon. We will each begin our daily task at once, if you don't mind, and we can talk afterwards."

"I am quite ready," replied Hope, entering the little room which was reserved for her use, and divesting herself of her hat and jacket. "What shall I do?"

"Do?" Tristram hesitated for a moment, looking about him. He was fond of dogs, and always had two or three of them on the premises. "Here," he said, suddenly, catching up a little Yorkshire terrier by the scruff of his neck and tossing him upon a sofa, "paint that. You must get it done at one sitting, mind. I don't want a picture or a care-

ful sketch ; I want a study, more or less finished. I give you three hours,—ample time, if you know how to set about it.” And, with that, he left her.

Hope had not had much experience in depicting animals, nor was she accustomed to work with rapidity ; but she determined to do her very utmost to stand the test to which she was being subjected. She was very eager to earn a little praise that morning. If Tristram would only say a few encouraging words it would be such a help to her and would seem like a good omen. So she made friends with the little dog, and induced him to look at her, and placed him in various positions which he declined to maintain, and dashed with feverish haste into her study. It was a total failure, and a second and a third attempt pleased her no better ; but the fourth time something more like achievement rewarded her efforts.

After the first difficulty had been overcome she took heart and plied her brushes swiftly and silently, while Mills darned an old stocking, murmuring occasionally, “Poor Toby ! Poor little feller !” to the dog, whose name was not Toby, and who glanced over his shoulder with ineffable contempt at the ridiculous old person who knew no better than to call him so. Luckily, he felt an interest in Hope’s proceedings, and, when she spoke to him, would rouse himself from incipient slumber to gaze inquisitively at her, with his ears cocked and his head on one side. It was thus that she caught his likeness. His wise little face, his bright eyes, looking out from beneath their shaggy penthouse, the curiosity that was expressed in his pointed ears, the many shades of his long, silky coat,—all these she managed to render with a good deal of skill and fidelity, and she was debating with herself whether she should let well alone or add a few finishing-touches, when, to her astonishment, Tristram came in to say that the allotted time was up.

“So that is my little tyke, is it ?” he observed, examining what she had done, and stood looking at it in silence for what seemed to Hope an interminable time.

“Do you think I have improved ?” she ventured to ask, at last.

“Yes,” he answered, slowly ; “I think you have improved. You have more facility than I gave you credit for,—more facility.”

This, coming from Tristram, was a good deal, and he added nothing more, but gazed abstractedly at the study, drawing his fingers through his beard. When he turned away and saw Hope’s happy face, he smiled at her in an odd, rather sad sort of fashion. He looked as if he were sorry for her, and she wondered why.

“You want to get on very much, don’t you ?” he asked, gently.

“Yes ; *very* much !” she replied.

"Well, well!" muttered Tristram, and began to walk up and down the room. Presently he stopped and shook his broad shoulders, as if to free them from a weight. "Come," said he, cheerfully; "you have done a good morning's work, and I have got a little bit of good news for you as a reward. I have sold two of your pictures."

"Oh! have you?" exclaimed Hope, catching her breath.

"Yes; and got a hundred guineas for the pair, too. What do you think of that?"

A hundred guineas! Hope felt herself rich beyond the dreams of avarice. "Is it possible?" she cried. "Who *could* have bought them?"

"Well, a dealer bought them; but it was on commission, as I need hardly say. His instructions were to buy two of your pictures, and he wanted to know the price. I said a hundred guineas, at which he made an ugly face; but he admitted that he was authorized to expend that sum, and I assured him we couldn't take less."

"Mr. Tristram," said Hope, becoming grave, as a rather dispiriting thought crossed her mind, "upon your honor, was it *you* who bought those pictures?"

"Upon my honor," answered Tristram, "it was not. Upon my honor, I don't think them worth the money. And if you don't know who the purchaser is, I'm sure I don't."

"I haven't an idea," said Hope, musingly.

She had an idea; but it was an absurd one, and she dismissed it. Young officers in the Guards, with next to no income, do not throw away a hundred guineas upon the daubs of an amateur. Besides, why should Captain Cunningham care to possess any of her productions? She never would have supposed that it could be he, only that she was unable to think of any one else who knew that she was painting with a view to ultimate profit. Nevertheless, this notion, for all its absurdity, came back to her more than once in the course of the afternoon and evening; and she only got rid of it at last by reminding herself that Cunningham was a man whom she could never like, and that if he bought pictures at all it was probably to present them to little Mrs. Pierpoint.

CHAPTER XI.

HOPE IS TOLD THE TRUTH.

IF Hope had felt any overpowering desire to learn the name of the man who had so rashly expended a hundred guineas upon two carefully-executed but not very original works of art, she might easily have

asked Tristram to give her the address of the picture-dealer and applied to that intermediary for the desired information. This course did, indeed, suggest itself to her ; but upon second thoughts she decided not to adopt it. People who insist upon knowing too much often have reason to repent of their curiosity ; and what, after all, did it signify ? The important matter was that she had already managed to earn a round sum of money : that would be something to tell her uncle when he came up to London. In the mean time, she took advantage of her leisure to work unremittingly both in Tristram's studio and at home.

Tristram, after the first day, did not praise her much ; but, on the other hand, she fancied that he watched her with greater interest and treated her aspirations more seriously than he had done in the autumn. His method with her had the appearance of being a little capricious. He seldom allowed her to finish anything that she had begun, but would push it aside, saying, "There's enough of that : try something else." Sometimes he would make one of his models sit to her in an attitude which would have bothered Michael Angelo himself ; sometimes he would order her to produce an effect of light and shade which even his own audacity might have hesitated to undertake. He never gave her anything easy to do, and never seemed to care much about her drawing being defective. By degrees she began to understand what it was that he was trying to discover ; and, though this made her tremble,—for she could not help knowing that the originality which he sought was not in her,—yet her courage rose even while she trembled and while the immense difficulties of Art grew more apparent to her. To recognize a difficulty is surely a step, though it be but a small one, towards overcoming it.

The days flew by, and Hope's holiday of hard labor seemed scarcely to have begun when it was over. It was, in fact, somewhat curtailed by the arrival of her relations in Eaton Square at a date rather earlier than that which they had fixed upon. Parliament met in the first days of February, and, as an important amendment was moved to the Address, it was necessary that Mr. Lefroy should be in his place to swell the numerically feeble ranks of the Opposition. His voice, likewise, was placed at the service of his party and the country for a few minutes, when he rose, with an amiable smile, to say that the wild inconsistencies of the right honorable gentleman at the head of the Government had now, he should imagine, reached their culminating point. Further, that he (Mr. Lefroy) happened to know as a fact that a very large section of the right honorable gentleman's followers were aghast—simply aghast—at the condition of public affairs, and would certainly

never give him another vote if they had the courage to obey their consciences.

This declaration, which brought about—as it was probably designed to do—a very pretty row at the time, was not productive of serious consequences ; and, so far as any benefit to the Conservative cause was concerned, Mr. Lefroy might perhaps as well have remained quietly at Helston Abbey. But his return to London, if it failed to check the headlong career of the ministry, was quite effectual in disturbing that of his niece. Hope, after she had bidden a regretful farewell to Henrietta Street and had reported herself, in accordance with instructions, in Eaton Square, soon perceived that her studies could be continued only in the face of persistent and almost insurmountable obstacles. Although she was nominally allowed to take her breakfast at any hour that suited her, she could not practically get it before ten o'clock ; and immediately afterwards her cousins were wont to claim her services.

“ You might be good-natured and come to the dress-maker's with me,” Alice would say. “ You have all your life to paint pictures in, and I have only a few weeks in which to provide myself with a stock of decent apparel.”

Lady Jane, too, showed an alarming tendency to assume that all the required concessions had now been made, and that it only remained to summon Mr. Herbert up from the country. When Hope assured her that she was laboring under a total misapprehension of the case, she only smiled indulgently and said, “ Well, he *must* come up for Alice's wedding, at any rate, and then you and he can talk matters over. But, for your own sake, I hope you won't go on much longer like this. Everybody is talking about it.”

“ Do you mean to say,” exclaimed Hope, in dismay, “ that you have told anybody that we are engaged ?”

“ Certainly not. How could you think such a thing of me after my promise to you ? Naturally people noticed that you were always together at Helston, and naturally I have been asked questions about it ; but I have always replied that there was no engagement yet.”

“ Yet !” Hope groaned and turned away. It was evidently useless to remonstrate with her aunt.

On the third day after her change of quarters a number of people came to dinner, among whom was a certain Mr. Francis : “ A great friend of Dick Herbert's,” Lady Jane whispered to her : “ he is going to take you in to dinner, and I hope you will make yourself agreeable to him, because he is by way of being extra fastidious.”

The inference that she was about to be submitted to Mr. Francis for approval was not calculated to prepossess Hope in favor of that

gentleman; nor was she particularly taken with the look of him when he was introduced to her. He was a small, wiry, alert man, with bright brown eyes and dark hair and beard, in which last a white thread or two was distinguishable here and there. Hope fancied that he was mentally appraising her, and did not trouble herself to respond to his advances with any cordiality. He was not, however, discouraged by her coldness, and after a time she became interested in him, in spite of herself. He talked very pleasantly; he seemed to know everybody, to have been everywhere, and to have tried his hand at all sorts of occupations and amusements. Before dinner was half over Hope had found out that he had been in Parliament, but had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, experience having forced him, as he said, to abandon so many of the advanced ideas with which he had started that he had thought it best to retire from political life while he had still a few illusions left. He appeared to know a good deal about art; he had at one time been war-correspondent to one of the chief daily papers; he had accompanied a yachting expedition to the polar regions, and there was no variety of sport with which he was not familiar.

"It was Dick Herbert who first introduced me to the big game," he remarked. "You know him, I believe? And I hope you like him; because, if you don't, we won't talk about him."

Hope would much have preferred not to talk about him; but honesty compelled her to admit that she liked him, and her neighbor went on:

"I shall never be such a shot as Herbert; but I'm respectable enough to be trusted on occasions when it wouldn't be altogether safe to miss; and he and I have had many a good month together in India and Abyssinia. Dick Herbert is, without any exception, the best-tempered fellow that I know. I never saw him put out, and I never heard him grumble."

"I am not sure that I admire that extreme good-nature," Hope was provoked into saying. "Of course, if one does not care particularly about anything or anybody, one is not likely to be put out."

Mr. Francis looked annoyed. "You don't know much of Dick Herbert, evidently," he remarked.

As he was silent for several minutes after this, Hope flattered herself that she had caused him to drop the subject; but presently he took her terribly aback by turning round in his chair so as to face her, and saying, "Miss Lefroy, I wish you would tell me something. Perhaps it is rather impertinent of me to ask; but am I right in suspecting that Herbert is going to be married?"

"I—I—don't know," answered Hope, faintly. But she recovered

herself in a minute, and added, "To the best of my belief he is not engaged to anybody."

"Oh, I see; only going to be. Well, I'm sorry. I hope you will excuse my saying that I'm sorry. I don't speak from a selfish point of view, for I should be glad to see Herbert married, though I suppose I may expect to lose a good friend when the event comes off; but there are very few women good enough for him, and still fewer who would be likely to suit him. I wonder whether it is too late to try and stop this."

Hope hardly knew how to answer. As no direct reference had been made to herself, she thought it best to assume that she was not alluded to, and said,—

"Not in the least too late, I should think. As I told you, I don't believe Mr. Herbert is engaged at all."

"Ah, but you think he will be before long, and so does Lady Jane; she gave me to understand as much. Besides, he wouldn't have stayed all that time at your uncle's without a reason. As a general thing, he hates staying in other people's houses, unless it is for a few days' shooting. You are quite mistaken in supposing that Herbert doesn't care about anything or anybody. He cares a good deal more than most people, and shows it a good deal less, that is all. He is the very last man in the world who ought to make such a marriage as I am pretty sure that this would be. His wife must be able to enter into his ways, otherwise she will spoil his life, and very likely her own into the bargain,—if that signifies."

"Possibly it might signify to her," remarked Hope. "Do you mean that she should be able to shoot lions and tigers?"

"No," answered Mr. Francis, rather tartly, "I don't. I mean that she ought to be as unselfish and kind-hearted as he is; and, to speak plainly, I doubt whether the lady in question is remarkable for unselfishness."

"Are you sure that you know much about her?" inquired Hope.

"I am not very well acquainted with her, certainly; but some people are easily classified. No doubt she would turn out a very fair, average empty-headed member of society if she were mated with one of her own species; but most assuredly she is not fit to black Dick Herbert's boots. I ought to apologize for my plain language; but I hate to think of poor Herbert being so thrown away."

"Pray don't apologize, Mr. Francis," said Hope, who was excusably indignant. "I dare say it will do me good to have heard what is the impression that I produce upon a total stranger. But I think you are needlessly alarmed on your friend's account. Both he and I are perfectly free, as it happens, and, if you will only repeat some of the

amiable things that you have been saying about me to him, no doubt he will give up all idea of throwing himself away upon me."

Hope was too angry to turn her eyes towards her neighbor. Had she done so, she would have been privileged to behold a man of the world, an ex-member of Parliament, and an intrepid hunter, looking as great a fool as it is possible for any mortal to look.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, in accents of heart-felt distress; "what a frightful mistake I have made! I never for a moment supposed that you were the lady: I thought, of course, it was your cousin. It was Lady Jane who misled me; she was so oracular about it. I am afraid you will never forgive me, Miss Lefroy."

Hope could have forgiven him more easily if she could have pardoned herself. How could she have been so foolish as to let out the very thing that she was most anxious to conceal? How could she have supposed that Mr. Francis, or any other casual acquaintance, would tell her to her face that she was empty-headed and selfish?

"The best plan is to say no more about it," she answered, not over-graciously. "It is a great pity that Aunt Jane cannot keep anything to herself. I am sorry you have such a bad opinion of poor Gertrude. But perhaps, after all, you only meant that you did not wish your friend to marry anybody."

And then she turned away from him and began to talk to an old gentleman who was seated on the other side of her.

Hope had no further conversation with Mr. Francis that evening; but his words remained in her mind and rankled there. If what he had said applied to Gertrude, it applied with quite equal force to herself; and after everybody had gone away she summoned up all her courage, drew her aunt into one of the empty rooms, and said, "Aunt Jane, I want to tell you that I have quite made up my mind not to marry Mr. Herbert."

Poor Lady Jane fairly lost patience. "It appears to me, Hope," she exclaimed, "that there is only one thing about which you have made up your mind, and that is to cause as much distress as you can to everybody. I shall not interfere. When Dick Herbert comes, you and he must settle it between you. But I must say that for a girl who professes such extreme reluctance to be dependent upon her relations you are singularly unwilling to take an excellent opportunity of relieving them from all responsibility for your vagaries."

And with that Lady Jane clutched her bedroom candlestick and marched majestically up-stairs.

The good lady—for she was really good, and wished no harm to any living creature—was sorry afterwards that she had spoken so sharply;

but she did not think it necessary to retract her words, nor, perhaps, even if she had done so, would her niece have been able to forget them.

Early the next day Hope escaped to Tristram's studio. The maid who had been told off to accompany her since her removal to Eaton Square could not be spared that morning, she was informed: so she broke through regulations for once, and, without saying a word to anybody, went off alone. But when she reached her destination she found that she could do nothing. Her trembling fingers refused to obey her, and presently she sank down upon a chair, saying, "It is no good: I am too tired."

"What is the matter with you?" asked Tristram, who had stationed himself beside her easel.

Hope was very nearly bursting into tears outright. However, she swallowed down the lump in her throat, and answered, "Nothing is the matter,—at least, everything is the matter. Mr. Tristram, I can't bear it any longer: I must be put out of my pain. I am sure you can tell me now. Is there any chance?"

Tristram's long, bony fingers twisted themselves into his beard. He gazed at his questioner, and made no articulate reply; but every second of silence was a reply to her, falling like lead upon her heart.

"No," he burst out roughly, at last; "there is no chance." Then he spun round on his heels, walked away to the window, and remained there, looking out at the gray sky and the bare, blackened trees.

Probably there are few people who have not, at one time or another, received some such answer as this. We have waited, perhaps, through long weeks, hoping against hope, for news of the missing ship; we have scanned the doctor's face, it may be, day after day, not daring to put into words the question that has been trembling upon our lips. And then, all of a sudden, the blow falls. It is an odd sensation, and is seldom what we expected it to be. The worst has happened that can happen. It is all over; the very suffering itself is over, only the memory of it remaining. Whether we know it or not, the recuperative forces of nature set to work instantly to console us, and what people call despair is very often only another word for peace. The first thing that Hope was conscious of, after a minute of dizziness and bewilderment, was that she was sorry for the good friend who had been forced to deal so cruelly with her.

"Never mind," she said: "you have done your best."

That great baby Tristram turned to her with his features distorted into a grotesque grimace and tears in his eyes. He began to speak loudly and hurriedly, his words jostling one another. "I had to tell you—what could I say? You have not genius, and without genius

you cannot—in your position—take up art as a trade. It was better that you should be told. I know; don't trouble to explain: I understand it all. You have had a dream, and it can't come true. Heaven help us! we all have dreams, and all have to wake out of them, some in one way, some in another. What a world we live in!—and what helpless wretches we are! All this because a man as rich as Croesus takes it into his head one day to buy a few shares in an infernal unlimited bank! If any one wants proof of the intervention of Providence, there it is for him. Don't tell me that these things happen by blind chance. Why they should ever happen at all—but what is the good of talking? Courage! courage! don't let that devil of a thing that they call life beat you. Fight it out. Look at me: I have been through worse trouble than you have known or ever will know, I trust; and yet here I am, alive and well and happy,—yes, happy, in spite of all. I have felt like cutting my throat more than once; there have been days when I thought I could not hold out any longer, and must knock under. Even when the worst was over, I had to contend against poverty and stupidity and the malevolence of those cursed critics——” He went on confusedly referring to the miseries of his past life, half forgetting his hearer's troubles in the remembrance of his own; but that he could not help: it was his nature to view the world and all events that took place therein subjectively.

After a time he recollected himself, grew calmer, and sat down beside the girl, taking both her listless hands in his strong ones. “Come, now, Miss Hope,” he said; “we must not make a tragedy out of this. We don't know what your life might have been like if you had been able to make what you wished of it: it isn't certain that it would have been happy. I think a man who has creative power, and who feels in him the love of beauty, cannot be miserable; but I don't know about women: their wants are not the same as ours. Just now, what you are thinking of is the irksomeness of having to live with people who don't suit you; but that will not last forever. Perhaps it may come to an end very soon.”

“Yes, perhaps,” assented Hope. Presently she added, “Mr. Tristram, will you advise me what to do? You have always been so kind, and I have no one else to consult, except people who can't give an unprejudiced opinion.” And, without further preface, she related to him the history of Herbert's offer and of her provisional acceptance of it.

Tristram heard her out, making no comment, and, when she had finished, said, “I think I would rather not advise you.”

“I am not bound to follow your advice,” answered Hope, smiling faintly. “Let me at least know what you think.”

"Well, then, I will say to you what I should say to my own daughter, if I had one. I know something of Mr. Herbert, and all that I know of him is in his favor. He is no longer a very young man; he has been rich and his own master from his boyhood, and he has never made a fool of himself in any way. From what you tell me, and from what I have heard from others, I should think that he would be a kind husband. There is no reason why you should not marry him, and every reason why you should, except one. My belief is that love—in the sense of what is called being in love—is a curse rather than a blessing. At the best, it promotes selfishness, and at the worst, it brings about jealousies and broken hearts and all kinds of unhappiness. Marriages are made without any regard to it in France, and I never could see that French couples were at all less attached to one another than English couples. Indeed, family ties are far stronger with them than with us. But I know perfectly well that all this doesn't and can't convince you. Nature has the same method with all young creatures, and an old fellow's experience has no chance against her. I am afraid I cannot be of much service to you in this matter."

"But it comes to this," said Hope, after pondering for a while, "that you do advise me to marry Mr. Herbert."

"Yes, I won't shirk the responsibility: it is what I should advise. But I may be quite wrong. My mind is warped,—I have suffered too much——"

He rose and took a turn or two up and down the room. "One thing," he said, "I may tell you, for your comfort: though you have not genius, you have talent, and plenty of it. Painting will always be a resource and a consolation to you, whatever happens. Nothing can rob you of that."

But perhaps this seemed rather cold comfort to Hope, who made no rejoinder while she put on her hat and jacket.

Tristram accompanied her to the outer door and held her hand for a minute, saying "God bless you!" when she bade him good-by. It was tacitly understood between them that she would return no more to the studio in which she had spent so many happy, sanguine hours.

CHAPTER XII.

LADY JANE IS MADE HAPPY.

THE wedding of Lord Middleborough, an event of some magnitude in its way, took place immediately after Easter. The ceremony, in accordance with a custom recently introduced, was performed in the

afternoon, and was graced by the presence of as many dukes, duchesses, cabinet ministers, ex-cabinet ministers, foreign ambassadors, and social celebrities as the eye of a fond mother could wish to rest upon. So large was the throng of invited guests that, when these had been marshalled to their places, and the claims of the representatives of the press had been attended to, there was not much room left for the British public, which had assembled in great force, as it always does at such times, and which, for the most part, had to content itself with waiting outside in a bitter east wind and admiring the gay clothing of the ladies as they hurried across the strip of red carpet from their carriages to the church.

The bride, a rather pretty little blue-eyed woman, was honored by a general murmur of approbation; the bridesmaids also were pronounced worthy, both in person and in costume, of the occasion; but perhaps the most unequivocal success of the day was obtained by the tall, pale girl dressed in French gray, who, if she had been listening, might have heard herself described by an appreciative butcher's-boy as "a *real* beauty,"—which expression of opinion was instantly confirmed by the by-standers. Nor was it only among the plebeian herd upon the pavement that the appearance of this lady caused a momentary sensation. The more critical assemblage within the building did not fail to remark her delicate, high-bred features, the graceful carriage of her head, and her large and rather sorrowful gray eyes. The majority, not knowing who she was, whispered inquiries about her, and those who did know replied, "Oh, that is Miss Lefroy, the daughter of the late man. Lost a huge fortune in the Central English Bank smash," which generally elicited a murmur of "Poor thing! no wonder she looks so sad."

A few well-informed persons mentioned a rumor that she was about to be married to "that queer fellow, Dick Herbert;" and this greatly increased the curiosity with which she was regarded; for women of all ranks, ages, and dispositions are interested in a marriage, and especial interest would attach to that of Dick Herbert,—not so much because he was a "queer fellow" as because he was so rich, and had been for such a number of years an ostensible bachelor that nine people out of ten believed him to have a wife somewhere who was not presentable.

Hope was entirely unconscious of being noticed or discussed, and, even if she had heard what was being said about her, she would not have cared much. The days when the coupling of her name with Herbert's would have brought a flush of anger into her cheeks were past and gone: it was very likely—more likely than not, now—that her name would be permanently coupled with his. No further direct pressure had been brought to bear upon her either by her uncle or by

Lady Jane ; but in a hundred little ways the conviction had been brought home to her that if she threw away this chance the reproaches heaped upon her would be greater than she would be able to bear. Since Tristram had swept away her dream of life into space, she had grown apathetic about the future, which seemed to hold no golden promises for her ; she had not definitely decided what she would do, but she knew very well that Herbert would say something to her that day, and she was disposed to abide by his judgment, whatever it might be. She could see him on the opposite side of the church, towering a head above his neighbors ; she watched him while the choir sang "The voice that breathed o'er Eden," and while the bishop, assisted by his satellites, proceeded with the form of words which was to convert Alice Lefroy into a viscountess. Once their eyes met, and he smiled. He had a kindly, pleasant, honest sort of face. "I don't think he will beat me, at all events," Hope said to herself, with something between an incipient laugh and a sob in her throat.

Well, it would soon be over now ; she would soon know her fate ; and it would be something to have done with indecision. Time, plodding on with even steps, brought her nearer and nearer to the moment which she half dreaded and half wished for. The ceremony was concluded ; the crowd—not quite so large a one as had been present at the church—repaired to Eaton Square to inspect the wedding-presents, and gradually melted away ; the bride and bridegroom, being possessed of three large houses of their own, drove off to spend the honeymoon in one belonging to a relative, which had been lent them for that purpose ; Hope was standing alone in a small morning-room, looking out of the window and waiting for the sound of an approaching footstep which she expected every instant to hear.

She had already shaken hands with Herbert, but only a few words had passed between them, and it was hardly to be supposed that he would go away without a longer interview. He did not, however, seem inclined to hurry himself, and Hope was rather angry with him for keeping her waiting. She could hear voices and laughter down-stairs, where, no doubt, he was engaged in conversation with the rest of the family, and she could fancy it all,—Mr. Lefroy rubbing his hands and saying, "Thank goodness that is over !" Gertrude reporting some acrimonious speech of Lady Chatterton's ; Lady Jane smiling contentedly, and exclaiming, all of a sudden, "Dear me ! where can Hope be ? I wish you would go and see what has become of her, Dick,"—and then a slow, deliberate step mounting the stairs. Oh, why didn't they make haste and get it all ended ?

In reality, her suspense was not prolonged for more than five

minutes or so. She heard the door opened and shut; some one entered the room and advanced until he was close to her elbow, and then, just for a second, a wild notion took possession of her. Suppose it should not be he? Suppose it should be—somebody else?

But of course it was he; and it was his voice that was saying, cheerfully, "Well, you didn't write to me, after all."

"I had nothing to write about," answered Hope, still looking out of the window. Her hands were cold and damp, a sudden access of nervousness had come upon her, and she did not venture to look at him.

But he showed no consciousness of her distress. "I thought," he said, "that perhaps you would let me know how you were getting on. Is Mr. Tristram encouraging?"

Hope turned round and dropped into the nearest chair. "No," she answered. "I have not got on at all; I never shall get on now. Haven't you heard? Didn't they tell you?" Then, recollecting herself, "But of course they could not. I did not mention it to them, and no one has ever asked me about it. I suppose they knew all along that I should fail."

She glanced at him to see whether he showed any sign of surprise, or pleasure, or regret; but his face expressed nothing at all.

"Isn't it rather too soon to despair?" was his only comment.

"Mr. Tristram says not. He told me that I had no chance whatever."

"What a brute!"

"He is the best friend that I have in the world. I asked him to tell me the truth, and I was very glad that he told it me without phrases."

"And what are you going to do now?" Herbert asked, after a pause.

"I don't know," answered Hope.

Presently she glanced up at him again and saw that he was sorry for her. He certainly looked very kind; but it is never quite pleasant to be pitied. "Since I can't have what I want, I must do without it, that is all," she remarked, rather brusquely.

There was nothing to be urged against so self-evident a proposition; but Herbert was able to put forward another equally indisputable. "When one has got what one wants, one doesn't always like it," he observed. And, obtaining no response, he went on, "Now, about the alternative suggestion that I made to you: have you thought any more of it?"

"Of course I have thought of it," Hope answered, slowly.

"And you don't much fancy it?"

"I hardly know what to say. I can't feel about marriage as you and everybody else seem to feel. Mr. Herbert, do you think we *ought* to marry, not caring in the least for one another?"

"The case is not quite so bad as that, is it? Our understanding was that it wouldn't be a love-match. Surely that doesn't exclude affection."

That passing sensation of wonder and resentment which Hope had felt once before swept over her again, as she raised her eyes to his frank, good-tempered face. She did not wish him to be in love with her; but at the same time it was a little strange and a little unflattering that he should be so entirely free from any idea of such a thing. "It does not exclude affection, of course," she agreed; "only sometimes I am afraid—but perhaps I may be mistaken. If you are content to have it so, I am."

"That's all right: then we'll consider it settled," said he, with a cheerful air of relief. "It won't be my fault if you ever repent of your bargain. I shall remember my promise: you will have your own way and live your own life, and whenever you find me a bore you will only have to say so, and I'll take myself off. I'm always ready to book my passage for the other side of the world at a moment's notice. Do you like yachting?"

Hope shook her head. "I hate the sea."

"Well, I love it: so that you can count upon being rid of me for a good part of the summer, at all events."

"And Mr. Francis will keep you company, I suppose," said Hope, laughing a little, though she did not feel very merry. "Do you know that I met your friend Mr. Francis a short time ago? He gave me quite a new view of your character."

"Oh, he did, did he?"

"Yes: he had heard a report that you were going to be married, and he was very much annoyed and rather rude about it. He said you were the last man in the world who ought to make a marriage of convenience, that nobody was good enough for you, and that unless your wife could share your tastes—does that mean taking long cruises without being sea-sick?—she would spoil your life."

"Francis is an ass," remarked Herbert, placidly.

"He did not strike me as being that."

"He is, though,—a clever ass: there are lots of them about. I am a stupid ass, if you like, but I do know what I want."

"Why should you want this?" exclaimed Hope. "I cannot understand why you should want it!"

"I thought I had told you down at Helston. But never mind: I am not afraid of the result."

Hope, however, was a good deal afraid. She got up and moved restlessly about the room. All her life long, until recently, she had been accustomed to be loved: she was not sure of herself, and did not know what she might become if in future she was only to be tolerated. Perhaps it was not very dignified, but an impulse which she could not resist prompted her to pause suddenly beside the man who—whether he admitted it or not—must control her destiny. "You will be good to me, won't you?" she murmured, appealingly.

What could any one say or do in answer to such a question? Herbert rose and took possession of her hands. "My dear," he said, kindly, "you may trust me for that." And then he bent down and kissed her forehead.

If he thought such an action natural and permissible under the circumstances, it was because he really knew very little of the queer nature of women. Hope started away from him, flushing painfully.

"You must not do that!" she cried, with tears in her voice. "There must be nothing—*nothing*—of that kind! I thought at least we were to have no pretence!"

Herbert looked considerably crestfallen, and a tinge of color found its way also into his sunburnt cheek. "I beg your pardon," he said, humbly: "I will not offend you in that way again. I fancied——"

"You fancied that it was the proper thing to do," she interrupted; "but it is not; and your having fancied so only shows—— Oh, I don't think I can marry you! I don't think I can!" she concluded, sinking down into her chair again.

Yet even while she said this she felt that she had gone too far now to recede, and he had not much difficulty in making his peace with her. Only she was very urgent upon the point of there being no "make-believe" between them, and as to this he declared himself to be quite of one mind with her.

"You know, I always told you that in my opinion the one important thing is to start fair," he said. "If we are only honest with one another we are sure to get on all right. I want you, if you will, to tell me everything, without bothering yourself to consider whether it will hurt my feelings or not. I always like to hear the truth, pleasant or unpleasant."

"I think I may promise that," Hope answered, meditatively. "I have told you nothing but the truth, so far: you know all that there is to know about me. And I will try not to spoil your life," she added, with a slight smile.

"No fear of that. We thoroughly understand one another now. We are not lovers; we are two friends who are going to set up house together: isn't that it?"

"Yes; that is it," replied Hope.

And, having committed themselves to the above absurd and utterly impracticable scheme of existence, these two fools went down-stairs to make it known, being well aware that only the warmest congratulations awaited the announcement of their folly.

Nothing, indeed, could have been more genuine or more heartily expressed than the contentment of Mr. Lefroy and Lady Jane. The cloud which had arisen of late between them and their niece was at once and forever dispelled. Herbert, who had to catch a train, soon went away; and hardly had the door closed behind him before Lady Jane began to contemplate arrangements for a second matrimonial function.

"It can hardly take place before the end of the season," she said. "There will be the trousseau to be provided, and I should think most likely he will want to re-furnish Farndon. I haven't seen the place for a long time; but when I was there last it looked as if it wanted a great deal doing to it. I wonder whether his sister will go on living there. I suppose she must; and yet I am not so sure that she will, for she is an independent sort of girl, and she has money of her own. No doubt she will marry before long. Somebody said something about that Cunningham boy having paid her a good deal of attention. It would be a good match for him; but I don't know——"

"Oh, Aunt Jane," interrupted Hope, "do let us try to talk about anything in the world for the next few months except marrying and giving in marriage!"

But that was the last faint symptom of revolt that escaped her. As the days went on, she became reconciled to her lot, and saw that it might have been a worse one. Happiness, she kept on saying to herself, is not everything; and, besides, there are many kinds of happiness. One kind, certainly, might be derived from having satisfied everybody. When one has fought and has been beaten, it is a consolation to be kindly and generously treated by the conquerors; and on this score Hope had no cause for complaint. She might, had she been so minded, have gone to Tristram's studio every day now, and Lady Jane's maid would never have been too busy to accompany her; her uncle troubled himself more than once to gratify her love of art by taking her to one of the picture-galleries; her aunt never pressed her to do anything that she did not like, nor quarrelled with her for declining to go out into the world. These may not have been very important concessions, but,

such as they were, she was grateful for them. She recognized the fact that she had reached the end of a chapter in her life, and appreciated the consideration which allowed her to pause before opening a fresh one.

(To be continued.)

THE MARCH WIND.

BLOW, wind of March, and sing
 Your songs unto the timid buds and grass ;
 Unclasp the fetters of the woodland spring
 Hushed in its house of glass.

Blow, wind of March, and thrill
 The languid pulses of the barren trees,
 Until their empty hands with blossoms fill
 And tempt the honey-bees.

Blow, wind of March, and wake
 The sleeping violets with gentle words ;
 Spread your green canopy of leaves and make
 A shelter for the birds.

Blow, sturdy wind of March,
 And burst the winter's frosty prison-bars ;
 Blow all the clouds from heaven's azure arch
 And stud it with white stars.

Blow, wind of March, ay, blow,
 Until the orchards heed your voice, and bloom :
 Then whisper softly where the wild flowers grow
 About the winter's tomb.

Frank Dempster Sherman.

THE AMERICAN PLAY.

THE American play is yet to be written. Such is the unanimous verdict of the guild of dramatic critics of America, the gentlemen whom Mr. Phœbus, in "Lothair," would describe as having failed to write the American play themselves. Unanimity among critics of any kind is remarkable, but in this instance the critics probably are right. In all of its forms, except the dramatic, we have a literature which is American, distinctive, and a credit to us. The histories of Motley and of Prescott are standard works throughout the literary world. Washington Irving and Hawthorne are as well known to all English readers and are as dearly loved as are Thackeray and Charles Lamb. Poems like Longfellow's "Hiawatha," Whittier's "Snow-Bound," Lowell's "The Courtin'," and Bret Harte's "Cicely," belong as decidedly to America as do Gray's "Elegy" to England, "The Cotter's Saturday Night" to Scotland, or the songs of the Minnesingers to the German Fatherland, and they are perhaps to be as enduring as any of these. Mr. Lowell, Mr. Emerson, and Professor John Fiske are essayists and philosophers who reason as well and as clearly and with as much originality as do any of the sages of other lands. In our negro melodies we have a national music that has charms to soothe the savage and the civilized breast in both hemispheres. American humor and American humorists are so peculiarly American that they are *sui generis* and belong to a distinct school of their own; while in fiction Cooper's Indian novels, Holmes's "Elsie Venner," Mrs. Stowe's "Oldtown Folk," Howells's "Silas Lapham," and Cable's "Old Creole Days," are purely characteristic of the land in which they were written and of the people and manners and customs of which they treat, and are as charming in their way as are any of the romances of the Old World. Freely acknowledging all this, the dramatic critics still are unable to explain the absence of anything like a standard American drama and the non-existence of a single immortal American play.

The Americans are a theatre-going people: more journals devoted to dramatic affairs are published in New York than in any European capital, except perhaps Paris. Our native actors in many instances are unexcelled on any stage of the world; we have sent to England to meet with unqualified favor from English audiences J. H. Hackett, Charlotte Cushman, Joseph Jefferson, Edwin Booth, John S. Clarke, Lawrence Barrett, Edwin Forrest, Mary Anderson, Kate Bateman, and many more; while, with the exception of certain of Bronson Howard's com-

edies, localized and renamed, how many original American plays are known favorably or at all to our British cousins? "Rip Van Winkle," although its scenes are American, is not an original American play by any means: it is an adaptation of Irving's familiar legend, its central figure is a Dutchman whose English is broken, and its adapter is an Irishman. But "Rip Van Winkle" and Joseph K. Emmett's "Fritz" and "The Danites" are the most popular of the American plays in England, and are considered, no doubt, correct pictures of American life.

That the American dramatists are trying very hard, however, to produce American dramas all theatrical managers on this side the Atlantic know too well; for shelves and waste-paper-baskets are full of them to overflowing. Frequent rejection and evident want of demand have no effect whatever upon the continuous supply. How few of these are successful or are likely to live beyond one week or one season all habitual theatre-goers can say. During the single century of the American stage not twoscore plays of any description have appeared which have been truly American and which at the same time are of any value to dramatic literature or of any credit to the American name. By purely American play is meant the original production of an American writer, with American scenes and characters, which is thoroughly American in tone. In this category cannot be included dramas like Mr. Daly's "Pique" or "The Big Bonanza," for the one is from an English novel and the other from a German play; nor Mr. Boucicault's "Belle Lamar" or "The Octoroon," which are native here, but from the pen of an alien; nor plays like "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which are not original, but are drawn largely, if not wholly, from American novels; nor plays like "The Twelve Temptations" or "The Black Crook," which are not plays at all.

2 The first American play ever put upon a regular stage by a professional company of actors was "The Contrast," performed at the theatre in John Street, New York, on the 16th of April, 1786. It was, as recorded by William Dunlap in his "History of the American Theatre," a comedy in five acts, by Royal Tyler, Esq., a Boston gentleman of no great literary pretensions, but in his later life prominent in the history of Vermont, to which State he moved shortly after its admission into the Federal Union in 1791. Mr. Ireland preserves the cast of "The Contrast," which, containing no names prominent in histrionic history, is not of particular interest here. It was not a brilliant comedy, weak in plot, incident, and dialogue; but it is worthy of notice, not only because of its distinction as the first-born of American plays, but because of its introduction and creation of the now so familiar stage-Yankee, Jonathan, played by Thomas Wignell, an Englishman who

came to this country the preceding year, was a clever actor, and later a successful manager in Philadelphia, dying in 1803. Jonathan no doubt wore long-tailed blue coats, striped trousers, and short waistcoats, or the costume of the period that nearest approached this: certainly he whittled sticks, and said "Tarnation" and "I vum," and called himself a "true-born son of liberty" through his nose, as have the hundreds of stage-Yankees, from Asa Trenchard down, who have come after him, and for whom he and Mr. Wignell and Royal Tyler, Esq., are solely responsible. Jonathan was the chief character in the piece, which was almost a one-part play. Its representations were few.

The American drama, such as it is, may be divided into four classes: the Indian and the Revolutionary drama, which are generally identical and coincident; the society plays, of which Mrs. Mowatt's "Fashion" and Howard's "Saratoga" are fair examples; the Yankee or character plays, like "Solon Shingle" or "The Mighty Dollar;" and the plays of local low life, like "Mose" or "Squatter Sovereignty." Of these the Indian drama, as aboriginal, should receive perhaps the first attention here.

The earliest Indian play of which there is any record on the American stage was from the pen of an Englishwoman, Anne Kemble (Mrs. Hatton), a member of the great Kemble family, and a sister of John Kemble and of Mrs. Siddons. It is described as an operatic spectacle, and was entitled "Tammany." Dedicated to and brought out under the patronage of the Tammany Society, it was first presented at the John Street Theatre, New York, on the 3d of March, 1794. Columbus and St. Tammany himself were among the characters represented. The Indians who figured upon the stage were not very favorably received by the braves of that day, quite a party of whom witnessed the initial performance of the piece, and "Tammany" was not a success, notwithstanding the power of the Kemble name, the good will of the sachems of the Society, and the additional attraction of the stage-settings, which were the first attempts at anything like correct and elaborate scenic effects in this country.

The John Street Theatre, although it was the most important in the town for several years, was not the first New York theatre. It was located on the north side of John Street, a few doors from Broadway, sixty feet back from the street, and in the rear of the buildings now numbered 17, 19, and 21. It was a wooden structure, painted red, and of no architectural pretensions, although commodious and well arranged for its time. It was opened to the public December 7, 1767, and closed January 13, 1798, "The New Theatre," on Park Row, better known as the "Park Theatre," being opened on the 29th of January of the same year, 1798.

At the Park Theatre, June 14, 1808, was presented the next Indian play of any importance, and, as written by a native American, Mr. James N. Barker, of Philadelphia, it should take precedence of "Tammany," perhaps, in the history of the Indian drama. It was entitled "The Indian Princess," was founded on the story of Pocahontas, and, like "Tammany," was musical in its character. It was printed in 1808 or 1809, and is rather a clever production, the versification smooth and clear, the dialogue bright, and the plot well sustained throughout.

Pocahontas has ever been a favorite character in our Indian plays. George Washington Parke Custis wrote a drama of that name, presented at the Park Theatre, New York, December 28, 1830, Mrs. Barnes playing the titular part. James Thorne, an English singer, who died a few years later, was Captain John Smith; Thomas Placide was Lieutenant Percy; Peter Richings, Powhatan; and Edmund Simpson, the manager of the Park for so many years, played Master Rolf. Robert Dale Owen's "Pocahontas" was played at the same house seven years later, February 8, 1838, with Miss Emma Wheatley as Pocahontas; John H. Clarke, the father of Constantia Clarke, the Olympic favorite in later years, as Powhatan; Peter Richings, an Indian character, Maccamac; John A. Fisher, Hans Krabbins; his sister, Jane M. Fisher,—Mrs. Vernon,—Ann; and Charlotte Cushman, at that time fond of appearing in male parts, Rolf. As these several versions of the story of the Indian maiden are preserved to us, that of Mr. Owen is decidedly the best as a literary production. It has not been seen upon the stage in many years. With the "Pocahontas" of John Brougham, that very clever burlesque, all veteran play-goers are familiar; but unhappily John Brougham cannot be claimed as an American, nor his "Pocahontas," therefore, as a national production.

Among many other Indian plays, successful or unsuccessful, known in other days and now quite forgotten, may be mentioned "Sassacus; or, The Indian Wife," said to have been written by William Wheatley, then a leading young man at the Park Theatre, New York, where "Sassacus" was produced on the 8th of July, 1836, Wheatley playing an Indian part, Pokota; his sister, Miss Emma Wheatley, then at the height of her popularity, playing Unca, and John R. Scott, Sassacus. This latter gentleman as a "red man of the wood" was always a great favorite with the gallery, and he created the titular rôles in "Kairrisah," "Oroloosa," "Outalassie," and other aboriginal dramas with decided credit to himself. In the course of a few years, while the stage-Indian was still the fashion, were seen in different American theatres "The Pawnee Chief," "Onylida; or, The Pequot Maid," "Ontiata; or, The Indian Heroine," "Osceola," "Oroonoka," "Tuscatomba,"

“Wacousta,” “Tutoona,” “Yemassee,” and “Wissahickon,” not one of which lives to tell its own tale to-day.

Unquestionably, Mr. Forrest's great success with “Metamora,” a prize drama for which he paid its author, John Augustus Stone, five hundred dollars,—a large sum of money for such a production half a century ago,—was the secret of the remarkable run upon Indian plays from which theatre-goers throughout the country suffered between the years 1830 and 1840. Forrest, even at that early period in his career, was the recognized leader of the American stage, the founder of a peculiar school of acting, with a host of imitators and followers. Metamora was one of his strongest and most popular parts, its great effect upon his admirers is still vividly remembered, and, naturally, other actors sought like glory and profit in similar rôles.

“Metamora ; or, The Last of the Wampanoags” was produced for the first time on any stage at the Park Theatre, New York, December 15, 1829. Mr. Forrest, Peter Richings, Thomas Placide, John Povey, Thomas Barry, Mrs. Hilson (Ellen Augusta Johnson), and Mrs. Sharpe were in the original cast. As Metamora Mr. Forrest appeared many hundreds of nights, and in almost every city of the American Union. Wemyss, at the time of the first production of the play in Philadelphia, January 22, 1830, wrote of him and of “Metamora” as follows : “The anxiety to see him crowded the theatre [Arch Street] on each night of the performance, adding to his reputation as an actor as well as to his private fortune as a man. It is a very indifferent play, devoid of interest ; but the character of Metamora is beautifully conceived, and will continue to attract so long as Mr. E. Forrest is its representative. It was written for him, and will in all probability die with him.” Mr. Wemyss's prophecy was certainly fulfilled. No one since Mr. Forrest's death, with the single exception of John McCullough, and he but seldom, has had the hardihood to risk his reputation in a part so well known as one of the best performances of the greatest of American actors, and “Metamora” and Mr. Forrest have passed away together.

“Metamora” owed everything to the playing of Forrest : if it had fallen into the hands of any other actor it would no doubt have been as short-lived as the rest of the Indian dramas generally,—a night or two, or a week or two at most, and then oblivion. As a literary production it was inferior to others of its class, and not equal to “The Ancient Briton,” for which Mr. Forrest is said to have paid the same author one thousand dollars, or to “Fauntleroy” or “Tancred,” dramas of Mr. Stone's which met with but indifferent success. John Augustus Stone's history is a very sad one : he threw himself, in a fit of insanity, into the

Schuykill in the summer of 1834, when barely more than thirty years of age; after life's fitful fever sleeping quietly now under a neat monument containing the simple inscription that it was "Erected to the Memory of the Author of *Metamora* by his friend Edwin Forrest." With all of his faults and failings, the great tragedian was ever faithful to the men he called his friends.

The first of the purely Revolutionary plays presented in New York was probably "Bunker Hill; or, The Death of General Warren," and the work of an Irishman, John D. Burke. It was played at the theatre on John Street, September 8, 1779. This was followed during the next year by Dunlap's tragedy "André," at the Park. After these, at different periods, came "The Battle of Lake Erie," "The Battle of Eutaw Springs," "A Tale of Lexington," "The Siege of Boston," "The Siege of Yorktown," "The Seventy-Sixer," "The Soldier of '76," "Marion; or, The Hero of Lake George," "Washington at Valley Forge," and many more of the same stamp, all of which were popular enough during the first half-century of our history, but which during the last half have entirely disappeared. "The Battle of Tippecanoe" related to the Indian wars, as "The Battle of New Orleans" was founded on the War of 1812, and "The Battle of Mexico" on our Mexican difficulties some years later. The dramatic literature inspired by the War of the Rebellion was not extensive or worthy of particular notice. It was confined generally to productions like "The Federal Spy; or, Pauline of the Potomac," at the New Bowery Theatre, New York, and "The Union Prisoners; or, The Patriot's Daughter," at Barnum's Museum. During the struggle for national existence, war on both sides of the Potomac was too serious a business and too near home to attract people to its mimic representations on the stage; and since the cruel war is over the whole country has been satisfied to forget that it was ever fought and to think of brighter things. Patriotism itself is not so popular as it was in 1861 or 1862, and the patriotic drama is entirely out of fashion. Boucicault's "Belle Lamar: An Episode of the Late American Conflict" was the least successful of any of his later productions; and to-day, except where the glorious Sixty-Ninth are seen marching down Broadway on some of the variety stages, the military drama is almost unknown, disappearing gradually with its Indian ally. The reaction began to take place as early as 1846, when James Rees, a dramatist, author of "Charlotte Temple," "The Invisible Man," "Washington at Valley Forge," but of no Indian plays, wrote that the Indian drama, in his opinion, "had of late become a *perfect nuisance*,"—the italics being his own.

All of the more modern of the Indian and Revolutionary plays

should not, however, be entirely ignored. Mr. Daly's "Horizon," Frank Murdock's "Davy Crockett," Oliver B. Bunce's "Love in '76," and one or two others, deserve more than a passing word here. Mr. Bunce's little play, a comedietta in two acts, was produced in September, 1857, at Laura Keene's Theatre, New York, Miss Keene playing Rose Elsworth, the heroine; Tom Johnstone, Apollo Metcalf, a Yankee school-teacher, a part that suited his eccentric comedy genius to perfection; and J. G. Burnett, Colonel Cleveland, of the British army, a wicked old soldier in love with Rose and completely foiled by the other two in the last act. "Love in '76" was unique in its way, being the only "parlor play" of the Revolution, the only play of that period which is entirely social in its character; and a charming contrast it was to its blood-and-thunder associates on that account,—a pretty, healthy little story of woman's love and woman's devotion in the times that tried men's hearts as well as souls. It was not put upon the stage with the care it deserved, and was too pure in tone to suit a public who craved burlesque and extravaganza. It has not been played in some years. Miss Keene, Mr. Johnstone, and Mr. Burnett are all dead. Mr. Bunce is the author of other plays, notably the "Morning of Life," written for the Denin Sisters, then clever little girls, which they produced at the Bowery Theatre, New York, in the summer of 1848. George Jordan and John Winans, the latter a very popular low-comedian on the east side of the town, were in the cast. At the same house, two years later, was played "Marco Bozzaris," a melodrama in blank verse, with very effective scenes and situations, written by Mr. Bunce, founded not on Halleck's poem, but on the story of Bozzaris as related in the histories. James W. Wallack, Jr. (then known as "Young Wallack"), was the hero; Susan Denin, his martyred son; John Gilbert, now of Wallack's, was the villain of the piece; and Mrs. Wallack, the hero's wife. "Marco Bozzaris" was very popular, and was not withdrawn until the end of the Bowery season.

Mr. Daly's "Horizon," one of his earliest works, was produced at the Olympic Theatre, New York, March 22, 1871, and ran for two months. In the advertisements it was called "a totally original drama, in five acts, illustrative of a significant phase of New York society, and embodying the varied scenes peculiar to American frontier life of the present day." It was certainly an American play. In no other part of the world are its characters and its incidents to be met with. Complications of plot and scenery and certain surprises in the action were evidently aimed at by the author, rather than literary excellence. A panorama of a Western river and a night surprise of an Indian band upon a company of United States troops were well managed and

very effective. The play was suggestive of Bret Harte's sketches and of dime novels, with its gambler, its Heathen Chinese, its roughs of "Rogues' Rest," its vigilance committee, its abandoned wife, and its prairie princess. The Indian element, so often absurd and objectionable on the stage, did not predominate in "Horizon," and was not offensive. The part of Wannamucka, the semi-civilized redskin, very well played by Charles Wheatleigh, was quite an original conception of the traditional untutored savage: he was wild, romantic, treacherous, but with a touch of dry humor about him that made him attractive in the drama, if not according to the nature of his kind. Panther Loder might have stepped out of the story of "The Outcasts of Poker Flat,"—one of those cool, desperate, utterly depraved, but gentlemanly rascals whom Mr. Harte has painted so graphically, and whom John K. Mortimer could represent so perfectly upon the stage. Mortimer during his long career never did more artistic work than in this rôle. The stars in "Horizon" whose names on the bills appear in the largest type were Miss Agnes Ethel, the White Flower of the Plains, and George L. Fox. The lady was gentle, charming, and very pretty in a part evidently written to fit her; not so great as in "Frou Frou," in which she made her first hit, or as "Agnes," which was to follow, but a very pleasant, creditable performance throughout. Poor Fox, as Sundown Bowse, the Territorial Congressman, furnished the comic element in the piece, was humorous and not impossible, the first of the Bardwell Slotes and Colonel Sellerses and Culpepper Starbottles who are now the accepted stage-Yankees and who furnish all of the amusement in the modern American drama. Mr. Fox has not been greatly surpassed by any of his successors in this line. Miss Ada Harland as his daughter, Miss Lulu Prior as the royal Indian maiden, Mrs. Yeamans as the Widow Mullins, and little Jennie Yeamans as the captured pappoose, all added to the popularity of the play. Taken as a whole, "Horizon" is the best native production of its kind seen here in many years, with the single exception of "Davy Crockett."

Mr. Frank Murdock called his "Davy Crockett" a "backwoods idyl." It is almost the best American play ever written. A pure sylvan love-story told in a healthful, dramatic way. A poem in four acts. Not perfect in form, open to criticism, with faults of construction, failings of plot, slight improbabilities, sensational situations, and literary shortcomings, but so simple and so touching and so pure that it is worthy to rank with any of the creations of the modern stage in any language. The character of Davy Crockett, the central figure, is beautifully and artistically drawn: a strong, brave young hunter of the Far West, bold but unassuming, gentle but with a strong will, skilled in

woodcraft but wholly ignorant of the ways of the civilized world he had never seen, capable of great love and of great sacrifices for his love's sake, shy, sensitive, and proud, unable to read or to write, utterly unconscious of his own physical beauty and of his own heroism, faithful, honest, truthful,—in short, a natural gentleman. The story is hardly a new one. Davy seems to be the son of the famous Davy Crockett, whose reputation was so great that his very name became a terror to the 'coons of the wild woods, and who left to his children and to posterity the wholesome advice that it is only safe to go ahead when one is sure one is right in going. On this motto the Davy Crockett of the play always acts. He is in love with a young woman who is his superior in station and education. Of his admiration he is not ashamed, but in his simple, honest modesty he never dreams of winning the belle of the country or that there is anything in him that could attract a refined lady. It is his good fortune to save her life from Indians and from wolves at some risk of his own scalp and with some damage to his own person. In a forest hut, while she nurses his wounds, she recites to him the story of "Young Lochinvar," upholding the course of the Borderer of other lands and other days, so faithful in love, so dauntless in war, telling of her own approaching marriage to a laggard in love and a dastard in battle into which her father would force her. On this hint he speaks, sure he is right at last, and going ahead, like the young hero in "Marmion," to win this old man's daughter. He carries her away from the arms of the man she hates; one touch of her hand and one word in her ear is enough; through all the wide border his steed is the best; there is racing and chasing through Cannobie Lee, behind the footlights and in the wings, but Lochinvar Crockett wins his bride, the curtain falls on proud gallant and happy maiden, and the band plays "Home, Sweet Home."

All this, of course, is the old, old story so often told on the stage before, and to last forever; but Mr. Murdock seems to have told it better than any of his fellow-countrymen.

There is no doubt, however, that "Davy Crockett," like "Metamora," owed much of its success to the actor who played its titular part. Mr. Frank Mayo's playing of this backwoods hero is a gem in its way. He is quiet and subdued, he looks and walks and talks the trapper to the life, never over-acts and never forgets the character he represents; he is so natural and so easy that his art is better than the realism of the professional hunters "Buffalo Bill" (William F. Cody) and "Texas Jack" (J. B. Omohundro) who have since walked the stage in similar rôles. Mr. Mayo became almost a one-part actor; but in that one part and in his line he certainly has not been equalled in his

own generation. He was born in Boston in 1839, and moved with his family to San Francisco, California, in 1850, where, at the American Theatre, he made his professional *début* in 1856, doing general utility business. His first leading part was Nena Sahib in Boucicault's "Jessie Brown," in 1859. He played Armand to the Camille of Matilda Heron, and supported Julia Dean during her California engagement. Coming East in 1865, he starred through the country as a tragedian with some success, and made his first appearance in New York, under the management of James Fisk, Jr., at the Grand Opera-House, March 31, 1869, as Ferdinand, in "The Tempest." He first played "Davy Crockett" in Rochester, in November, 1873, producing it in New York at Niblo's Garden on the 9th of March, 1874, when he had the support of Miss Rosa Rand as Eleanor Vaughn, the heroine who looked down to blush and who looked up to sigh, with a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye, and who made in the part a very favorable impression. The play has never been properly appreciated by metropolitan audiences. Free from the tomahawking, gun-firing business, it did not attract the lovers of the sensational; utterly devoid of emotional and harrowing elements, it did not appeal to the admirers of the morbid on the stage; and, giving no scope for richness of toilet, it had no charms for the habitual attendants upon *matinée* performances.

Its reception by the press was not cordial or kindly; and the severe things written about it had, it is said, such an effect upon its sensitive author that he absolutely died of criticism in Philadelphia, November 13, 1872. Frank H. Murdock was a nephew of James E. Murdock, the old tragedian, and himself an actor of some promise. His single play was of so much promise that if there were an American Academy to crown such productions it might have won for him at least one leaf of the laurel.

Laurence Hutton.

AS I CAME DOWN FROM LEBANON.

AS I came down from Lebanon,
 Came winding, wandering slowly down
 Through mountain-passes bleak and brown,
 The cloudless day was wellnigh done.
 The city, like an opal set
 In emerald, showed each minaret

Afire with radiant beams of sun,
And glistened orange, fig, and lime,
Where song-birds made melodious chime,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
Like lava, in the dying glow,
Through olive orchards far below,
I saw the murmuring river run ;
And 'neath the wall, within the sand,
Swart sheiks from distant Samarcand,
With precious spices they had won,
Lay long and languidly in wait
Till they might pass the guarded gate,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
I saw strange men from lands afar
In mosque and square and gay bazaar,—
The Magi that the Moslem shun,
And grave effendi from Stamboul
Who sherbet sipped in corners cool ;
And from the balconies o'errun
With roses gleamed the eyes of those
Who dwell in still seraglios,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
The flaming flower of daytime died,
And Night, arrayed as is a bride
Of some great king in garments spun
Of purple and the finest gold,
Outbloomed in glories manifold,
Until the moon, above the dun
And darkening desert, void of shade,
Shone like a keen Damascus blade,
As I came down from Lebanon.

Clinton Scollard

PERCHANCE TO DREAM.

I.

MRS. MARTIN, who was known to her lively young friends in New York as the Duchess of Washington Square, had a handsome place on the Hudson, just above West Point. It was called the Eyrie,—although, as Dear Jones naturally remarked, that road did not take you there. Every fall, when the banks of the river reddened to their ripest glory and when the maple had donned its coat of many colors, the Duchess was wont to fill the Eyrie with her young friends. From the Eyrie was heard the report of many an engagement which had hung fire at Newport and at Lenox. The Duchess was fond of having pretty girls about her, and she always invited clever young men to amuse them. She was an admirable hostess, and no one ever regretted that he had accepted her invitation. Mr. Martin, who was, of course, relegated to his proper position as merely the husband of the Duchess, was, in fact, a charming old gentleman, as the clever young men soon discovered when they came to know him. Indeed, although Mrs. Martin was the dominant partner, Mr. Martin was quite as popular as she.

On the afternoon of the last Saturday in October, just as the sudden twilight was closing in on the river, the ferry-boat came gently to its place in the dock of the West Shore Station in Jersey City, and two young men in the thick of the throng which pressed forward to the train were thrust sharply against each other.

“Hello, Charley!” said one of them, recognizing his involuntary assailant: “are you devoting yourself to the popular suburban amusement known as ‘catching your train’?”

“Hello yourself! I’m not a telephone,” Charley Sutton responded, merrily. “I’m catching a train to-night because I’m going up to the Eyrie to spend Sunday.”

“So am I,” answered his friend, Mr. Robert White, who was one of the editors of the *Gotham Gazette*, and who wrote admirably about all aquatic sports under the alluring pen-name of “Poor Bob White.”

“My wife is up there now,” continued Sutton.

“So is mine,” responded White; “and Dear Jones and his wife promised to go up on this train.”

By this time the young men were alongside the train: they boarded the Pullman car, and in one of the forward compartments they found Mr. and Mrs. Delancey Jones and also Mrs. Martin.

The Duchess greeted them very cordially. "Come and sit down by me, both of you," she said, with her pleasant imperiousness: "I want somebody to talk to me. Dear Jones is getting perfectly horrid. He is so taken up with his wife and the baby now that he isn't half as entertaining as he used to be."

"Why, Mrs. Martin, how can you say so?" interjected Mrs. Delancey Jones. "I don't monopolize him at all. I scarcely see anything of him now, he is so busy."

"You ought not to have introduced us to each other if you didn't want us to fall in love and get married," said Dear Jones.

"I decline all responsibility on that score," the Duchess declared. "People call me a match-maker. Now, I'm nothing of the sort. I never interfere with Providence; and you know marriages are made in heaven."

"You believe, then, that all weddings are ordained by Fate?" asked Charley Sutton.

"Indeed I do," Mrs. Martin answered.

"Well, it *is* a rather comforting doctrine for us happily-married men to believe that our good luck was predestination and not free will," said White.

"I wish this predestination was accompanied by a gift of second-sight," Dear Jones remarked, "that we might see into the future and know our elective affinity and not be downcast when she rejects us the first time of asking."

"Oh, you men would be too conceited to live if we didn't take you down now and then," said his wife, airily.

"Of course *I* knew you didn't mean it," he went on.

"The idea!" she cried, indignantly. "I did mean it! Why, I couldn't bear you then."

"Still," White suggested, "a power to see into the future would simplify courtship, and men would not draw as many blanks in the lottery of matrimony."

"Second-sight would be a very handy thing to have in the house, anyhow," Charley Sutton declared. "A man who had the gift could make a pocketful of rocks in Wall Street."

"Oh, Delancey," cried Mrs. Jones, "wouldn't it be delightful if you could only interpret dreams! You would make your fortune in a month."

"I'd be sure to predict that the world was coming to an end every time I ate mince-pie," replied Dear Jones. "Nobody has had rich visions on prison-fare since Joseph explained his dream to Pharaoh's chief steward."

"I wonder how the esoteric Buddhists and the psychic-research sharps would explain away that little act of Joseph's," Charley Sutton remarked, with a fuller admixture than usual of the Californian idiom which he had brought from the home of his boyhood.

"They would call it telepathy, or thought-transference, or mind-reading, or some other of the slang phrases of the adept," White answered.

"I don't know how much there may be in this Spiritualism," said the Duchess, in her most impressive manner; "but, somehow, I do not feel any right to doubt it altogether. They do very strange things at times, I must say."

Dear Jones caught Charley Sutton's eye, and they both winked in silent glee at this declaration of principles.

"This play that we have been to see this afternoon," the Duchess continued,—“there is something uncanny about it.”

"The last act is simply thrilling," added Mrs. Jones: "I felt as if I must scream out."

"Where did you go?" asked White.

"Mrs. Martin and I came in this morning," Mrs. Jones answered, "to do some shopping, of course——"

"Of course," interjected her husband, sarcastically.

"And to go to the matinée at the Manhattan Theatre, to see that English company in the 'Bells,'" she continued.

"It is rather an eerie play," said Sutton. "The vision in the last act, where Mathias dreams that he has been mesmerized and must answer the accusing questions in spite of himself, is a very strong bit of acting."

"I can't say I enjoyed it," Mrs. Martin declared: "it was too vivid. And I couldn't help thinking how awkward it would be if a man was able to read our thoughts and force us to tell our secrets."

"If any man had such a power," said Dear Jones, with imperturbable gravity, "going out into society would be inconveniently risky."

"It would, indeed!" the Duchess declared. Whereupon Dear Jones and Charley Sutton exchanged a wicked wink.

"I'm not given to the interpretation of signs and wonders," said Dear Jones, "and I have not paid any special attention to the inexplicable phenomena of occult philosophy——"

"Very good," interrupted White: "‘inexplicable phenomena of occult philosophy’ is very good."

"Really, I don't think you ought to jest on such a serious subject," said the Duchess, authoritatively.

"I assure you I meant to be very serious indeed," Mr. Delancey

Jones explained: "I was going on to inform you that once I was told a dream which actually came to pass."

"You mean the man on the Barataria?" asked his wife, eagerly, and with a feminine disregard of strictly grammatical construction.

"Yes."

"Why, that is just what I was going to ask you to tell Mrs. Martin. I think it is the most wonderful thing I ever heard. Oh, you must tell! It was only a month or so ago, you know, when we were coming back from London. You tell them the rest, Lance: I get too excited when I think about it."

"Spin us the yarn, as Bob White would say," remarked Charley Sutton.

"If you can a tale unfold," White added, "just freeze the marrow of our bones!"

"It isn't anything to laugh at, I assure you," cried Mrs. Jones, pathetically. "You think that because Lance is funny sometimes he can't be serious; but he can! Just wait, and you shall see!"

"Is this a joke?" asked the Duchess, who was always a little uneasy in the presence of a merry jest.

"It is quite serious, Mrs. Martin, I assure you. There are no mystic influences in it, nor any mesmeric nonsense: it is only the story of an extraordinary case of foresight into the future, to which I can bear witness in person, although I have absolutely no explanation to propose."

"It is a mystery, then?" asked White.

"Precisely," answered Jones; "and, with all your detective skill, Bob, I doubt if you can spy out the heart of it."

The voice of the conductor was heard crying "All aboard!" a bell rang, a whistle shrieked, and the train glided smoothly out of the station. The little company in the compartment of the Pullman car settled back comfortably to listen to the story Dear Jones was going to tell.

II.

"You know," Mr. Delancey Jones began, "that I had to go to Paris this summer to get some decorative panels for the parlor of a man whose house I am building. Now, I'm not one of those who think that Paris is short for Paradise, and I wanted to run over and give my order and hurry back. But my wife said she had business in Paris, too——"

"And so I had," his wife asserted. "I hadn't a dress fit to be seen in."

"Consequently," he continued, disregarding this interruption, "she went with me; and she wouldn't go without the baby——"

"I'm not an inhuman wretch, I hope," declared Mrs. Jones, sharply. "As if I could leave the child at home! Besides, she needed clothes as much as I did. But there! I won't say another word. When he looks at me like that, I know I've just *got* to hold my tongue for the rest of the day."

With unruffled placidity Dear Jones continued, "The man who makes *robes* didn't come to time, the lady who sells *modes* was late, and the conduct of the *lingère* was unconscionable.—I trust," he asked, turning to his wife, "that I have applied these technical terms with precision?"

"Oh, yes," she answered; "and you know more about them than most men do."

"The result was," Dear Jones went on, "that we had to give up our passage on the *Provence*. By great good luck I managed to get fair state-rooms on the *Barataria*, which sailed from Liverpool a fortnight or so later. We had two days in London and a night in Liverpool, and then we went on board the *Barataria*, and waked up the next morning in Queenstown, after a night of storm which proved to us that although the ship rolled very little she pitched tremendously. She had a trick of sliding head-first into a wave, and then shivering, and then wagging her tail up and down, in a way which baffles description."

"You need not attempt to describe it," said the Duchess, with dignity, raising her handkerchief to her lips.

Dear Jones was magnanimous. "Well, I won't," he said. "I'll leave it to your imagination. We lay off Queenstown all Sunday morning. Early in the afternoon the tender brought us the mails and a few passengers. I leaned over the side of the boat and watched them come up the gangway. One man I couldn't help looking at: there was something very queer about him, and yet I failed to discover what it was. He seemed commonplace enough in manner and in dress; he was of medium size; and at first sight he had no tangible eccentricity. And yet there was an oddity about him, a certain something which seemed to set him apart from the average man. Even now I cannot say exactly wherein this personal peculiarity lay, yet I studied him all the way over, and I found that others had also remarked it. The one thing in which he definitely differed from others was his paleness: he was as white as a ghost with the dyspepsia. He was a man of perhaps fifty; he was clean-shaven; he had very dark hair, so absurdly glossy that I wondered if it were not a wig; he had sharp black eyes, which were either abnormally restless or else fixed in a preoccupied stare.

“The Barataria was crowded, and the ship’s company was as mixed as a Broadway car on a Saturday afternoon : there was the regular medley of pilgrims and strangers, republicans and sinners. There was an English official, Sir Kensington Gower, K.C.B., and there was a German antiquary, Herr Julius Feuerwasser, the discoverer of the celebrated Von der Schwindel manuscript. There was a funny little fellow we called the Egyptian, because he was born in Constantinople, of Dutch parents, and had been brought up in China : he had worked in the South Africa diamond-fields, and he was then a salaried interpreter at a Cuban court. In short, we had on board all sorts and conditions of men, as per passenger-list. We steamed out of Queenstown in the teeth of a stiff gale ; and I shall willingly draw a veil over our feelings for the first two days out. We managed to get on deck and to get into our steamer-chairs and to lie there inert until nightfall ; and that was the utmost we could do. But Wednesday was bright : the wind had died away to a fair breeze, just brisk enough to keep our furnaces at their best ; the waves had gone down ; and so our spirits rose. I went to breakfast late and to lunch early. I found that the odd-looking man I had noted when he came aboard at Queenstown was placed opposite to me, between Herr Julius Feuerwasser and Sir Kensington Gower. They had already become acquainted one with another. During lunch the pale stranger had a fierce discussion with the learned German about the Eleusinian mysteries, and he pushed the Teuton hard, abounding in facts and quotations and revealing himself as a keen master of close logic. Herr Julius lost his temper once as his wary adversary broke through his guard and pinned him with an unfortunate admission ; and at dinner we found that the archæologist had applied to the chief steward to change his seat at table. As he was an overbearing person, I didn’t regret his departure.”

“I have seen a German grand duke eat peas with his knife !” said the Duchess, as one who produces a fact of the highest sociological importance.

“Apparently the victor in the debate did not remark the absence of his vanquished foe,” Dear Jones continued, “for he and the K.C.B. soon got into a most interesting discussion of the Rosicrucians. Obviously enough, Sir Kensington Gower was a learned man, of deep reading and a wide experience of life, and he had given special attention to the subject ; but the pale man spoke as one having authority,—as though he were the sole surviving repository of the Rosicrucian secret. The talk between him and Sir Kensington was amicable and courteous, and it did not degenerate into a mere duel of words like that in which he had worsted the German. Their conversation was extremely inter-

esting, and I listened intently, having had a chance to slip in a professional allusion when they happened to refer to the connection between Architecture and Masonry. I heard Sir Kensington Gower call the stranger by name,—Mr. Blackstone. There seemed to me to be a curious fitness between this name and its wearer: fancifully enough, I saw in the man a certain dignity and a certain prim decision which made the name singularly appropriate. Before dinner was over, the talk turned to lighter topics. As Sir Kensington went below to see after his wife——”

“I remember that *you* didn’t come to see after *me!*” interrupted Mrs. Jones, laughing. “I was left on deck to the tender mercies of the steward. But no matter: I forgive you.”

Her husband went on with his story, regardless of this feminine personality:

“Mr. Blackstone and I left the table together to get our coffee in the smoking-saloon. Our later conversation had been so easy that I ventured to say to him that a name like his could belong by rights only to a lawyer,—or to a coal-dealer. The remark was perhaps impertinent, but it was innocent enough; yet a sudden flush flitted across his white face, and he gave me a piercing flash from his unfathomable eyes before he answered, shortly, ‘Yes, I am a lawyer; and my father owns and works a coal-mine near Newcastle.’ I did not risk another familiarity. His manner towards me did not change; he was as polite and as affable as before: I studied him in vain to see what might be the peculiarity I was conscious of but unable to define. We had our coffee, and, encouraged by my dinner, I was emboldened to take the cigar Mr. Blackstone offered me: I have rarely smoked a better. We sat side by side for a few minutes almost in silence, watching the smoke of our cigars as it wreathed upward, forming quaint interrogation-marks in the air and then fading away into nothing. Then the man we called the Egyptian—I knew him, as he had crossed with us in the City of Constantinople last year—came over and asked us to take a hand in a little game of poker.”

“He knew the secret wish of your heart, didn’t he?” asked Robert White. “I suggest this as an appropriate epitaph for Dear Jones’s tombstone: ‘He played the game.’”

“I think I can give you a simpler one,” said the young Californian, —“just this: ‘Jones’ Bones.’”

“I wonder what there is so fascinating to you men in a game like poker,” the Duchess remarked. “You all love it. Mr. Martin says that it is the only game a business-man can afford to play.”

“Mr. Martin is a man of excellent judgment,—as we can see,” said Robert White, bowing politely.

"Mr. Martin is a man of better manners than to interrupt me when I am telling a story of the most recondite psychological interest," remarked Dear Jones.

"Don't mind them, Lance," his wife urged: "just hurry up to the surprising part of the story, and they will be glad enough to listen then."

Thus encouraged, Dear Jones proceeded:

"As I said, the Egyptian came over and asked us to join in getting up a game. Mr. Blackstone had been playing with them every afternoon and evening. We crossed over to an empty table in the corner where the other players were awaiting us. There was a change in Blackstone's manner as he sat down before the cards. I thought I saw a hotter fire in his eyes. As soon as he took his seat, he reached out his hand and grasped the pack which was lying on the table. For the first time, I noticed how thin and slender and sinewy his hand was. He gripped the cards like a steel-trap, holding them for a second or two face downward on the table. Then he cut hastily and looked at the bottom card. Again the quick flush fled across his face. He cut again and looked at the card, and then again. I noted that he had cut a black court-card three times running. After the last cut he gripped the pack again, as though he wished to try a fourth time, but he seemed to change his mind, for he threw the cards down on the table and said, 'I think I had better not play to-night.' 'Why not?' asked the Egyptian. Blackstone smiled very queerly, and hesitated again, and then he said, 'Because I should win your money.' The Egyptian laughed. 'I take my chance of that,' he answered; 'you play; you win,—if you can; I win,—if I can.' Blackstone smiled again. 'You had better not urge me,' he replied: 'sometimes I can look a little way into the future: I can tell when I am going to be lucky. If I play to-night, I shall win from all of you.' The Egyptian laughed again, and then began dealing the cards. 'I bet you two shillings,' he said to Blackstone, 'I get a pot before you.' The other players pressed Blackstone to play. Finally he yielded, repeating his warning, 'If I play to-night, I shall win everything.' Then we began the game."

"And did he win?" asked Charley Sutton, by his interest confessing his initiation into the freemasonry of poker.

"Well, he did!" Jones answered. "He emptied my pocket in fifteen minutes. He won on good hands and he won on bad hands. He came in on an ace and got four of a kind. He could fill anything. He could draw a tanyard to a shoestring,—as they say in Kentucky. He had a draught like a chimney on fire. There never was such luck. At last, when he drew a king of spades to make a royal straight flush, the Egyptian surrendered: 'I run!' he cried; 'I run like a leetle rabbit!'

and he dropped his hands on each side of his head, like the falling ears of a frightened rabbit."

"Was it a square game?" the young Californian asked, eagerly.

"I do not doubt it," answered Jones: "I watched very closely, and I have no reason to think there was any unfair play. We changed the pack half a dozen times; and it made no matter who dealt, Blackstone held the highest hand."

"Mr. Blackstone seems to have had a sort of second-sight for his money," suggested Robert White.

"Did his luck continue?" asked Charley Sutton.

"Generally," Robert White remarked, judicially, "luck is like milk: no matter how good it is, if you keep it long enough it is sure to turn."

"I didn't go into the smoking-saloon the next day," Dear Jones explained. "I——"

"I wouldn't let him!" interrupted Mrs. Jones. "I thought he had lost enough for one trip: so I tried to console him by talking over the lovely things I could have bought in Paris with that money."

"But on Friday," her husband continued, "as we left the lunch-table together, Blackstone said to me, 'You did not play yesterday.' I told him I had lost all I could afford. 'Yesterday the play was dull,' he said: 'it was anybody's game. But to-day you can have your revenge.' I told him I had had enough for one voyage. 'But I insist on your playing this afternoon,' he persisted: 'I am going to lose, and I want you to win your money back; I do not want those other men to win from me what you have lost: it is enough if they get back what I have gained from them.' 'But how do you know that you will lose and that I shall win?' I asked. He smiled a strange, worn smile, and answered, 'I have my moods, and I can read them. To-day I shall lose. To-day is Friday, you know,—hangman's day. Friday is always my unlucky day. I get all my bad news on Friday. A week ago this morning, for example, I had no expectation of being where I am to-day.' After saying this, he gave me another of his transfixing looks, as though to mark what effect upon me this confession might have. Then he urged me again to take a hand in the game, and at last I suffered myself to be persuaded. He had prophesied aright, for we all had good luck and he had bad luck. He played well,—brilliantly, even; he was not disheartened by his losses; he held good cards; he drew to advantage; but he was beaten unceasingly. If he had a good hand, some one else held a better. If he risked a bluff, he was called with absolute certainty. In less than an hour I had won my money back, and I began to feel ashamed of winning any more. So I was

very glad when my wife sent for me to go on deck. But just before dinner I looked into the smoking-saloon for a minute. The five other players sat around the little table in the corner, exactly as I had left them three hours before. When the Egyptian saw me he cried, gleefully, 'You made mistake to go away. We all win, all the time. We clean him out soon.' I looked at Blackstone. His face was whiter even than before: his eye caught mine, and I saw in it an expression I could not define, but it haunted me all night. As I turned to go, he rose and said, 'I have had enough for to-day. It is no use to struggle with what is written. Perhaps I may have a more fortunate mood to-morrow.' At dinner he sat opposite to me, as usual, but there was no change in his manner. He had lost heavily,—far more heavily than he could afford, I fancy,—but there was no trace of chagrin about him. He talked as easily and as lightly as before; and by the time dinner was half over, he and Sir Kensington Gower were deep in a discussion of the tenets of the Theosophists. Sir Kensington was a scoffer, and he mocked at their marvels; but Blackstone maintained that, however absurd their pretensions were, they had gained at least a glimpse of the truth. He said that there were those alive now who could work wonders more mysterious than any wrought by the Witch of Endor. I remember that he told Sir Kensington that the secret archives of Paris recorded certain sharp doings of Cagliostro which passed all explanation."

"If he knew so much," asked Charley Sutton, "why didn't he know enough not to buck against his bad luck?"

"I can understand that," Robert White remarked: "he was like many another man,—he did not *believe* what he *knew*."

"Tell them about the dream, Lance," said Mrs. Jones.

"I'm coming to that now," answered her husband. "I have not yet told you that, in spite of our bad weather the first two days out, we had made a splendid run,—almost the best on record. By Friday evening it was evident that, unless there were an accident of some sort, we should get inside of Sandy Hook some time on Saturday night,—probably a little before midnight. So on Saturday morning we all got up with a sense of relief at our early delivery from our floating jail. You have heard of the saying that going to sea is as bad as going to prison, with the added chance of drowning?"

"I have heard the saying," answered Bob White, indignantly,—for he was always quick to praise a seafaring life,—“and I think that the man who said it was not born to be drowned.”

"I believe you are web-footed," returned Dear Jones: "most of us are not; and we were delighted to get within hail of the coast. It was a lovely day, and the sea was as smooth as I ever saw it. We made a

run of four hundred and sixty-eight miles at noon ; we took our pilot one hour later ; we sent up our rocket and burned our Roman candles off Fire Island about nine that evening ; and we ran inside Sandy Hook a little after eleven. Shortly before we had crossed the bar, and as the lights of the coast were beginning to get more and more distinct, Mr. Blackstone joined me, while I was standing near the captain's room. The light from the electric lamps on the stairs fell on his head, and I marked the same uncanny smile which had played about his face when he rose from the card-table after losing his money the day before. We walked the length of the ship two or three times, exchanging commonplaces about America. I found that he had never been out of England before ; but he had improved his time on the boat, for he had already mastered the topography of Manhattan Island and of New York Bay. He asked me how close we should come to the shore when we entered the Hook, and whether we should anchor at Quarantine in mid-stream or alongside a dock. When I had answered his questions as best I could, he was silent for a little space. Then, suddenly, as we came to the end of the ship, he stopped, and asked me if I were superstitious. I laughed, and answered that I was like the man who did not believe in ghosts but was afraid of them. 'I thought so,' he returned. 'I thought you were not one of the narrow and self-satisfied souls who believe only what they can prove, and who cannot imagine circumstances under which two and two may not make four. Now, I am superstitious,—if a belief in omens, dreams, and other manifestations of the unseen can fairly be called a superstition. I cannot help lending credence to these things, for every event of my life has taught me to rely on the warnings and the promises I receive from the unknown. I do not always understand the message ; but if I disobey it when I do comprehend, I am sorely punished. I had a dream last night which I cannot interpret. Perhaps you may help me.' I confess that I was impressed by his earnestness ; and, not without a share of curiosity, I told him I should be glad to listen. He transfixed me with another rapid glance, and then he said, "This was my dream. I dreamed that it was to-morrow morning,—Sunday morning,—and that I was in New York. I was reading a newspaper : there is a paper in New York called the *Gotham Gazette* ?" I told him that there was such a journal. 'Is it published on Sunday ?' he asked. I explained that it sold more copies on Sunday than on any other day of the week."

"One hundred and thirty-seven thousand last Sunday," interrupted Robert White, smiling, "according to the sworn statement of the foreman of the press-room : advertisers will do well, etcetera, etcetera."

"For particulars, see small bills," added Charley Sutton.

Dear Jones paid no attention to these unnecessary remarks.

"Blackstone repeated," he continued, "that he dreamt he was in New York on Sunday morning, reading the *Gotham Gazette*; and he told me he had been trying all day to remember exactly what it was he had read in it, but his recollections were vague, and he could recall with precision only four passages from the paper. 'You know,' he said to me, 'how old and solid the house of Blough Brothers & Company is?' I answered that I knew that they were as safe a bank as could be found in Lombard Street. 'The first thing I read in the *Gotham Gazette* of to-morrow,' he said, 'was a message from London announcing that Blough Brothers & Company had failed the day before,—that is, to-day, Saturday.' I laughed easily, and told him that he ought not to give a second thought to a dream as wild as his, for I supposed that Blough Brothers & Company were as safe as the Bank of England. He shot another sharp glance through me, and answered, after a second's hesitation, that stranger things had happened than the failure of Blough Brothers & Company. Then he went on to tell me the second of the things he was able to recall from his vague memory of the *Gotham Gazette* of Sunday morning. You remember the great steam-yacht race,—the international match between Joshua Hoffmann's Rhadamanthus and the English boat the Skyrocket? Well, that race was to come off that very Saturday: it had been decided probably only five or six hours before our talk. Blackstone told me that he had read a full account of it in the *Gotham Gazette* of the next day, and that it had been an even race, but that from the start the American yacht had led a little, and that the English boat had been beaten by less than ten minutes. The third thing he had read in the paper was a review of a book. 'I think I have heard you refer to Mr. Rudolph Vernon, the poet, as a friend of yours?' he asked. I said I knew Vernon, and that I expected to read his new poem as soon as it was published. 'It is called "An Epic of Ghosts," and there was a long criticism of it in the *Gotham Gazette*,' said Blackstone,—'a criticism which began by calling it one of the most peculiar of poems and by declaring that its effect on the reader was ghastly rather than ghostly.'

"And he told you this the night before you arrived?" asked Robert White, very much interested. "Why——"

"Let me tell my tale," answered Dear Jones: "you can cross-question me afterwards. I shall not be long now."

"And what was the fourth item he remembered?" the Duchess inquired.

"The fourth item," Dear Jones responded, "was a paragraph announcing the arrival in New York of the steamship Barataria—the

boat in the stern of which we were then standing—and noting that one of the passengers was mysteriously missing, having apparently committed suicide by jumping overboard the night before. With involuntary haste I asked him the name of this passenger. ‘It was not given in the newspaper,’ he answered, ‘or, if it was, I cannot recall it.’ We stood for a moment silently side by side, gazing at the phosphorescent wake of the ship. The second officer, Mr. Macdonough, came aft just then; and I walked back with him to return a book I had borrowed. I found my wife had gone to bed; and in a few minutes I was asleep, having given little heed to Blackstone’s dream, vividly as he had recited its unusual circumstances. The next morning we were busied with the wearying preliminaries of disembarking, and I did not notice the absence of Blackstone from the breakfast-table. When we had been warped into dock and had signed our papers before the custom-house officials, we left the boat and went down on the wharf to wait for our trunks, seven of which were at the very bottom of the hold. A newsboy offered me the Sunday papers, and I bought the *Gotham Gazette*. The first words that met my eye were the head-lines of a cable-message: ‘Heavy Failure in London,—Sudden Stoppage of Blough Brothers & Company.’ The next thing I saw was an account of the great steam-yacht race. As you know, the Rhadamanthus had beaten the Sky-rocket by eight minutes. I could not but recall Blackstone’s dream, and I instantly tore the newspaper open, that I might see if there were a review of Rudolph Vernon’s ‘Epic of Ghosts,’ and there it was. The criticism began by calling it the most peculiar of poems and by saying that its effect was ghastly rather than ghostly. Then I searched for the fourth item of the dream. But I could not find it. That one alone of the four things he had told me was not in the paper. There was nothing about the Baratavia but the formal announcement of our arrival in the column of shipping news. Although the fourth item was not to be found, the presence of the other three was startling enough, it seemed to me, and I thought that Blackstone would be interested to see the real *Gotham Gazette* of Sunday morning, that he might compare it with the *Gotham Gazette* he had read in his dream. I looked about on the dock, but he was not visible. I went back on the boat, but I could not lay eyes on him. I asked our table-steward and others, but no one had seen him. At last I went to Mr. Macdonough, the second officer, to inquire his whereabouts. Before I had more than mentioned Blackstone’s name, Mr. Macdonough became very serious. ‘I cannot tell you where Mr. Blackstone is, for I do not know,’ he said: ‘in fact, nobody knows. He is missing. It is quite a mystery what has become of him. He has not been seen since

we left him last night,—you and I. So far as I can judge, we were the last to speak to him or to see him. All trace of him is lost since we walked forward last night, leaving him standing in the stern of the ship. He did not sleep in his state-room, so his steward says. We do not wish to think that he has jumped overboard, but I must confess it looks like it. Did he ever say anything to you which makes you think he might commit suicide? I answered that I could recall nothing pointing towards self-destruction. ‘He was a queer man,’ said Mr. Macdonough, ‘a very queer man, and I fear we shall never see him again.’ And, so far as I know, nobody has ever seen him again.”

As Dear Jones came to the end of his story, the rattling train plunged into a long tunnel.

III.

When the train at last shook itself out of the tunnel, Robert White was the first to break the silence.

“To sum up,” he said to Dear Jones, “this man who called himself Blackstone told you on Saturday evening four things which he had dreamt would be in the *Gotham Gazette* of Sunday morning. Three of these things were in the *Gotham Gazette*, and, while the fourth item was absent from the newspaper, the suicide it recorded had apparently taken place?”

“Yes,” answered Dear Jones.

“How do you account for this extraordinary manifestation of the power of second-sight operating during sleep?” White asked.

Dear Jones replied, shortly,—

“Oh, I do not account for it.”

“What have you to suggest?” White inquired.

“I haven’t anything to suggest,” Dear Jones answered. “I have given you the facts as I know them. Every man is free to interpret them to please himself. I tell the tale only: I have not hinted at any explanation, either natural or supernatural.”

“Perhaps Mr. White can unravel the mystery,” said Mrs. Jones, with just a tinge of acerbity in her manner.

“No,” White returned, thus attacked in the flank, “no, I have no explanation to offer,—at least, not until I have fuller information.”

“I have emptied myself of the facts in the case,” retorted Dear Jones, “and a cider-press couldn’t get any more details out of me.”

With an amiable desire to pour oil on waters which might be troubled, the Duchess remarked, pleasantly, “I think Dear Jones has told us a most interesting story, and I’m sure we ought to be obliged to him.”

Dear Jones arose and bowed his thanks. Just then the train went sharply around a curve, and Dear Jones resumed his seat in the car with awkward promptness. As he sat down, Robert White looked up at him musingly. At length he spoke :

“ You say the man called himself Blackstone ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ He was a peculiar-looking man, you say,” Robert White continued, “ and yet you could not declare wherein his oddity lay. He was of medium size, a little under the average height, and a little inclined to be stout. He was about fifty years old. He wore a black wig. He had a very white face. His dark eyes were restless when they were not fixed in a vague stare——”

“ Why,” cried Dear Jones, “ how did you know that ? ”

“ He had a long, full beard,” Robert White went on ; when Dear Jones broke in again :

“ Oh, no : he was clean-shaven.”

“ Ah ! ” said Robert White : “ perhaps he had removed his beard to change his appearance. Did he have the blue chin one sees in a man whose face is naturally hairy ? ”

“ He had,” answered Dear Jones ; “ and the deadly pallor of his cheeks made this azure of his jaw more obvious.”

“ I am inclined to think,” Robert White said, slowly,—“ I am inclined to think that the man who told you his alleged dream, and who called himself Blackstone, was John Coke, the chief clerk and confidential manager of Blough Brothers & Company——”

“ The firm that failed ? ” the Duchess asked.

“ Precisely,” was the answer ; “ and he was the cause of the failure,—he and Braxton Blough, a younger son of the senior partner. They both absconded on the Saturday before the failure,—the Saturday you sailed : Coke could easily have left London with the mail and joined you at Queenstown. I took a great interest in the case, for my father-in-law lost a lot of money he had sent over to be used in operating in the London Stock Exchange.”

“ I shouldn’t wonder if you were right in your supposition, Bob,” said Charley Sutton ; “ and of course if the man had cleaned out Blough Brothers & Company he could make a pretty close guess when they were likely to suspend. Besides, Blackstone is just the sort of slantindicular name a man called Coke would take.”

“ Coke ? ” repeated the Duchess ; “ Coke ? Isn’t that the name of the Englishman Mr. Hitchcock used to talk to us about in London ? ”

“ Yes,” answered Mrs. Jones : “ I think I have heard Mr. Hitchcock speak of a Mr. Coke.”

White looked up quickly, with a smile. "Do you mean Mat Hitchcock?"

"Mr. C. Mather Hitchcock is the gentleman I mean," replied Mrs. Martin.

"Ah!" said White significantly.

"I saw a good deal of him last summer in London, and I heard him speak of a Mr. Coke several times. I think he said he was the manager or director or something of Blough Brothers & Company. I know he told me that Mr. Coke was the best judge of sherry and of poetry in all England. I own I thought the conjunction rather odd."

"Mrs. Martin," said Robert White, "you have given us the explanation of another of the predictions in the alleged Mr. Blackstone's alleged dream. I happen to know that, owing to a set of curious circumstances, little Mat Hitchcock wrote the review of the 'Epic of Ghosts' which appeared in the *Gotham Gazette*."

"And you think he showed what he had written to Coke before he sent it off to the paper?" asked Dear Jones.

"Isn't it just like him?" White returned.

Dear Jones smiled, and answered that Mat Hitchcock was both leaky and conceited, and that he probably did show his review to everybody within range.

"But how did this Mr. Blackstone know that the review would appear on that particular Sunday morning?" asked Mrs. Jones, with a slightly aggressive scepticism.

"He didn't *know* it," answered White; "he just guessed it; and it was not so very remarkable a guess, either, if he knew when the review was posted in London, as the *Gotham Gazette* prints book-notices only on Sundays."

"Still, it was a most extraordinary dream," said the Duchess, with dignity, not altogether approving of any attempt to explain away anything purporting to be supernatural.

"The failure of Blough Brothers and Company was remarkable, if you like," Robert White continued. "The house was more than a century old; it held the highest position in Lombard Street; it was supposed to be conservative and safe; and yet for the past five years it had been little better than an empty shell. This man Coke was allowed to do pretty much as he pleased; and he and Braxton Blough, the younger son of old Sir Barwood Blough, the head of the house, were as thick as thieves—I use the phrase advisedly."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Jones, with a chilly smile.

"They speculated in stocks," Robert White pursued; "they loaded themselves up with cats and dogs; they took little fliers in such in-

flammable material as Turkish and Egyptian bonds ; and they went on the turf together. They owned race-horses together as ' Mr. Littleton ;' and that's another bit of evidence that your Mr. Blackstone was really this man Coke. You see ? Coke—Littleton—Blackstone ?”

“ I see,” answered Dear Jones.

“ When the game was up, there was a warrant out for Coke, but he had been gone for a week. It was supposed he had run over to Paris ; but that must have been a mere blind of his, since he came over here on the Barataria with you.”

“ He came over with me,” said Dear Jones, quietly, “ but he did not land with me.”

“ Poor Braxton Blough had been led astray by Coke, who tempted him and got him in his power and kept him under his thumb. When the bubble burst he disappeared too, and it is supposed that he took the queen's shilling and is now a private at the Cape of Good Hope. He wasn't in England when poor old Sir Barwood Blough died of a broken heart. Braxton had always been his favorite son, and he had spared the rod and spoiled the child.”

“ Braxton Blough ?” repeated the Duchess. “ Surely I have met a man of that name ; and I think it was at the dinner Lord Shandygaff gave us at Greenwich.”

“ I remember him now,” broke in Dear Jones,—“ a dark, gypsy-looking fellow. I know I remarked on the difference between him and Lord Shandygaff, who was the very type of an Irish sportsman, with all that the word implies.”

Robert White whistled.

“ Oh, I beg your pardon,” he cried, hastily, as Mrs. Martin looked at him with surprise. “ You will forgive me when I explain. Now we have stumbled on something really extraordinary. You know those odd little Japanese puzzles,—just a lot of curiously-shaped bits which you can fit together into a perfect square ?”

“ I have known them from my youth up,” answered Dear Jones, dryly ; “ and I see nothing extraordinary in them.”

“ I refer to them only as an illustration,” Robert White returned. “ You tell us a tale of a dream and its fulfilment ; you set forth a puzzle, but there are several little bits wanting ; the square is not perfect ; there is a hole in the centre. Now, as it happens, we here who have heard the tale can complete the square. We can fill the hole in the centre, for we chance to have concealed about our persons the little bits which were missing. And Mrs. Martin has just produced one of them. You met Mr. Braxton Blough at a dinner given by Lord Shandygaff ; and it was natural that you should, for the two men had many tastes in

common, and I have heard that they were very intimate. Indeed, next to Coke, Lord Shandygaff was Braxton Blough's closest friend. And this provides us with a possible explanation of another of the alleged predictions in the alleged dream of the alleged Blackstone."

"How so?" asked Charley Sutton.

"I confess I don't see it," said Dear Jones.

"That's because you do not know the secret history of the steam-yacht race," Robert White answered. "Lord Shandygaff is the owner of the Skyrocket; he is a betting man; he was in New York for a fortnight before the race came off; and yet he did not back his boat as though he believed she would win. Now, I have been told, and I believe, that when the match had been made and the money put up, a rumor of the speed made by the Rhadamanthus in a private trial over a measured mile, after Joshua Hoffmann had put in those new boilers, reached the ears of the owner of the Skyrocket. It is said that Lord Shandygaff then had a private trial of his yacht over a measured mile under similar conditions of wind and weather as that of the Rhadamanthus, and he discovered, to his disappointment and disgust, that his boat was going to be beaten. I have understood that he came to the conclusion, then and there, that he was going to lose the race and his twenty-five thousand dollars,—unless there should be a stiff gale of wind when the match came off, in which case he thought he might have a fair chance of winning."

"Well?" asked Charley Sutton, as Robert White paused.

"Well," said White, "if what I have stated on information and belief is true, if Lord Shandygaff believed that his boat would be beaten, his intimate friend Braxton Blough would not be kept in the dark; and whatever light Braxton Blough might have he would share with his intimate friend Coke. Therefore your friend the alleged Blackstone, when he told you his alleged dream on Saturday, the day of the race, knew that there was smooth water and a light breeze only, and that therefore the Rhadamanthus had probably beaten the Skyrocket from start to finish."

"I see," said Charley Sutton, meditatively.

Mrs. Jones looked at Mr. White with not a little dissatisfaction, saying,—

"You have tried very hard to explain away this Mr. Blackstone's dream as far as the failure of Blough Brothers & Company is concerned, and the review of Mr. Vernon's book, and the race between the Rhadamanthus and the Skyrocket; but how do you account for the suicide?"

"How do you know there was any suicide?" asked Robert White, with a slight smile.

"It was in the *Gotham Gazette*,—your own paper," she said, with ill-concealed triumph.

"It was in the *Gotham Gazette* which Coke said he had seen in a vision," White returned; "but I do not think it was ever in any *Gotham Gazette* sent out from our office in Park Row."

"But I thought——" began Mrs. Jones, when her husband interrupted.

"I'm afraid it is no use arguing with White," he said: "he seems to have all the facts at his fingers' ends."

"Thank you," White rejoined. "I wish I had my fingers' ends on Coke's collar."

"That's just what I wanted to ask you," said Dear Jones. "Where is he?"

"How do I know?" returned White.

"What do you think?" Dear Jones asked.

"I don't know what to think," answered Robert White: "the facts fail me. Probably the *Barataria* was not very far from shore when she anchored off Quarantine that night, soon after you and Mr. Macdonough left him in the stern of the ship?"

"We were within pistol-shot of the health officer's dock, I suppose," replied Dear Jones.

"Then," said Robert White, "perhaps Coke jumped overboard and swam ashore, and so killed the trail by taking water. We have an extradition treaty with Great Britain, and he may have told you his dream so that you could bear witness in case he was tracked by the detectives. On the other hand, he was a queer man, hysteric, and a mystic, and it may be that he did commit suicide. Perhaps, even, he told you the truth when he told you his dream."

"I shall always believe that," Mrs. Jones remarked.

"So shall I," said Mrs. Martin. "It is very unpleasant to destroy one's faith in anything. It is so much better to believe all one can: at least that is my opinion."

This opinion was handed down by the Duchess with an air which implied that no appeal could be taken.

Robert White wisely held his peace.

Then the train slackened before stopping at the station where Mrs. Martin's carriage was awaiting them.

Brander Matthews.

THE ONE PIONEER OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

MODERN ideas of unexplored lands are limited almost entirely to the North and South Poles, whither costly expeditions are constantly being despatched: while in South America alone there are the interiors of Guiana, Brazil, Patagonia, and Tierra del Fuego, besides smaller patches of only half-explored land, all calling for more attention than they have hitherto received.

The whole of Brazil has indeed been explored in a superficial sort of way: that is to say, there are certain narrow lines of explored land, chiefly along rivers which intersect the country; but only two people from all the civilized world have ever penetrated beyond the coast of Tierra del Fuego, though the coast itself has been well surveyed, and whalers' boats frequently land there for water.

One of these two pioneers is a Chilian lady who was shipwrecked on the coast, and saved alive by the chief of a Fuegan tribe which murdered all her companions. She was seen alive and happy by the other pioneer, a seaman, by name Thomas Thorold, who spent nearly six months in the interior of this strange country and came safe home to England again. It is his story that I propose to tell.

Less than six years ago an English sailing-ship, homeward bound from Valparaiso, foundered off the west coast of Tierra del Fuego during the cruel, wintry month of July. The crew got into three boats and pulled to the shore, which was not far distant. After rounding a headland, they found themselves in comparatively smooth water, surrounded by bare, bleak hills, beneath which there was a broad sandy beach, which would afford them easy landing.

But on this beach and about the foot of the hills they saw what above all things they dreaded,—the signs of the doom they felt must sooner or later be theirs,—the stunted forms of Fuegan natives, standing and lying about their rude huts and canoes.

As soon as the Fuegians espied them, they crowded into their canoes and rowed out towards them, while their shouts brought a multitude of natives to the beach, where they clustered like a flock of vultures hovering over their prey.

The Fuegians are a small race, with a dark copper-colored skin. The men are mostly clad in old vests and trousers that they have acquired from some shipwrecked crew, or from the steamers passing through the Straits of Magellan; others wear deer or guanaco skins. The women are dressed more simply in a single garment resembling a

poncho, made of some skin,—a simple square, with a hole in the middle for the head.

Their boats have none of the graceful gliding of the North American canoes, but are simply made of pieces of bark or wood clumsily tied together with fibres, and are awkwardly rowed with oars formed of poles with flat pieces of wood tied on to the end. The only manufacture in which these men—the lowest type of humanity—at all excel is that of barbed spear-heads, which they make with considerable skill of an almost transparent sort of flint, very similar to some of the arrow-heads used by the wild Bugrés of Brazil. These, dipped in poison and fixed on to long wooden shafts, become dangerous weapons for poor weary sailors to face who have nothing to defend themselves with but oars and stretchers.

Before the three doomed boats were within half a mile of the shore, they were surrounded by seven or eight canoes crammed with these gibbering aborigines, before whom the sailors were perfectly helpless, for from a considerable distance the unerring spears came hurtling towards them. The miserable men tried in vain to parry them. One by one they dropped into the bottom of the boat and died in agony, as the fiery venom from the spear-heads coursed through their veins.

Suddenly, when there were only two or three left untouched in each of the boats, one of the Fuegians, who seemed to be a chief among them, gave a shout that made all the others stand motionless, with spears poised in their hands; and he spoke to them in their loud, cracked language for a minute or more: it seemed years to the helpless men waiting to be killed.

At the helm of one of the boats sat the mate, Thomas Thorold, a tall, strong man of about thirty, towards whom the chief pointed several times as he was speaking. Soon he stopped shouting and gesticulating, and again the spears came whizzing from the strong savage arms.

But a change had taken place: the weapons were aimed at all the sailors except Thomas Thorold. He sat there untouched, expecting every moment to receive his death-wound, and receiving it not. Only he saw his companions dropping one by one, meeting their deaths bravely, as Englishmen are wont to do, but with features tortured into that rigid glare which indicates the height of suppressed terror and extreme suspense.

When at last the mate was the only living one left, to his horror they surrounded him, bound his hands and feet, and lifted him into one of their canoes. Then they turned towards shore, towing the three boats behind them.

Thorold, naturally supposing that they were keeping him for tor-

ture, and preferring immediate death to a deferred but more horrible fate, attempted to jump into the sea, or dash out his brains against the sides of the canoe; but they carefully prevented him from doing himself any harm. Arrived at the shore, they retired to their huts, leaving him, still bound hand and foot, upon the beach.

This was late in the afternoon, and all that night he lay there helpless, expecting every moment to be carried to the fire or some other torture. But they went about their business, gathering clams and mussels and eating them raw, collecting fuel and heaping up the fires, and never touched their prisoner at all; only they kept looking towards him, and crowds of little half-naked hideous children stood a few yards off and gazed at him in awe, and lean dogs came and snarled and sniffed at him suspiciously.

The tribe appeared to consist of between one and two hundred, and there were several rude huts formed of trees cut down and stuck close to one another in the ground, while their branches and foliage were tied together and formed an inefficient roof.

Fuegians appear to be insensible to cold, for, though the climate is as cold or even colder than the extreme north of Scotland, they do not attempt to make comfortable huts for themselves, and they wear nothing but the light clothing which I have described. At night, however, most of them slept by the fires, like dogs on a winter's night.

All that night long Thomas Thorold lay bound upon the beach, trembling with cold and terror, and praying, "Lord, now let me die!"

In the early morning he felt that his hour had come, for two or three of the Fuegians came towards him, and one of them had a knife in his hand. But when they had cut the fibre ropes that bound him they left him alone again, standing on the beach, free to do what he liked.

It was useless to think of flight, for their eyes were always upon him, and, besides, one man could have done nothing with a boat in the sea outside the bay. So after a while he obeyed the cravings of nature, and collected mussels and clams on the shore, as he had seen the natives do; and on this cold food he made a wretched breakfast.

Thus he spent all that day and all the next thirty-seven days, for he kept a careful count of the time. He ate only the miserable shell-fish that he found on the beach, drank water from a torrent that flowed down the mountain-side, and slept by one of the fires, which he boldly approached the first night after they unbound him, for he had experienced the cold of one wintry night, and that was enough.

They were neither kind nor unkind to him, but took no notice of him whatever: they never attempted to speak to him, even by signs,

except on one occasion when he wandered too far from them, and one of them ran after him and made signs to him to go back.

During the leaden-footed days he necessarily observed how the natives passed their time, but he did so without the slightest interest, and was unable to relate many details about them. Most of the work, such as hewing wood and drawing water, was done by the women; the men did very little, but spent their time mostly in lying about their huts. Sometimes a few of them went off in their canoes seal-hunting, and always returned with one or two seals; sometimes they went hunting inland, and returned with a guanaco,—a species of llama: then they all immediately fell upon it, tore it to pieces, and ate it raw. If a dead seal was washed ashore, they ate it in the same way, gorging themselves on the putrid blubber and flesh.

After these disgusting feeds they lay on the ground for hours in a torpor, and Thorold could easily have stabbed them as they lay asleep, but that some of the weaker ones, having been unable to secure much of the food, were awake and ready to cast their spears at him. Moreover, if he had killed them all, he would have been no better off.

All these weeks he was in a horrible state of suspense as to why he was being kept alive and what torture was preparing for him, so much so that he was unable to sleep for terror, until forced into unconsciousness by fatigue.

But on the thirty-eighth day an event occurred which, although in itself gruesome and terrifying, put into his heart a hope that he might some day return to the outer world again, and gave him a clue as to what was his captors' only conceivable object in preserving him alive.

It was about noon, on a fine cold day, when Thorold, standing on the beach and looking out to sea, saw two whalers' boats pull round the headland to a distant part of the shore, where they proceeded to land and get fresh water. The huts of the Fuegians were between Thorold and the new-comers, who apparently did not perceive the natives, and were quietly filling their water-casks at a stream.

As Thorold was following his natural impulse to run to them, get into one of their boats, and make them row away, he was pinioned by three or four strong natives. Then a few canoes put out to cut off the boats should they attempt to escape, and all the rest of the fighting-men, and many of the women, caught up their long spears and ran towards their victims.

To Thorold's surprise, he was made to run along with them. The whalers' men were intercepted before they got off, and then it was the old ghastly tale repeated: they were shot down to a man with the poisoned spears. All the while the Fuegians who were holding Thorold

made him understand that they wished him to watch what was going on, by gesticulating and pointing towards the slaughter.

After it was over they pillaged the dead bodies and the boats of everything they had, and then threw the corpses into the sea.

While Thorold was lying awake that night, and brooding over the horrible event, a sudden inspiration came to him that the object of the Fuegians in keeping him alive was to send him back to his people that he might tell them how they would be treated if they came to the land of the Fuegians,—to declare unending war between themselves and the white world; and though, of course, he never knew for a certainty, yet the way in which they made him watch the slaughter of the whalers' men, and everything that happened before and after, pointed to this explanation of their conduct. From that night his great fear and suspense were mingled with this grain of hope.

The next morning the Fuegians collected their belongings, which consisted of nothing but spears and knives, a few skins, and some utensils for holding water, and marched inland, taking their prisoner with them. They spent about six hours a day on the march, over difficult mountain-passes and down into deep valleys, making fires to sleep by at night, and living on guanacos, which they occasionally shot.

Thorold took little interest in observing the nature of the country, but he reported it to be very similar to that seen on the coast,—bleak mountains, with occasional copses of stunted trees, and all else absolutely barren and uncultivated. There is little doubt, however, that it is a treasure-house of mineral wealth; for various ores, including gold, are picked up in plenty on the coast, and there is every indication of coal. If a coal-mine was once got into working order here, it would be of inestimable value for the coaling of ships alone, as well as for use in South America itself, for coal is at present brought from England at great expense all the way to Montevideo, and to Sandy Point, in the Straits of Magellan, from the north of Chili.

On the fourth day of the march they met another tribe, also on the march, and the two bodies of men fell to fighting at once, as is their invariable custom. After an hour's fighting there were only about fifty men left of the first tribe: these surrendered, and became prisoners of war to their conquerors, who had also sustained heavy losses. The prisoners, however, did not appear to be regarded as slaves at all, but simply mingled with the victorious tribe. After the battle the prisoners spoke to their captors about Thorold, whom they brought forward, apparently explaining their object in keeping him; and he lived with the new tribe on exactly the same footing as he had done with the old one.

Nearly six months Thorold spent in this way, the tribe in which he

lived sometimes marching for five or six days, and then settling down for several weeks ; sometimes they were on the sea-shore, and then he lived as they did, chiefly on raw mussels and other shell-fish ; when they were inland he lived on pieces of raw guanaco, which he grabbed along with the others.

There is a story current in Chili that the Fuegians, when driven to necessity, first eat their dogs, the only domestic animal which they keep, and, when these are all gone, proceed to devour the old women of the tribe. Thorold saw no signs of cannibalism ; but this was perhaps because no necessity for it arose. He states that the old women were treated with especial care ; and it is doubtful whether this affection arose from the hearts or the stomachs of their grandchildren.

Five times he saw a fight with another tribe ; in three out of the five his tribe was conquered, and he changed hands, the prisoners always appearing to explain to their captors their object in keeping him.

Among the third tribe with which he lived he saw a white woman : she was the Chilian lady whom I have already mentioned ; and Thorold took the first opportunity of going up to her. The Fuegians held him back at first, for they regarded her as a goddess ; but at her command they let him approach her. They were unable to converse, for she spoke only Spanish and he only English ; but from that time Thorold was treated by the natives with more deference than before.

He was never allowed again to approach the Chilian woman, who appeared to be rather ashamed of her situation before him, but he saw her manner of life. She was the wife of the chief, and had apparently a large number of children. The natives treated her with great respect, and cooked meat for her, and made her a more elaborate hut than they made for themselves. Her dress was a mixture of civilization and barbarism. On the whole, she appeared satisfied with her strange life.

About four weeks after Thorold joined this tribe, another tribe came upon them ; there was a fight, and he changed hands. Just before the fight began, the Chilian woman went away with a few companions, and he saw her no more.

Towards the end of the sixth month the tribe which possessed Thorold reached a place on the sea-shore which consisted of a bay almost shut in by land. He had often reached a similar place, for there are many bays on that coast with an island facing them.

On the morning of the third day after they had reached this spot he was on the beach gathering his usual breakfast of shell-fish, when he heard a sound that sent the blood rushing towards his heart. It was the familiar sound of a steamer, and, looking up, he saw the black smoke floating away in the wind.

Then he knew that he was on the shore of the Straits of Magellan, and before he had time to consider how to secure his safety he had dropped on the beach in a dead faint; for six months' living in horrible suspense, without shelter, and with the poorest apology for food, had left him very little of his old strength.

On that day the steamer *Aconcagua*, of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, bound from Liverpool to Valparaiso, left Sandy Point and was proceeding westward through the straits. The bulwarks were crowded with passengers and officers and crew looking out for native canoes, for it is the custom of steamers passing through these straits to slow down, unless they are in a great hurry, and interview the natives in their canoes, ending by dropping over the ship's side a barrel filled with old clothes and tobacco and other things calculated to please the savage mind. Once or twice a couple of natives have been hoisted on board and shown round the steamer. With awe they gazed at the long saloon, and in horror they fled when they were taken down to the fire-room and a furnace door was suddenly opened at them, reminding them of a crater of one of the volcanoes that gave their land its name of Fire.

Before the awful adventure of Thorold, all that was known about these strange people was learnt in this way, and thus the curious fact was discovered that, although their near neighbors the Patagonians will drink all the rum and other fire-water they can lay their hands on, the Fuegians will take no alcohol of any kind, but, when offered it, turn away with the same appearance of disgust that a dog shows under similar circumstances, in this way, among others, showing how low they stand in the scale of humanity. Tobacco, however, they greatly appreciate.

On this occasion the passengers of the *Aconcagua* were not disappointed in their desire to see the natives. Several canoes were shooting out to meet them, and in one of them they saw, to their intense surprise, a white man standing up, and heard him shouting to them in English to "stop, for God's sake!" Of course they stopped. The canoes came alongside, and the white man was hauled up on deck without the slightest opposition from the Fuegians, and indeed by their evident desire.

On reaching the deck Thorold fainted. He was carried away and attended to by the doctor; and the natives, we may be sure, got a good toll that day. Several barrels were dropped over the ship's side, laden with all things that the savages could desire.

The rescued man soon recovered sufficiently to tell his wonderful story. He was taken to Valparaiso, and thence back again to England in the steamship *Galicía*, as a distressed British seaman.

During the first part of the voyage his mental faculties appeared to

be a good deal weakened. He would frequently hang over the bulwarks in a sort of stupor, and the doctor ordered any one who saw him in this state at once to approach him and touch him, and ask him what he was thinking of, until he answered them.

And the answer that came at last was always the same :

“ I was thinkin’ of how the faces of my mates looked when them savages was murderin’ of them.”

Randle Holme.

SILENCE.

WHY should I sing of earth or heaven? not rather rest,
Powerless to speak of that which hath my soul possessed,—
For full possession dumb? Yea, Silence, that were best.

And though for what it failed to sound I brake the string,
And dashed the sweet lute down, a too-much-fingered thing,
And found a wild new voice,—oh, still, why should I sing?

An earth-song could I make, strange as the breath of earth,
Filled with the great calm joy of life and death and birth?
Yet, were it less than this, the song were little worth.

For this the fields express; brown clods tell each to each;
Sad-colored leaves have sense whereto I cannot reach;
Spiced everlasting-flowers outstrip my range of speech.

A heaven-song could I make, all fire that yet was peace,
And tenderness not lost, though glory did increase?
But were it less than this, ’twere well the song should cease.

For this the still west saith, with plummy flames bestrewn;
Heaven’s body sapphire-clear, at stirless height of noon;
The cloud where lightnings pulse, beside the untroubled moon.

I will not sing of earth or heaven, but rather rest,
Rapt by the face of heaven, and held on earth’s warm breast.
Hushed lips, a beating heart,—yea, Silence, that were best.

Helen Gray Cone.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

MR. BRANDER MATTHEWS (in LIPPINCOTT'S for January) seems to think that the literary superiority, if not supremacy, of New York City is absolutely indisputable; and, no doubt, if the greatest accumulation of private publishing houses, newspapers, and periodicals is to be taken as settling the question of a literary capital, he has the argument all his own way. But I wish to point out that this does not exhaust the subject, and why.

If mere quantity is to be the test, let us not forget that the political capital is the seat of a publishing establishment (to wit, the government of the United States) compared with which the greatest of those beside the Hudson is altogether insignificant, and which in the volume, variety, and value of its output probably greatly exceeds all of them combined. I wonder how many of your readers have any distinct conception of the magnitude of the weekly issues of single bureaus. The patents of every week, for example, range from four hundred to five hundred, and even more, published individually and collectively, originally and repeatedly, in full and in synopses, and forming the basis for other publications, which again take divers forms. Every one of these, it should be noted, is a descriptive treatise of some one item, at least, relating to mechanical or scientific advance. This will serve as an instance, but is perhaps hardly so striking as the mass of contributions to history and to human knowledge generally which are continually pouring from the two great centres of the Capitol and the National Museum with its affiliations. In the nature of things New York City can have nothing to compare with these.

As to writers, any one who will think for a moment cannot fail to see that in a city like Washington they must outnumber proportionally those of an overgrown commercial mass like New York. Indeed, it might be maintained that the outnumbering is absolute, in spite of the difference in bulk of the cities themselves. Where else on the continent is there a town of any size in which a large element of the population is employed in work having a distinct literary element? Washington is not a city of buying and selling, handing things over counters and sending them off in barrels, or going wild over "quotations," but a city of legislation, administration, adjudication,—that is to say, of endless argument, description, explanation, persuasion, most of which takes the form of writing. Add to this the daily work of the scientific branches, including, besides all that is printed, who shall say how much dissertation, how many valuable notes and answers to inquirers, which never see the light. I maintain that a man with the requisite skill and facilities could gather every month from what is written in Washington enough to furnish forth a dozen magazines equal to the best that New York turns out. The material would not be the same; probably it would not be as popular; but that is the commercial side of the question only.

Perhaps Mr. Matthews would find fault with my definition of literature; but he has not given us anything precise to go upon. Moreover, it must be remembered that one great mass of this Washington writing does not differ in kind from what the *North American Review* serves up; that another might very

well go into the *Popular Science Monthly*, if there were room for it; that even a well-prepared patent-specification or argument on a point of practice is at least as legitimately literary as a descriptive article written to fit a string of illustrations, or the average work on a daily newspaper.

But if "literature" is to be confined to works of the imagination, and if we are to define rigidly, it would be quite possible to set up a standard which would exclude nearly everything that has been written in New York for the past ten years. Seriously, what has the great city to show for herself? I should say that in criticism—an ominous indication!—she appears to most advantage. The reading and rereading of Stedman's two volumes have given me such pleasure that I can hardly bring myself to find any fault with him; and indeed such chapters as those on Poe, Walt Whitman, and Tennyson in his relations to Theocritus must have a permanent value and charm; but, after all, the comparison with the best of contemporary English criticism is not to his advantage. To avoid vagueness, one may give as the high-water mark of this last the series of reviews contained in the *Athenæum* for the past half-dozen years or so, including, with many others, two of Tennyson, two of Rossetti, one or two of Browning, and one of the romantic and mystical element in Keats. These bear the marks of a single hand, and their total value would certainly outweigh Mr. Stedman's two volumes. Yet these latter surely rise a head and shoulders above anything else in the way of literature that New York has given us for a long time.

Of poetry, since the death of Bryant, the less said the better. It would be unkind to specify, even for the purpose of praise. Lumping the singers together, one may admit that there are perhaps six men of the metropolis who in as many years have produced each from two to ten beautiful trifles in verse, and that these, with others, have rolled out a considerable volume of rhythmical rhetoric which nobody can legitimately find fault with, except on the ground that it is practically dead already. The whole mass does not equal in value one of Walt Whitman's tonic and reckless effusions, or even the forest scene in Joaquin Miller's "With Walker in Nicaragua." New York could not hold either of these poets. The former has taken his veritable inspiration and deplorable extravagance to the suburbs of Philadelphia; and the other, his genius lost in a tropical tangle to those of Washington.

And now we come to the field of fiction,—the only one in which the country at large is able to make a creditable figure, and, *a fortiori*, that in which her "literary capital" ought to do so. One can imagine Father Knickerbocker, confronted with this problem, adopting Whittier's invocation, "Stand still, my soul, in the silent dark: I would question thee." A silent dark indeed; and sore need of questioning! Yet no lack of topics, truly: how can there be in such an awful seething mass of human life, passion, aspiration, misery? Quoting one of their minor poets, "'tis not a theme you want: you want a heart." Broadly, and in no spirit of unkindness, one can but arraign the whole crew of New York fictionists as lacking breadth, depth, vision, and the power of turning vision to account. Hence they fall back on "An Average Man" and "The House of a Merchant Prince;" that is to say, on upholstery and what corresponds to it in human life. The last two words of the latter title may almost be termed the shibboleth of New York. Her newspapers are always flaunting it; even Mr. Brander Matthews, from whom one might hope for something better, harps upon it in his recent novel, "The Last Meeting." But what a flattening out, what an utter vulgarization, of ideals! The princely type of man may not be the highest

type; he has defects enough, surely, and let us hope for something better; but nobody before the palmy days of New York ever undertook to flatter wealth by making him out a mere glutton of money. Alexander of Bulgaria is princely; one might forgive the application of the epithet to a man like Fitz-Hugh Lee or Wade Hampton, right or wrong, rich or poor; the merchant princes of Venice were princes first and merchants afterwards, with the typical merits and demerits of an hereditary oligarchy rather than a plutarchy; but the wealthy merchandisers of New York for the most part differ from the humblest tradesman who supplies them only in having more money than he, and more of certain educational and social advantages which money brings. It is time to have done with the affectation of princedom in such quarters, however estimable may be some of the individuals to whom it is ascribed. America has produced nothing more absurd, unless it be Mr. Howells's graded Massachusetts nobility, with leather-manipulators for Knights of the Bath and cotton-spinners for Knights of the Garter.

There is undoubtedly a certain kind of interest in our transplanted French school, of which Miss Green is the most notable professor. "The Leavenworth Case" and "Hand and Ring" may not be so good as Gaboriau, but they do not tire one so soon, and they have no elements in them with which the taste of an Anglo-Saxon as such gets out of patience. But it is hardly an indigenous growth. At its best it never equals the worst of Poe in that line; and at its worst it floods the country with cheap poison. Such as it is, New York may be accounted its headquarters and credited accordingly.

All in all, one does not find anything in recent New York narrative achievements which is more nearly fresh and distinctive than what one may call the Stocktonite cult. We have had the poetry of ingenuity till it palls on us a little; but the minor romance of ingenuity, as a copious element in magazine life, is still rather new. All tales of this sort are gotten up after a foreordained recipe. Perhaps Fitz-James O'Brien's "What was it?" lately awakened to a vampire life in the British critical papers, still remains the best specimen of such work. Here the method is frankly avowed. "Bulwer's 'Dweller on the Threshold' is frightful," reasons O'Brien (I don't pretend to give his exact words); "something else is more frightful still. Now, what would be most frightful of all?" And he stimulates his brain and works out a delectably horrifying conclusion. Mrs. Oliphant (I think it is) makes one of her characters advise a literary friend in this wise: "You want an original ghost-story? Your husband, a clergyman, thinks a human ghost irreverent. Very well, make yours the ghost of a *cat*. Other ghosts glide; make yours *jump*." That is exactly the spirit in which Mr. Stockton approaches the problem of shipwreck or apparitions or whatever else he may happen to have on hand. The unusual, the extravagantly incongruous, the mechanically new. The results are almost always entertaining for an idle hour; but they do not belong to art of a high order. This last never comes from the intellect alone; and even in so far as it comes therefrom it has something more important to say than "Guess!" or "Peek-a-boo!"

The field of Manhattan fiction may therefore be defined as a triangle, with the upholstery and stock-tape men occupying one angle, the amateur detectives and experts in murder another, and the puss-in-a-corner people and conundrum-ites a third. Mr. Matthews and many others occupy the intervening ground, not yet having decided on anything individual as distinguished from the above three types, nor absolutely become disciples of any one of them.

Now, there are regions which can make a better showing. Notwithstanding all that may be said of Henry James's verbal sins, his obvious superficiality of topic, his lack of versatility, and the too frequent application of analysis to things not worth analyzing, he is, more than any other, an exponent of the union of the scientific way of getting at things with the artistic way of setting forth things which is perhaps of all human attitudes the most modern. He founded a school, too, which has some claims on attention, and, in spite of his recent wanderings in the desert, his earlier productions ought to survive, and will. Mr. Howells was not so very far out with regard to his style, either. It has, when not overdone, a great and original charm for some of us, at least, and makes one forgive such blunders as representing an educated Boston gentleman to have been ignorant of the meaning of *morganatic* and other common words. Mr. Howells himself, who can hardly yet be claimed by New York, has also been presenting us with a fairly interesting gallery of portraits, some of which are very life-like, and has shown, besides, a tendency to dig into matters that really concern human life as we daily find it. There is something solid, something that will bear thinking about, in all his later books. I should say that "The Undiscovered Country" is, on the whole, the best.

But, after all, to get the real value and freshness of American literature one must go to the South and Southwest. Even writers like De Forest, who have come from a different region, have seemed always to do their best when working with Southern materials. "Kate Beaumont" remained the best story of that region until Baker's "Colonel Dunwoddie" appeared. Since then we have had "Old Creole Days," "The Grandissimes," "Dr. Sevier," "In the Tennessee Mountains," "Down the Ravine," "Where the Battle was Fought," "The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains," "Blue Dave," "At Teague Poteet's," and "Uncle Remus,"—to say nothing of others. I think that any three stories on that list would outweigh the whole literature of New York City for a decade. Perhaps, then, Atlanta or Murfreesborough might more reasonably be our literary capital than the vast, noisy, prosaic "city of many cities." Or we might shift it to that Pacific slope to whose influences we owe Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and Joaquin Miller.

But it would be as well to admit that centralization in literature has not advanced much faster than in politics, and that, so far as it exists at all, the centres coincide pretty fairly.

THIS is an age pre-eminent in organizations for all sorts of purposes. Business, pleasure, religion, art, science, all have their societies. Earth, air, and sea, past, present, and future, are parcelled out to zealous guardians. Outcasts, convicts, and pagans have their friends. Dumb beasts, trees, plants, minerals, fossils, skulls, and old bone-heaps have their overseers. Among all these various objects of study, amusement, protection, and charity, it would seem that almost everybody and everything was provided for. Nevertheless, there is a class of mankind which has hitherto been strangely overlooked.

Mrs. Gradgrind, when about to enter the arcanum of all mystery, thought she had discovered a new "ology." Unfortunately, she died before she could make it known to the world. Perhaps in that supreme moment she caught a glimpse of the region in which this unfortunate class habitually dwells, and perceived dimly, from afar, something of the part which it plays in the evolution of society, and something of the neglect and wrong that it in turn receives.

This class is what it is, not from choice, nor yet from circumstance, but from the tyranny of birth. Its characteristic features and functions are matters of mental organization and temperament: they cannot be put on and off like a garment. These unfortunates can no more help their peculiar constitution than the feeble-minded can. They are erratic, visionary, often irrational, without executive faculties, and too sensitive to endure the push and hurry and scramble of business; but it is not their fault.

Now, if it were possible in early childhood or infancy to discriminate this unlucky class with absolute certainty, the work of the proposed society might be greatly simplified. The line of profitable work, perhaps, would lie in the suppression of the class. A large number of babies could be gathered into a pound and quietly and mercifully chloroformed, instead of being left to the prolonged asphyxia of life.

Perhaps the reader has already divined that I refer to the race of poets. He may endeavor to put me to shame by citing the successful business career of the greatest dramatist the world has ever seen. He may further instance that unique writer of our own day, a genial essayist, an acute and accomplished critic, a genuine poet, who still is able to keep a cool head and steady hand while he manipulates the wheel of Fortune,—the stock exchange. Even so. Two swallows, however, do not make a summer, and it is still true that, as a rule, the poet as such is wholly unable to maintain himself in the struggle for life. There are, it is true, poets of the highest order who are in comfortable financial circumstances. This is because some ancestor with a business head prudently accumulated a fortune and then considerately withdrew from this stage of action and left his unhappy offspring to inherit it.

A few centuries back the matter stood upon a different basis. Society was not that exceedingly complex thing it is now. Generations of culture had not yet produced a very large number of those peculiarly sensitive and impressionable minds which belong to the poets. In those days men of wealth and distinction took great delight and satisfaction in connecting a poet with their establishment. Many poets were thus preserved. Doubtless many died lingeringly in poverty and obscurity, not even knowing, in some cases, what the matter was. Burns, at a later day, was "scotched," and Wordsworth was saved by a meagre legacy.

It will, doubtless, surprise most readers to be told that a poet can rarely, if ever, live by the product of his legitimate work. Have we not all been told how Mr. A— received a thousand dollars from the — Magazine, and Mr. B— a hundred dollars for a sonnet, only fourteen lines? Thereupon a mental calculation has followed like that of Major Pendennis: "Seven dollars a line, one hundred lines a day, three hundred and sixty-five days in a year—why, bless me! the fellow must fairly roll in wealth."

It may be possible that now and then a publisher has paid largely for the influence of a great name, or to secure a writer who has attracted sudden and wide-spread attention. It is also true that a soap-manufacturer may use the pages of the same magazine (the outside ones), at a hundred dollars or more per page, to advertise his wares. But what will the unknown or little known writer receive for his work? I am not speaking of the reams and cords of rubbish run off by machinery, and measurable with a ten-foot pole, which deserve merely waste-paper prices, but meritorious verse, recognized as such by editor and critic. How many pages will he be able to dispose of in the course of the year? Under favor-

able circumstances, a dozen or even twenty pages, paid for at rates varying from five to twenty dollars per page. By becoming the exclusive property of some one magazine or paper, he may possibly receive a little more, in the rare event of there being a demand for him.

So much for periodical literature. How does it stand in the matter of printed volumes? Recently one of the well-known and eminent American authors was consulted as to the publication of a volume of verse by one of the unknown. A kindly judgment as to the quality of the work was freely expressed, which was very grateful to the feelings of the obscure poet and helped to soften the disappointment that followed. The great man's verdict was that the poems had real merit but no commercial value. The only way to publish is to hire them printed by the job and draw your check for the expense. His own verse, which is almost if not quite the best written in America, he assured his listener scarcely paid the cost of publication. The matter then stands thus: If a poet is able in some other way to live, he can, in the course of three or four exceptionally fortunate years, earn enough by his contributions to periodicals to pay the expenses of publishing a modest volume of verse. "Write a novel," was the final word, "and you will find an audience." Write a novel, indeed! Who was it who asked, when told that the people were starving, "Why can't they eat bread-and-butter?" That there are poets who are something more is not denied. Some of these can write novels. Others may succeed in various departments of prose literature. They may do other things. Some, very likely, might teach a country school. Others could possibly edit a village newspaper. Many could drive a horse-car or tend a butcher-shop. And agriculture stretches out its all-embracing arms to the multitude. Still, we were speaking of poets and the possibility of their earning a living by the practice of their art. And suppose there is now and then one who, foregoing all family ties and living in a garret, has the rare (or ill) fortune to prolong his death-in-life existence for a few years solely by the exercise of his poetic faculty, what is the price he pays for it? What is the nature of the work for which he receives so munificent a reward? What, indeed, is the poet? The Danish philosopher shall answer: "He is an unhappy man who conceals deep tortures in his heart, but whose lips are so formed that, while the sigh and the groan stream over them, they sound like beautiful music. It happens to him as to the unfortunates who in Phalaris's bull were slowly tortured at a low fire, and whose cry could not reach the ear of the tyrant to terrify him: to him they sounded like sweet music. And men gather around the poet and say to him, 'Sing again soon,'—that is to say, 'May new sufferings torment your soul, and may your lips continue to be shaped as before; for the cry would indeed trouble us, but the music is delightful.' And the reviewers gather around and say, 'That is right. Thus should it be according to the rules of *Æsthetics*.'" This, my clear, hard-headed business friend, I do not expect or ask you to understand. It is not and cannot be stated in terms of dollars and cents. There is one side of the poet's work which you can, however, appreciate. Suppose, on some rainy day when you are not busy, you undertake the construction of a sonnet. I am merciful: I don't ask you for the thought, the sufferings, or the music. See about what effort is required to overcome the mechanical difficulties of such a composition. You have heard, perhaps, how long Gray was in writing the *Elegy*. Will you kindly cipher out his earnings per day at any the most extravagant sum ever received by any poet for any poem of the same length?

From all that has been said, I trust it is now clear that the poet, as a poet, has no longer a place in the economical system of the world. Through the law of the survival of the fittest, he must disappear, unless society by some concerted action shall prevent his total extinction. Whether this is worth while may indeed be questioned, and this I do not propose to discuss.

"But what plan or suggestion have you for the benefit of this class?" asks the practical man. Nothing,—nothing at all, my friend. I am not a business-man, or a man of executive abilities, or a man of horse sense. My deficiencies in that line only emphasize the point I have striven to make. I am myself a member (I say it modestly) of the class to whose wrongs I wish to call attention.

How would it do (I speak as a fool) to start a magazine devoted wholly to poetry and poets? Doubtless it would cost a great deal of money and return very little. So does the work of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, for example, and there is no income whatever from the business.

That difficult and delicate problems will be encountered by the proposed society is freely conceded. I am not so wild and irrational as to suggest that everything called poetry should be published or paid for. There are many persons with what may be called the poetic temperament who are not poets. There are, of course, vast crowds who write verse and have not even the justification of a poetic temperament or poetic sensibility. It is the province of the society gently but firmly to turn back such to other legitimate callings. This is as much in the interest of poetry as is the encouragement, through actual aid and still more necessary sympathy, of the genuine poet. Whatever direction the work of such a society is to take, it is not and cannot be a mere charity. Doubtless it would find plenty of people ready to take its gratuities; but they would not be the poets. The poet asks only that he may live by the exercise of the high faculties with which he is endowed, and to give a full equivalent for all he receives.

There came a day when the last minstrel disappeared from the age and country he had adorned, amused, and illustrated. Left to the mere laws of supply and demand, the time seems to be coming when the last poet will disappear among the vortices of business into the dark abysm of time.

It is a little odd that Mr. Howells's very latest utterance of his literary creed, to the effect that the office of fiction is primarily "to verify the externals of life, to portray faithfully the outside of men and things," should appear in the same magazine with the close of a novel which is a distinct break in Mr. Howells's own methods of representing life. The charm of "Indian Summer"—and it will rank with the most charming of the author's work—is that it deals hardly at all with "the externals of life," but portrays so faithfully the inside of men and things. Perhaps Mr. Howells will claim that he has not abandoned his theories after all, because in dealing with complex motive and mental stress he nevertheless has not deviated from the ordinary mixed motive and mental suffering, and so in allowing no heroics has remained true to actual human nature. Mr. Howells cannot abide a hero, and if we charge him with having given up the external for the internal he will probably save himself by saying, "Well, at least I have not gone into the supernatural." This is quite true; for the people who think and suffer and atone in "Indian Summer" are quite ordinary people, after all; but nevertheless, while it perhaps marks an unconscious broadening, or rather deepening, of the author's outlook, it makes a complete break in purpose and style

as compared with Mr. Howells's earlier work. It is almost his first spiritual work, using the word spiritual not in the least in any religious sense or to mark any unusual degree of intellectual delicacy, but simply to define the difference in this latest novel as one of mind, not manner. It deals not with what people said or did, but with what people thought and suffered at perfect variance with what they said or did. Mr. Howells has hitherto entertained us greatly with his clever catching and reproduction of the externals of men and things, chiefly of men. He has given us almost a surfeit of manners, and in "Silas Lapham" indulged in a gently cynical, amusingly ironical study of the singular fact that in this life at least our manners seem to count for more than our qualities. In "Indian Summer" there is still an abundance of manners; perhaps Mr. Howells would say more manners than ever, because the manners conceal so much. But he has given us, too, all that lay behind the outward expression, so that the by-play to the reader is that of a clever "My Double and how he undid me." In "Silas Lapham" every character is remarkable for its distinct simplicity; in "Indian Summer" every character has a Double which works so nearly to his or her undoing as to keep the reader in anxious suspense, not as to what Colville is going to do with Imogene, but what Colville is going to do with himself. True, Mr. Howells does not afflict us with analysis; there are no long paragraphs as to Colville's secret feelings; but the reader is very cleverly made to understand that Colville is feeling something, whatever he may be saying or doing, and the emotional strain is kept up with a skill that makes us gasp with relief when the engagement is broken. In "Silas Lapham" we have the emotions of people who, if they "get mad," go out and bang the door; in "Indian Summer" we have the emotions of people who never bang the door, but who may be supposed singularly often to be very, very mad. The banging of the door was amusing as a clever reproducing of "externals," but the complexity of emotion in those who don't bang doors is infinitely more entertaining, while its delineation requires a much higher order of skill. Mrs. Bowen's letter to Imogene's mother is a bit of insight into the workings of a woman's mind, infinitely more amusing and more wonderful than mere photographic reproduction of womanly inconsequence and absurdities.

Not only has Mr. Howells thus risen above his own standards in this latest work, but he has risen above the standards of other novelists in one unique respect. His treatment of the "Indian Summer" of life as having a distinct charm of its own, capable of charming far more deeply than the loveliest spring, is original and welcome. When we first come across the conflict between Imogene and Mrs. Bowen, we think we recognize pathos depending on the old hackneyed material of love and attractiveness outwitted by mere youth. What a new and delicate touch Mr. Howells gives to the situation in making Mrs. Bowen win the day, after all! For, essentially, Mrs. Bowen is in no way Imogene's superior. She is neither very noble, nor very beautiful, nor very wise; it is probable that at Imogene's age she was not any more "literary" than poor Imogene. Imogene herself is neither a flirt, nor a beauty, nor a bore; there is nothing the matter with her but her youth. Both are examples of the average society womanhood; neither is remarkable in any respect. It is a case of pleasant, bright, attractive womanhood plus experience *versus* pleasant, bright, attractive womanhood plus youth. In the average novel youth always wins the day; but Mr. Howells has given a touch wonderfully true in yielding the palm to experience. Old age is dark and unlovely, has been the cry from time immemorial; but one does not

need to attain to the "*senectute*" of Cicero before acknowledging the gracious fascination that belongs to the middle station of life, when large and generous experience has mellowed even very average beliefs and aspirations. The woman who has known, who has seen, who has felt, if she have emotional genius enough to give expression to herself, will win the palm every time over the girl who can look up at you with wonderful eyes,—unless, indeed, you too happen to be young; and even then, if the older woman does not scorn your youth, she can make you adore what she has gained over you simply by growing old. None of us wish to be any older than we are; but few of us would care to be younger.

All this is new in a novel. True, we have had plenty of charming elderly people in fiction: was there not once a "Baby's Grandmother" who was grace and fascination personified? But then in most of these cases age has been charming because it had managed by hook or by crook to retain the prerogative attractiveness of youth. It had kept its bright eyes, its alert step, its readiness to amuse and be amused, its pretty face, its winsome light-heartedness. But Mrs. Bowen conquered Colville not by what she had retained, but by what she had outgrown. That she was not like Imogene in the one fact of youthfulness was the one charm which won her triumph over Imogene. She was not in any way more delightful than her *protégée*, except in being older. Bravo, Mr. Howells!

WHETHER or no co-operation is to prove the universal solvent of domestic difficulties, one thing is certain,—a judicious co-operation in some little things would very much lighten people's burdens. This is especially true in the item of mending,—an item appalling to the house-mother of many cares and average income, and simply paralyzing to the bachelor and the self-supporting single woman. Coats and trousers come almost by nature, like reading and writing; and so, in these blessed days of the "ready-made," does underclothing of all sorts. The dresses of a woman even of moderate means may be put out, or a good dress-maker employed at home. At the worst, it is a woe which occurs at rare and somewhat regular intervals, and one meets it forewarned, and therefore fore-armed. But the mending! Like death, it has all seasons for its own; and yet, unlike the other dread foe, it is forever "getting behindhand." And there is never any one to be hired to keep along with it.

There's the rub: there really is no one to do the mending. The time of a skilled dress-maker is too precious; it would be, or at all events it would seem to be, more valuable than the garments to be mended. A common seamstress, one who lives by doing slop-work, simply refuses to undertake it.

A most exasperating fact it is that among the thousands of needle-women who are clamoring for work there is no one to be found to do this work. Froude has shown us Carlyle as exceedingly irate over this deplorable paradox; and there are few women, married or single, who will deny that for once at least he did well to be angry. Many of these very women, while taxing their brains and overtaxing their strength in the cause of the ill-paid needle-woman, have found it utterly impossible to procure a day's mending at fair wages to be done in their own houses. To their utter surprise and discomfiture, they have found the poor seamstress persistently refusing to leave the miserable slop-work on which she is slowly starving; and they cannot but wonder at the stupid obstinacy which blinds the wretched creature to her own advantage.

In fact, it is the poor needle-woman that is the wiser, and the philanthropic ladies, with all their social science, that are mistaken. The working-woman

knows by sad experience, or by a more pitiful prescience, how much worse than worthless is chance-work, how well paid soever it may be. Better for her the steady starvation wages of the slop-shop than the risk of a week of idleness after a day or two of well-paid industry.

Here it is that co-operation comes in and meets the double difficulty. It is because such work *is* chance-work that it is not welcome. Let it become regular and sure, and the difficulty is gone. If ten or twenty house-mothers and single women would combine and pledge themselves to give, say two hundred and fifty days' work in the year, they would find it a perfectly simple matter to discover a neat needle-woman glad to undertake the work at the lowest market-price, and her own condition would be vastly improved.

But for such co-operation to be possible requires certain virtues, common enough among men, but not too often felt to be the duty of women. A little forethought would be needed, and an accurate estimate by each co-operator of the amount of employment she could give, a little mutual forbearance in the allotting of times and seasons, *not* a little self-denial in the adjustment of domestic arrangements, so that loyal adherence to the prearranged plan would be possible. But all the difficulties inherent in the scheme are slight indeed compared with its advantages.

Such co-operation is admirably adapted to provide support for that most pitiful class of womankind, those whom we have always with us, the women who have "seen better days," and who, never having learned to do anything else really well, now have no better weapon with which to meet that deadly foe, the wolf at the door, than the needle and the one dainty womanly art of making "auld claes look amais as weel's the new." The States Charities Aid Association of New York City, in undertaking to procure the mending of linen for single gentlemen, has thus found itself performing a double charity and conferring a benefit on two of the most helpless classes of human beings. Every considerable community must possess one or more women of the very class needed for such employment,—women not coarsely unsuited for admission into the domestic circle, not trained to any but the most commonplace and least skilled needlework, yet capable of doing that work in a superior, almost an artistic, manner; and these are the women who would make this scheme of co-operation a success.

The same system of co-operation in little things applies to the matter of "days' work" in washing and cleaning,—the difficulty of finding competent women, and their exorbitant charges and exasperating "independence" when found. Success in such a scheme would require that some at least of its promoters should have imagination enough to conceive of the possibility of washing being done on some other day than Monday, and scrubbing on another than Saturday. For it all depends upon the fact that the woman who can find employment on only two or three days in the week, days when every other woman is in demand, must charge more and will be less careful to please than one who may be sure of daily work, but who knows that there are many other women who would be thankful to get her place.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1886.

*TAKEN BY SIEGE.**

CHAPTER VI.

BESSIE ARCHER was the only child of wealthy parents, and her one trouble in life was that she had no serious occupation. She had a much better mind than the average girl, and she was intelligent enough to be conscious of her own shortcomings. She wanted to be great, and she was only clever. Her father had taken unusual pains with her education, and the advantages that he would have given to a son were as far as possible given to her. She could translate Heine and De Musset very gracefully, and had put Horace into respectable English verse. Some of her Heine and De Musset translations she had set to music, and she sang them with a great deal of taste. But she tired of translating, and writing songs began to bore her. She wanted to do something of more consequence in the world. Having been born and brought up in luxury, she thought she would like to be a labor-reformer, and so she attended some noisy meetings at the Cooper Union, accompanied by her cousin Archie Tillinghast. Instead of being disillusionized thereby, she got up quite a sentimental feeling about the "horny-handed sons of toil." So regularly did she attend these meetings that she became known by sight to some of the professional agitators, and one of them made bold to call at her house and ask her for funds to carry on the good work. He was a smooth-tongued fellow, and he urged her to write a labor-reform pamphlet, which he engaged to print and send broadcast over the land,—if she would pay the expenses.

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But the labor-reformers palled upon her after a while, and she began to think deeply upon the subject of negro equality. She talked about it to every one who would argue or agree with her. She attended some meetings held to discuss the subject, and once invited the African orator home to dinner. She said that she had "no vulgar race-prejudices;" but her father had, and the dinner-party did not come off. Encouraged by her patronage, the orator told her one day that he had no vulgar race-prejudices either, and that he would as lief marry a white woman as a colored one. He advanced this belief with so much meaning that Miss Archer rang the bell and ordered the servant to put the orator out of the house. After that day she carefully avoided the subject of negro equality, and turned her attention to the amelioration of the condition of the Indian. This fancy pleased her longer than usual; but after she had made quite a collection of Indian trophies, and read a good deal, more particularly poems, of Indian literature, she went out to the Plains to visit a friend who had married an army officer. There she saw the Indian divested of romance. She thought him a very uninteresting personage, and preferred the legends of the poets to the facts that stared her in the face on the Plains.

At the time when Rush Hurlstone became acquainted with her she was deeply interested in esoteric Buddhism, and had attended some questionable meetings at the apartment of the high-priestess of Buddha, a certain Madame Parapoff, who drew around her a wholly Bohemian and partially vicious lot of people, mostly men, among whom she sat smoking cigarettes and discoursing of the strange things she had seen in India. She wore a brooch which she said had been plucked out of the forehead of a departed Hindoo and placed at her throat. Did any one doubt her? There was the brooch.

Madame Parapoff was a very clever woman, and had written a book entitled "The Rending of the Veil," which no one read, but which every one said was a wonderful production. It was in two large folio volumes, filled with illustrations, showing the veil before and after the rending, and giving the mystic signs known only to those who had sought faithfully for esoteric information on this subject.

Madame Parapoff, as I have said, was clever, but she had a face that would frighten off any one who was not particularly anxious to learn that which she alone professed to teach. Bessie Archer was never more alarmed in her life than on her first visit to Madame Parapoff's "bungalow," as the latter called it. She had never seen such a looking woman before: her face repelled her, but her manner was reassuring. The Russian was a thorough woman of the world, and she saw that in this visitor she had a fish of a new sort to deal with, who could not be caught

with the common bait thrown to the men around her. Only the choicest morsel would attract her. She must be careful not to offend her by speaking too plainly before her at first, and she must not give her her famous pamphlet, "Naked, and not Ashamed," to read until she was quite sure of her. Bessie had induced her useful cousin, Archie Tillinghast, to accompany her to Madame Parapoff's. Archie didn't want to go at all, but he was convinced that Bessie would go alone if he didn't go with her.

"Rum girl, Cousin Bess," he said to Rush; "bright as a dollar, but slippery as an eel; you never can tell where she is going to bob up. Beastly place, that Parapoff's. A lot of hairy men, smelling of whiskey and tobacco-smoke, lolling around the floor on skins, puffing their vile pipes in the face of the priestess, who sat on a sort of raised place in a big chair, and smoked cigarettes, partly in self-defence and partly to show her very white and well-kept hands and handsome rings. Hers were the only clean hands in the room. Such a lot of tramps! I don't believe they had a change of shirts among them."

"And did Miss Archer find pleasure in their society?" asked Rush.

"She tried to think she did. At any rate, she was doing something out of the common; and there is great satisfaction in that to some people, old boy," answered Archie. "I'm very fond of Bessie, otherwise you wouldn't find me trotting around to these tiresome places with her,—labor-reform meetings, negro-equality meetings, and Indian meetings. 'If you won't go with me, I'll go alone,' she says; and what's a fellow to do? Duty calls, and I obey."

This conversation took place at the Pow-Wow Club, where Archie and Rush were dining according to the promise given in a previous chapter. They had a good dinner and a pow-wow that did honor to the name of the club. As they sat over the walnuts and the wine, Archie took fifteen dollars from his pocket, and said, "Here is the rest of your money, old boy: I have deducted the five dollars. I struck old Penny-packer for twenty. Let's see what you've written."

Rush, a little embarrassed, tried to put off the evil moment.

"Nonsense, man!" said Archie. "Out with them. You know this is not supposed to be poetry. I'm not a critic: anything with a rhyme will do, so long as you get in the magic word *Damascene*."

So Rush pulled the papers out of his pocket, and puffed vigorously at his cigar with an assumed air of indifference. Archie spread the sheets out before him, cracked the soft-shelled almonds with one hand while he held the manuscript with the other, and read the following lines:

Like the blushes that paint the sunrise
 Are the blushes on her cheek ;
 And the thrush's note in the woodland
 I hear when she doth speak.
 Like a feather that's lightly blowing
 Is her white and tiny hand :
 Ah, she's the fairest maiden
 In all the broad green land.
 But the sweetest charms she owneth
 Are her hands so pearly white ;
 For she washes them with *Damascene*
 Each morning and each night.

"Bravo! bravo!" he exclaimed. "You could not have done better if you'd been in training for a month. This is just the thing." And, hastily glancing over the others, "Ah, I see you've dropped a little humor into these. That's good; but it's the sentiment that fetches old Pennypacker. You've more than earned your money: so I hope your conscience is at ease."

Rush reassured him on this point by pocketing the money, and at the same time he told him that his prospects at *The Dawn* office were improving; but he didn't say where his assignment had taken him, for fear of betraying himself if he spoke upon a subject so near his heart.

"Now, Rush, my boy," said Archie, looking at his watch, "I don't like to appear rude, but you know I told you I had three receptions this evening. One is that of the Daughters of Sappho, who hold their annual reunion at Delmonico's; but that won't keep me long. I'll get a programme and flee. The other is at the house of the California millionaire, McMulligan, who owns a palace in Fifth Avenue; and that will not delay me either, for the genial McMulligan himself has promised me a printed list of his guests. Then we will fly to my uncle Archer's, where we are sure to have a pleasant evening."

So, donning their overcoats, the two set out.

They walked down to Delmonico's, then in Fourteenth Street, where the Daughters of Sappho were having a grand time. The meeting had been called to order when they arrived, and Mrs. Lavinia Hopper-Walker was beginning her essay on "The Weaker Sex," which she proved to their entire satisfaction to be the male.

"Who behaves the most calmly in times of emergency?" asked Mrs. Hopper-Walker,— "the woman or the man? I need hardly say it is the woman. The woman will endure suffering without flinching, while a man in the dentist's chair has been known to kick great holes in the wall while his teeth were being filled." (Applause.) "Who are seized with panic at a fire?—the men or the women? Statistics will prove to

you that half the trouble during a fire in a theatre or other public hall is invariably caused by the pushing and crowding of the men, who will stamp out the life of any one who gets in their way. If this is not proof that man is the weaker vessel, what is? To me it is sufficient." (Great applause.)

But Mrs. Hopper-Walker thought that the others needed further proof; for she continued to present them with statistical evidence for half an hour longer at least. In the mean time Archie found the president of the club, Mrs. Merrie May, who gave him a programme of the evening's exercises and a printed synopsis of the different speeches. While Archie was attending to his duties, Rush was looking about the room at the strange people ranged along the wall. A gentleman with a very high forehead and a blond beard that grew in irregular spots about his face wherever it could pierce the surface tapped him upon the shoulder after a while, and said,—

"I saw you at the office of *The Dawn* the other day, so I presume you are a reporter and would like some points for an article for your paper,—the names of the distinguished people here this evening, etc." And, before Rush could say that he was not there as a representative of his paper, the man ran his fingers through his straggling locks and, drawing himself up to his full five feet four inches and a half, said, "The lady reading the address is Mrs. Lavinia Hopper-Walker," adding, in a most impressive whisper, "my wife. I am Tobias T. Hopper-Walker. T. stands for Tartar. My mother was a Tartar."

Rush thought that his wife was a Tartar also, but he didn't say so.

"Mrs. Lavinia Hopper-Walker is a most remarkable woman, sir. She can take the floor against any man, and shut him up before he knows where he is."

Rush looked at Mrs. Hopper-Walker, who at this moment was making one of her most cutting remarks at the expense of man. Her eyes were fixed upon her husband, and the expression of superiority that passed over her face was a study for a tragedian. The expression on his face would better have served the comedian, it was so self-deprecatory and showed such satisfaction in being the weaker vessel.

"This is a most representative gathering," he whispered. "There is Mrs. Ann Amelia de Johnstone, president of the 'Women Who Dare Society.' It meets every week at her house in Williamsburg, where it enjoys a most intellectual evening."

Rush looked in the direction indicated by Mr. Hopper-Walker's long forefinger, and saw a woman with a high forehead decorated with thin, tight curls. Her eyes were large, and their prominence was exaggerated by the powerful glasses she wore on her very *retroussé* nose.

Indeed, her nose turned up with so much determination that it carried her upper lip with it, exposing her two large front teeth to public gaze.

"Mrs. Johnstone is very clever," continued Hopper-Walker. "She writes for the magazines and pamphlets by the score. I suppose you have read her book on the form of marriage-proposals among the ancient Egyptians? She holds that women proposed in those days, and advocates the olden custom. Mrs. Hopper-Walker has written an answer to this, in which she proves that the custom is even older than Mrs. De Johnstone claims, and that that lady's theories have been in actual practice in this country for years. It is a good custom for some women. I know a number who would not have been married if it had not prevailed." He cast a furtive glance in the direction of Mrs. Hopper-Walker, who was just taking her seat amidst the most enthusiastic applause.

At this moment Archie put his arm through Rush's and said it was time for them to be off. Rush thanked Mr. Hopper-Walker, and the two young men went down-stairs to the café and seated themselves at a small table. While they drank a jug of German seltzer, Archie wrote out his report of the Sappho and sent it down to *The Trumpet* office.

"There's nothing pleases them like getting copy in early, dear boy. Now let us hie to my uncle Archer's, where I will leave you while I do the McMulligan's. As I told you before, that won't delay me long. Cousin Bess will take care of you while I am interviewing McMulligan on the cost of his entertainment."

From Delmonico's they strolled up-town as far as Twentieth Street, where they turned off to the home of the Archers in Gramercy Park. The moon was shining brightly upon this exclusive little park, and upon the ladies in their handsome wraps who were running gayly up the Archers' front steps and disappearing in a blaze of gaslight through the door. This was to be Rush's introduction to New York society,—a thing he had heard a great deal about and regarded with more or less awe. He was just at an age when society is most attractive. He was very susceptible to beauty, and he considered Helen Knowlton the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. And so she certainly was, for she was the only beauty he had seen who was not of a more or less rustic type, and, notwithstanding his country bringing up, he had little taste for rusticity in women. This first appearance in the social world was a great excitement to him, and he was very much afraid that he would do something in violation of the proprieties. So he determined to do as his friend Tillinghast did; and he could not have had a better guide in such matters. To Archie he said nothing about his embar-

rassment, and there was nothing in his manner to lead his friend to suspect it.

The two young men, as the ladies had done before them, ran lightly up the steps and entered the hall, where Rush almost had his breath taken away by the dazzling light and the perfume of flowers. He followed Archie up-stairs, where they left their top-coats; and, taking a sidelong glance at himself in the mirror to see that his tie had not ridden up over his collar and that his hair was not too much rumpled, he descended with Archie to the drawing-room. Here a gorgeous scene presented itself. The long rooms were brilliantly lighted with wax candles and decorated with more flowers than Rush had ever seen together in his life. The ladies were dressed in their finest Paris gowns; but it was not so much the dressing as the want of it that astonished our young countryman: the older the ladies were, the less they seemed to fear the cold.

Archie presented him at once to his uncle and aunt and to his cousin Bessie, for whom Rush immediately conceived the friendliest feelings. Bessie Archer certainly was an attractive girl. She was handsome and well made, and she looked like a girl who enjoyed good health. Her complexion was brilliant, her teeth dazzling, and her clear, gray-blue eyes looked as strong as an eagle's. Although she was an exceptionally clever girl, she was not a bit of a prig, and her manner was remarkable for its cordiality. When she took Rush by the hand she gave him such a firm, pleasant grip that he said to himself, "Here is a girl worth knowing; she shakes hands like a man; none of your flimsy, lackadaisical touching of the fingers, such as some girls give." And Bessie liked Rush at once. She had heard such pleasant things about him from Archie that she was naturally prejudiced in his favor; and it was impossible to look in his honest, manly face and not like him. "Now, Hurlstone, old fellow," said Archie, after introducing his friend to his cousin, "I will leave you to Cousin Bess's tender care and go where duty calls."

"I'm sure you could not leave me where I would rather be," said Rush, as glibly as though he had been "in society" all his life.

"Perhaps you will have a different tale to tell when Archie comes back," said Cousin Bess.

"I shall only speak more positively then," replied Rush, with a bow that Count d'Orsay might have envied.

At that moment the band, stationed in another room, struck up the music of a waltz, and there was a general movement of pleasant anticipation among the young people. Their elders drew up along the wall, and the dancers took their places on the floor.

"Do you dance, Mr. Hurlstone?" asked Miss Archer. "If you do, I will give you this waltz. I was saving it for Archie; but the poor fellow is not through with his day's work yet."

"No, Miss Archer," replied Rush, "I do not dance. I have heretofore looked upon a dancing man with a feeling of superiority; but now I regard him with envy, and for the first time regret that the steps of the waltz are a sealed book to me."

"I am very sorry, too; for I am afraid you are going to have a dull time, as this is a dancing company to-night. However, I will try and find a young lady whose conversation will in a measure alleviate your disappointment. Will you take something intellectual or something frivolous?" As Miss Archer asked this question, her eyes turned towards two ladies standing on the opposite side of the room.

Rush's eyes followed hers, and he answered, "Something frivolous, please."

So they threaded their way through the dancers, and he was introduced to Miss Gertie Gaston.

"How is it you are not dancing this evening, Miss Gaston?" Rush inquired, for he felt quite sure that she was one of the dancing girls.

"Do you want to know?"

"I am consumed with curiosity."

"Because I hate a plain waltz, and none of these men know the 'dip,'" she answered, with a show of annoyance.

"What ignorance! I fancied New York men knew everything. To think of it! grown men, and not know the 'dip'!"

"You know it?" said Miss Gaston, half rising.

"Alas, no!" replied Rush; "but, then, I am not a New York society man."

"Where are you from,—Boston or Philadelphia?"

"Neither: I came direct from the country,—from the abode of the milk-pail and the sausage."

"Really! and you work on a farm?—get up at five in the morning, milk the cows, and all that sort of thing?"

"I never have; but I dare say I could, if the cows would let me try."

"I should not think you would care to try," said Miss Gaston, with a movement of disapproval. "I should think a man might find something more manly to do than milking cows."

"No doubt he might; dancing, for instance?"

"Yes, indeed. He could learn the 'dip' in much less time than it would take him to learn to milk a cow."

Rush looked at the young lady to see if she was guying him, but the

expression of her face showed that she was thoroughly in earnest. He began to wish that he had chosen the intellectual lady, but the snatches of her conversation that reached him were not tempting. "I maintain," she was saying to a bald gentleman who was doing his best to suppress a yawn, "I maintain that Greek should be taught in the public schools; and you, Mr. Garside, should look to it, as a member of the Board of Education, and see that our young girls and boys are taught that classic language instead of these vile modern tongues that are only useful for mercantile pursuits. Greek is a purely intellectual language. Herodotus would——" But here Bessie Archer whirled past Rush in the arms of West Hastings, and gave him one of her sweetest smiles as she passed: so he never knew what Herodotus would have done.

Rush wished from the bottom of his heart that the dancing would stop, and that he might have a chance to talk a little with Miss Archer, who was quite as bright, he saw, as her cousin had represented her to be. The thought had hardly passed through his mind when the music ceased and the dancers strolled off in pairs. A young man dressed in the extreme of the fashion relieved him of Miss Gaston, and he stood for a moment leaning against the wall, wondering where Miss Archer was, when suddenly his heart gave such an upward lunge that he thought for a few seconds he should suffocate. But it soon fell back to its natural place, and left him at liberty to feast his eyes upon the radiant face of Helen Knowlton, as she entered the room accompanied by her aunt and an old gentleman whom he had no difficulty in recognizing as Uncle Lightfoot Myers.

A subdued murmur of admiration ran through the room as the prima donna stood for a moment on the threshold, looking about her for the host and hostess. In a moment West Hastings was by her side and conducting her on his arm to Mr. and Mrs. Archer, while Aunt Rebecca followed on the arm of Uncle Lightfoot. Rush ground his teeth at the assured manner in which Hastings took his place at Miss Knowlton's side. Then he tried to laugh at himself for being such a fool. "Of course they are engaged, or the next thing to it, and I am making myself miserable as foolishly as a man ever did." He got some comfort, however, from two men who stood chatting near by him.

"Is Helen Knowlton engaged to West Hastings?" asked one of the other.—"No," was the reply; "and she never will be engaged to Hastings or any other man while Aunt Rebecca lives. She may come near it fifty times, but I'll wager you anything you like that Aunt Rebecca Sandford is not going to let 'that child' put her head into the noose. And she's about right. Come, let's go out and have a B. and

S." And they sauntered out, leaving Rush in a pleasanter state of mind than he was in five minutes before. If Helen Knowlton was not engaged to West Hastings or to any other man, then he didn't see that his chances were utterly worthless; at any rate, he was not going to retire from the field until after he had done some prospecting. Rush Hurlstone, though as modest a young man as you would meet in a day's walk, was firm in the belief that a man could accomplish anything he made up his mind to do, provided it was at all within the possibilities. If he had seriously set his mind upon being President of the United States, he would have gone quietly along working towards that end, thoroughly convinced that he would accomplish his object. But he had no political aspirations. His ambition ran in another channel.

Helen Knowlton was now chatting with Bessie Archer and three or four men at the opposite end of the room. Rush's eyes were fastened upon her. He was thinking of her with all his mind, and she probably felt the magnetism of his glance, for she looked up, and, recognizing the face without being able to tell where she had seen it, she bowed to him in her most cordial manner. Aunt Rebecca, who never forgot the face of a newspaper-man, bowed too, and motioned for Rush to come over to their side of the room,—an invitation he was not slow in accepting.

"How are you?" she said, giving him her hand.—"Helen, here is Mr. Hailstorm, the young reporter who wrote that nice article about you in *The Dawn*."

Rush was rather embarrassed by this public announcement of his vocation, and annoyed by the miscalling of his name; but the hearty manner in which Miss Knowlton received him made amends for her aunt's want of tact.

"I recognized Mr. Hurlstone, and bowed to him across the room," said she, giving him her hand, whose touch sent an electric thrill through his entire frame. "Some other time I will thank him for his kindness, if he will allow me."

"So you know Mr. Hurlstone?" said Bessie. "He is an old college friend of Archie's, who brought him to us this evening that we might see for ourselves that all the nice things he had said about him were true."

"And do you think they are?" asked Helen, smiling upon Rush.

"We hope for the best," replied Bessie; "but I shall be able to speak with more authority after Mr. Hurlstone has made this house his head-quarters for a while."

Rush thanked Miss Archer for the implied invitation, but said he felt more like hiding his head in a hole after Archie's compliments than trying to prove their truth; and thus they chatted and laughed, after the

manner of young people at a party, until something was said about the banjo. Rush's reply led Helen to believe that he played that instrument, and she asked him if he did. He confessed that he "picked out a tune occasionally," and she invited him to come around some evening when there was no opera and try some duets with her, for she delighted in the banjo and found it a great recreation after grand opera.

Again the musicians struck up a waltz. West Hastings leaned down and whispered something in Helen's ear. She looked as though what he said had pleased her, and at once arose to dance with him. Again Rush ground his teeth. For a moment he wondered if he was too old to learn the mysteries of the waltz; but he could not help smiling as he thought of himself whirling about over a polished floor with a young woman in his arms. Then he inwardly railed at a custom that allowed such liberties. Because the band was playing and their feet were moving in time to the music, was that any reason why Hastings should have his arm around Miss Knowlton's waist and hold her hand in his? He could not see that it was. Dancing was a vulgar and vicious pastime, and he would never allow a sister of his to take part in any such wickedness. He did not stop to think that no sister of his would be likely to ask his permission. His eyes were bent upon the ground as these thoughts flew through his brain. A faint odor of mignonette reached him. He looked up just as Hastings and Miss Knowlton were gliding past.

"Here I am at last, old man," said Archie, at his shoulder,— "just ready for an evening's fun. My day's work is done, and I'm in prime condition for dancing. Seen the Knowlton? Ah, there she goes! Lucky beggar, that Hastings. They're engaged, you may bet your life. Come, let's have a glass of fizz. Uncle Archer is famous for his wines. I can promise you something good."

"No, thank you, Archie; I think I'll go home. I'm pretty tired. You know the social whirlpool is new to me. You don't mind, do you? I'll make my adieux to Mr. and Mrs. Archer and your charming cousin, and slip off to my virtuous couch."

"As you please, dear boy: I never like to force a fellow against his inclination," Archie answered; but he was evidently annoyed and disappointed that his friend should go so early.

"I shall never forget this evening, Archie. Good-night, old fellow. I'll hunt you up some time to-morrow."

So this foolish boy said good-night to his entertainers and went out under the stars. He had hardly reached the sidewalk before he repented his act. What an idiot to leave the place where Helen was! But he could not stand the torture of seeing her dancing with West Hastings.

He would rather be out in the cool night air; but he could not tear himself away from the place. Lighting a cigar, he paced the length of the park, always with the house in view, and by the time he had finished it, he saw the door open and Helen and her aunt and Uncle Lightfoot and West Hastings coming out.

The gentlemen put the ladies in their carriage, and, closing the door upon them, bowed them off. Thank heaven, he was not going home with her!

The carriage started down Twentieth Street; but it had not reached Fourth Avenue when Rush started after it. The horses trotted briskly, and so did Rush. It was not far to Helen's house, so that he arrived there just as the carriage drew up at the curb. Before he had time to think what he was doing, the handle of the carriage door was in his hand and he was making his best bow to the ladies. They were startled at first, but were reassured when they recognized Rush.

"How very odd that you should have happened by just at this moment!" said Helen.

"Chance has been kind to me," answered Rush, trying to speak without showing how blown he was. "I'm on my way home. I don't live far from here."

He didn't say it was a very roundabout way of getting to his lodgings, nor did Helen suspect it. He handed the ladies to their door and bade them good-night.

"Don't forget that you are to come and play the banjo with me," said Helen.

Forget! Rush laughed so heartily at the thought as he turned the corner of Twentieth Street into Sixth Avenue that a sleepless invalid tossing on his couch listened with envy to a man who was well and happy enough to laugh so long and loud.

CHAPTER VII.

IN the mean time, everything at the old home at Farmsted was not as Rush would have wished it to be. John Hurlstone, as I have intimated, was a young man fond of his pleasures,—so fond, indeed, that the pain they caused to others, and those, too, whom he held most dear, did not prevent his enjoying them to the full. Apparently, he was the kindest of sons and most affectionate of brothers. He was never known to give his mother a cross or impatient word in his life, and his attentions to his sisters were all that they could ask and more than they could ex-

pect, judging from the relations of other young men in their circle to their sisters. He was very popular in the village, for he was not only the most amiable but the gayest and handsomest young fellow in all those parts; and there was a dash of the hero about him, too,—for he had served with distinction in the army, having gone in as a private and won his captain's straps by sheer bravery and devotion to duty. Fonder of luxury than any man I ever met, he fairly revelled in hardship when it had to be endured. Easy-going as he was by nature, and slow to act under ordinary circumstances, he was as quick as a flash in an emergency. At home he was never on time, no matter what the urgency of the case; in the army he was punctuality itself. The most dandified about his toilet arrangements, and taking as much time to array himself as the vainest belle, he would take a snow-bath if he could get no other, dry himself in the sun, and be ready for marching in five minutes. His mattress at home had to be of a particularly choice quality of curled hair and the springs of the very best steel, or he could not sleep. In the army he would roll himself up in a blanket, lie in the mud during a pelting storm, and sleep as peacefully as a child. John Hurlstone was made up of contradictions. He loved his mother so tenderly that he was completely unnerved if she was ill, and waited upon her with the gentle devotion of a daughter; yet he did not hesitate to do things that he knew would break her heart, simply to gratify his own pleasure. He would have given his last crust to his mother and sisters, yet he would not do an honest day's work to save them from want. He did not say that he would not; he simply did not, and that was the end of the matter. His mother and sisters were devoted to him. They knew he was thoroughly selfish, but he was so sweet and kind at home that they forgave him everything. Women always liked him; men—that is, the serious-minded—regarded him less leniently. Among the class popularly known as "the boys" he was a prime favorite. They admired his cleverness, and he was pleased by their homage. He would sit for an hour at a time talking with big Sandy, the village blacksmith, a miserable, drunken fellow, because, he said, "Sandy is so fond of me." Every barkeeper in the town and every hanger-on of the saloons shook him by the hand and swore that "Cap'n Jack" was a "perfec' gemman." The attentions of the Prince of Wales are no sweeter to the professional beauty than were these words of compliment to Captain John Hurlstone.

John received the attentions of the young ladies more modestly. He never boasted of his conquests: indeed, he did not seem to think that he had made any. He never tired of telling how fond he was of the girls, individually and collectively, but that they were fond of him he mod-

estly denied. "They know I love them all, and they feel sorry for me," he used to say, laughingly. John Hurlstone was the most dangerous sort of a flirt, for he was really in love for the time being with each of the girls he flirted with. When he transferred his very special attention from one to another, he did so in the kindest manner, and seemed always to have a warm place in his heart for the old love. At the time of which I am now writing, he was paying marked attention, even for him, to Amy Bayliss, the pretty little simple-minded daughter of the Rev. Dr. Bayliss, rector of St. Ann's Church in the village. It was more than whispered that John Hurlstone was engaged to Amy Bayliss, but nothing authoritative was known upon the subject. But the dashing beauty Emily Barford denied the rumor flatly, and said that John Hurlstone was not the man to be caught by a baby face; that he was amusing himself with Amy Bayliss because he saw, as every one could see, that she was dead in love with him. Emily Barford, like many a clever girl before her, did not understand men as well as she thought she did, and in the case of John Hurlstone was entirely mistaken. He was just the man to be caught by a "baby face;" and when Amy Bayliss rolled her big blue eyes up towards his and stretched her little mouth with a smile that showed two rows of the whitest teeth, the big heart of Captain John swelled to bursting, and he swore to himself that he was at last madly and seriously in love.

John Hurlstone had been a hard drinker at different times in his life, but the folks at home had never seen him under the influence of liquor. He either went without drink altogether or he gave himself up to it. They used to say in the army that he could drink the entire mess under the table. He didn't care much for champagne, though when he was thirsty he would fill a celery-glass and drain it to the bottom. But this was done rather to amuse or astonish his companions than to slake his thirst. Hard liquors were his choice, and when he once began on them he kept it up in a way that would have killed most men. He was a convivial drinker, and seldom, unless to wipe out the memory of something unpleasant, took a drink alone. When he had money, he treated the crowd; when he had none, the crowd treated him.

When he had money! There was a mystery about John's money. Sometimes he was absolutely penniless; again he would be quite flush, and his pocket-book would be stuffed out with greenbacks of large as well as small denominations. His mother was the most unsuspecting of women, and when she said to him one day, "John, dear, where do you get so much money?" he answered her in his most ingenuous manner, sealing the statement with a kiss, "The government owes me a lot of back pay, mother, and every once in a while it pays up. Some day

it will be all paid : then I'll have to go to work like Rush and the rest of the boys."

She was perfectly satisfied, poor woman. How little she knew—it is just as well that she didn't—that there were as hard and daring gamblers in that little town of Farmsted as the metropolis itself could boast,—not only among the low fellows in the bar-rooms, who played for small stakes and lost as little as they won, but among an outwardly respectable class. There was a little club of six, of whom John Hurlstone was the youngest (and the sharpest), who met on certain nights in a private room in the Union House and played high till the gray light of dawn crept in through the chinks in the window-shutters and warned them that some busy housewife, up betimes, would see them slinking home in the small hours unless they stole away at once. What consternation there would have been in Farmsted if the knowledge of this little card-party had come to the ears of the gossips of that quiet town! for these men were the "solid men" of the place,—the retired merchants, lawyers, and bankers; and one of the number (I regret to betray it) was a vestryman of St. Ann's, and took up the collection every Sunday. This worthy man was indignant that John Hurlstone should be paying court to the rector's daughter. "The young scapegrace!" he muttered behind his sanctimonious, smooth-shaven lip; "I should like to tell Dr. Bayliss of his wickedness." But, much as he would have liked to expose the young man, he hesitated, for fear the young man might in turn expose him.

The more John Hurlstone thought of marrying Amy Bayliss the more his conscience pricked him, not only on account of the error of his present way, but also on account of the past. To blunt the points that pricked, he had recourse to his favorite liquor, but kept the knowledge of his dissipation from his family, for they never asked when he came home. His bedroom was on the ground-floor, and he could admit himself through the French window if there was any reason to suppose his entrance by the door would be heard.

One night the card-party held a very late session, and the vestryman, who had had an unusual run of luck, insisted upon "whooping it up and letting the devil take the consequences." This sentiment thoroughly harmonized with John's mood, and he brewed a bowl of punch that was as seductive as it was treacherous. The vestryman smacked his lips and slapped John on the back with brotherly affection. "Never tasted anything sho good in m'life. What d'y'er call it, Jack, old feller?" he said, helping himself to a fifth ladleful.

"I don't know what the right name is," answered Jack, "but in the army they called it hell-broth."

"The devil they did!" exclaimed the vestryman: "they're a wicked lot in the army."

Finally, it was proposed that the party should break up, and, as the night was breaking up too, and the punch was all drunk, the motion was adopted, and the vestryman and the lawyer, the banker and the merchants, linked arms and took the middle of the road until their paths diverged. Then they parted, after oft-repeated vows of undying friendship.

John had the farthest to go, and the punch was well down in his legs before he got half-way home. His head swam, and he put up his listless hands to wipe away the cobwebs from his face. How sleepy he felt! He wanted to lie down along the road; but something impelled him to keep on, and on he went, his uncertain footsteps taking him within an inch of ditches, heaps of stone, and the rows of trees that flanked the paths. At last he reached the homestead gate. What was the matter with the latch? It seemed possessed of a devil. (John never for a moment suspected that he was the one so possessed.) But finally it yielded to his fumbling, and swung back with a bang against the fence.

His mother, always a light sleeper, heard the unusual noise, and came to the window to see what was the matter. "Some stray horse or cow must have pushed the gate open," she thought. "I must see that a better latch is put on."

Thus musing, she looked down upon the path, and saw the figure of a man staggering up the walk.

What is it that puts so fine an edge upon a mother's intuitions? Mrs. Hurlstone had never seen a son of hers intoxicated, yet her heart sank within her, and she knew in a moment whose figure that was, and the cause of its unsteadiness. Hastily thrusting her feet into her slippers and wrapping her dressing-gown about her, she ran noiselessly down-stairs, fearful lest she should be heard and John's disgrace made known to the family. With trembling fingers she turned the heavy key in the lock, and stepped out upon the wide piazza.

Where was John?

There,—that limp and lifeless body lying at the foot of the steps,—that was John,—her first-born, her beautiful boy, covered with mud, his hair tumbled about and matted on his forehead, his face pale and bloated, breathing long, heavy breaths. That was John!

Once, years ago, she had seen a miserable tramp lying drunk in the gutter, and had pitied him that he could be so base a thing. And here was her own son in the same condition. She knew at a glance what was the matter with him, and when she stooped down to put her

hands upon his brow she smelt the stale, foul liquor that puffed up from his half-open mouth.

"John! John!" she cried, in very agony; "wake up, my son; come into the house and let me put you to bed. It is your mother, John, who is speaking to you."

No answer but John's heavy snores. She got down on the gravel, and held his head in her lap, and tried every means in her power to wake him; but he slept on. She thought he must be dying, and her hot tears rained upon his face. Still he slept. The gray dawn was breaking over the wooded east. Streaks of silver and gold shot through the pine-trees. In a short time the family would be up, or a neighbor passing by would stop to ask what was the matter. She must get him into the house, into his own room, and there try to revive him.

Just as she was about to exert all her strength to lift him, she heard footsteps on the gravel, and saw old Pete, the colored man-of-all-work, coming around a corner of the house. Old Pete was an early riser, and liked to have his chores done "before the day got ahead of him," so he said. The old man stood for a moment and surveyed the scene. He took in the situation at a glance, and from his coolness in the matter one might have inferred that it was not the first time that he had seen his young master in this condition.

"Oh, Pete, Pete, what shall we do? Mr. John is very ill, and I can't wake him," sobbed Mrs. Hurlstone.

"Jes' you go in the house and leave him to me, Miss Kitty: I'll soon bring him to," said Pete, laying down the bucket he was carrying to the well.

"What are you going to do to him?" anxiously inquired the mother, kissing her son's damp forehead.

"This ain't no place for you, Miss Kitty; you go inside out of the cold. Jes' leave him to me. I'll rub his years: that'll bring him round." And he suited the action to the word, rubbing the young man's ears with his horny palms till the mother begged him to stop. But Pete knew what he was about, for in a minute or two John opened his eyes in a dull, listless way, stared at his mother, and closed them again. Then Pete resumed his rubbing, and he opened his eyes wider and tried to get up.

"Go into the house, please, Miss Kitty: this ain't no sight for you to see. Leave him to me. I'll get him to bed." And he gently pushed his mistress inside the door, and then he helped his master to his feet.

"What's the matter, Pete?" said John, rubbing his eyes.

"Nothin' oncommon," answered Pete, laconically. "Jes' take my arm, and I'll help yer to bed."

John took the arm of the faithful negro, and, staggering slightly, got to his room, where the old man undressed him and put him in his soft white bed. There he soon fell fast asleep, but not so heavily this time. While the son was sleeping in his room, the mother was lying on her couch up-stairs, racked by a grief too deep for tears. But she knew that she must get up and put on a cheerful face before her children and be ready to answer any questions they might ask her about John. Fortunately, John was never an early riser, so their suspicions were not very much excited. They asked why he didn't come to breakfast, and their mother replied that he had a bad headache,—perhaps a truer statement than she had thought. About eleven o'clock John appeared upon the scene, and, except for a slight pallor in his cheeks and a faint tinge of gray under his eyes, he looked as fresh as a rose. He had had a cold bath, a good rubbing down, and a cup of hot coffee, and he felt pretty bright. His hands trembled a little as he held the morning paper up to read, and he had no appetite for the nice little breakfast his mother brought him; otherwise he was in fine condition. He had forgotten all about the night before, and he wondered if it could have been a tear he saw in his mother's eye when she kissed him good-morning. The mail had just been fetched up from the post-office, and Mrs. Hurlstone handed John a large, business-like envelope, addressed to him in a rough hand. An elaborate stamp on the outside bore the name of "The Grand Mutual Dividend Mining Company."

John ripped open the envelope nervously, and his eyes glistened as they ran down the page.

"Mother, this is from Colonel Mortimer, of Ours: he has organized a mining company on a new plan, and he wants me for secretary. He offers a good salary and little work, and I am to go to New York at once. I'm sorry to leave you, mother dear, but this is an opportunity not to be lost. Mortimer has a great head for schemes. If he goes into one you may be sure there's money in it,—at least for him," added John, with a laugh.

Mrs. Hurlstone did not join in the laugh; for if there was a man in the world whom she feared and disliked it was Colonel Andrew Mortimer. He was a brave soldier, but a corrupt and hardened man, and she knew that his influence over John was anything but good.

"You don't congratulate me, mother," said John, gayly, putting his arm around her waist and kissing her. Indeed she did not. How could she, knowing all she knew?

(To be continued.)

TWO DAYS IN UTAH.

BY AN IMPRESSIONIST.

THE most patient student of statistics and reader of the newspapers would be apt on impulse, if asked to define Mormon, to answer, thoughtlessly, "Mormon? Why, a Mormon is a polygamist." He may know that polygamy was an after-thought in the Mormon Church, subtly introduced by cunning leaders; he may even know that only two and a half per cent. of the Mormon population practise polygamy; but that every Mormon, in becoming a Mormon, tacitly sanctions, if he does not practise, the frightful rite, underlies his knowledge and permeates his judgment. No one would think of advancing the impressions of two days as serious facts, or reasons for formulating theories, or profound investigation of the subject, or grounds for forming a basis of action; but, if given and accepted merely as impressions, they may have their interest, if of no particular value.

And the first of these impressions is that polygamy is not a favorite feature of Mormonism to the Mormons themselves. Where are the polygamists? you keep asking. True, you have seen in the papers that Taylor and Cannon and other leaders are in hiding, that several are in the penitentiary, and that the United States government is vigorously prosecuting the evil-doers; but you were unprepared to find the vigor actually so vigorous and to be impressed with the fact that at present no man dares to practise polygamy publicly. You are thus wonderfully encouraged as to what the government is accomplishing, but you are far more encouraged by the impression that the government will eventually root out the horror more easily because *at heart* the bulk of the Mormon people are more than willing that it should be rooted out. You are shown the most charming residences in the city, and are told that they belong either to Gentiles or to Mormons who have become Gentiles. You are shown the homes of the city officials, who are all Mormons, but not polygamists, as no polygamist can hold a government office. You are told that of General Clausson's thirty children none like polygamy except the eldest son, who is in the penitentiary for liking it. You are driven to an exquisite, rose-embowered cottage, and say, with a sigh, "Can polygamy dwell in such a paradise?" and are assured, "Oh, no: the owner is a Mormon with one wife." The editor of the leading Mormon paper calls upon you, and you ask the friend who introduces him, "Has he ever had more than one wife?" to be

answered in the negative. A tall, spirited, tremendously-in-earnest young leader speaks at the Tabernacle on Sunday on the virtues of Mormonism and the cruelty of government persecution ; and when you ask, "How many wives?" the answer is, "One." Of course, in one sense, this not a ground for judgment as to the unpopularity of polygamy among the Mormons themselves, because no one now dares to have more than one wife ; but it is a relief to find that they cannot dare, and some reliance is to be placed upon it for inference because so many never took a second wife when they did dare. The men who already have two or more wives will fight to the last and go to the penitentiary rather than desert the women who have trusted them,—a faithfulness which has an honorable side, it is to be remembered, since many ask only to be allowed to support the women they have promised to support, and to be allowed to see the children who are at least their children ; but the younger men, who have as yet had but one wife, will never fight, with any resistance to be feared, for the privilege of having more,—the light undercurrent of the simplest conversation showing with many how thankful they would be not to have the Church expect it of them. Why, then, do these spirited young men, who have not, and who do not want, more than one wife, write and talk as if they did, as if the government that persecuted that one feature were the most cruel in the world, as if the man who did have more than one wife could still be a decent member of society ?

They speak and write thus, not because they want more wives, but because *they remember their mothers.*

For one long-misunderstood feature of Mormonism has lately been revealed in its true phases. It is natural to believe that none but the lowest class of women could submit to the indignities of a polygamist household. We have instinctively thought of them as necessarily fast and loose women, quite as bad as the men, and not to be tolerated in polite society. A little thought, even before actual investigation, will suggest that precisely the opposite must be the case. The women who accept polygamy may be fools to the point of idiocy in accepting anything so horrible with faith in it as a trial to be borne for the sake of religion ; but, aside from the indisputable fact that probably the majority of these foolish suffering women are sincere, honest, faithful, upright creatures, it is evident, on reflection, that a fast or loose woman would refuse to submit to the indignities of a polygamist household quite as quickly as the indignant, intelligent, rightly-educated woman of Gentile birth and training. The dissolute woman, caring nothing for the comparative dignity of appearing as a wife, would not hastily give up her position as petted favorite, free to come, free to go, with

nothing expected of her but that she shall not bear children, to take a position divided with another, or others, to which she is bound for life, and in which the first thing expected of her is that she shall bear many children. Even as the latest wife, she can enjoy no position prominently as petted favorite. It is true that no man can love two women at the same time equally well, and that preference will be unconsciously shown in some way; but, while the Mormon etiquette that requires punctilious if perfunctory outward observance of devotion to every wife is in its way horrible, ridiculous, and shameful, it does not permit what would strike me as one of the terrible features of polygamy,—the desertion of the first wife for one with a prettier face or a better table. Every Mormon wife has her “week” for her husband, as the New York wife has her “day” for visitors. It is horrible, it is inconceivable, it must be stopped; but it is right that we understand precisely what it is that must be stopped. The highest type of woman would rather be deserted than waited upon with perfunctory devotion; yet it must still be acknowledged that one kind of fidelity, poor as it is of its kind, is exacted of both Mormon husband and wife. Thus, while the horrors of Mormonism will keep the best women from belonging to it, the obligations of Mormonism will with equal force prevent the worst women from joining it. There remains a poor, pitiable middle class, of women lowly and miserably born, hopelessly ignorant, ignominiously patient, easily made devotees, who are willing to undertake the obligations and the sacrifices of Mormonism, and who accept polygamy, not enjoying it, but honestly beguiled into believing their martyrdom honorable. The sons of such women, remembering what their mothers have been,—faithful, patient, loving, though misguided,—will not submit to hearing those mothers called anything but wives. The very martyrdom they may have seen them suffer may make them equally earnest in defending polygamy and in not practising it. This is a somewhat lengthy “impression,” it is true; but it means that the eager, denunciatory talk of the younger orators is not fraught with so much danger as it seems to be.

It is often said that Mormonism, as a religious belief, would be harmless except for polygamy. Nothing could be more unwise than to admit that. It is Mormonism itself, the union of church and state, the implied treason that will not rush to arms while it is allowed to flourish in a little feudal despotism of its own, the secret power which cares nothing for polygamy except as it believes polygamy may be a weapon in its hands,—it is Mormonism itself that is to be hated, to be feared, to be crushed. Show the Mormon that the other, deeper, subtler aims he has at heart cannot, must not, shall not be endured, and he will

drop his polygamy before you ask him to. Horrible as they are, Mormonism and polygamy have their supremely ridiculous aspects, and it is part of the supremely ridiculous that no man can possibly enjoy polygamy. If he practises it, it is to further other aims. In a community where he is bound to "cherish" all his wives, outwardly at least, and to provide for them all, where he cannot take refuge from the scold in the arms of the favorite, where he must appear on the appointed day at the door of the poor housekeeper as faithfully as on the other day at the table of the excellent cook, it may safely be presumed that polygamy brings its own penalties with it and would only be endured to secure another object. It has been wittily said that, with a railway through Utah, and Gentile ladies in Salt Lake City, the milliner and dress-maker can be trusted to work the much desired reform; and there is judgment, as well as wit, in the saying. Few men can afford to have a dozen wives and forty children to be supported in equal comfort and luxury.

That Mormonism must be crushed goes without saying; but in order to crush it we must understand what it is and what it is not, what it was rooted in, and what it purposes accomplishing. We can never crush it by rising in saintly wrath and saying, "Out upon you, you polygamists!" Were Gentile communities free from any similar plague-spot, then indeed our wrath might be effective as one of our weapons; but the Mormon has it in his power to laugh derisively, to point to his voluntary "victim" at least set openly in a household, to be "cherished" by him till death, to be honored for bearing him children whom he is pledged to support, and to ask, since it is impossible to deny the existence of Gentile "victims," whether the Gentiles who shield themselves by hypocrisy and who do not shield their victims at all, who are willing in secret to pronounce their ways sinful, but who continue sinning, are indeed so few in number that the Gentile community may point the finger of scorn at Mormons who at least accept all the consequences of their sin. It is possible to walk through the streets of Leadville and wonder, as you see the open gambling-dens and dance-houses, "After all, is such openness worse than the sin which in more conventional communities lurks behind the carefully-drawn curtains and eminently respectable front door?" For if in one sense the open door attracts, in another it repels. Of course, sober reflection convinces one that it is worse; for the shame that hides its sin at least is conscious of sin; but the other phase of it is possible as a point of view.

And it is the Mormon's point of view which it is necessary for us to understand. First, in what is Mormonism rooted?

In sensuality? To suppose so seems absurd. If sensuality could

indeed only be gratified by accepting such conditions as the Mormon imposes upon himself in living with more than one wife, it is possible that men over whom sensuality reigns supreme might even go so far as this to obtain what they care most for. Unhappily, it is not so difficult for sensuality to secure its victims. The sensualist does not need to hedge himself in behind life-long obligations; and that the Mormon honestly regards his obligations as life-long is shown by the willingness of so many to go to the penitentiary rather than desert the women—and children—of whom, as sensualists, they might not have been averse to ridding themselves. Mormonism is rooted in lust, if you will; but it is the lust, not of sensuality, but of power.

Power! power! power! political power! Men conscious that even the proverbial chance of the rail-splitter or the canal-boy would never bring such as they to the White House coveted power over large masses of men. They might not hope to subvert the government, but for that they would not care, provided they could rule supreme in a small local feudalism that should minister to their special greed. Cunning, unscrupulous, ambitious, nothing was too low for them to stoop to to secure their ends. The lowest classes are most easily swayed: hence they would be satisfied to rule over the lowest classes, if they could only rule. The lowest classes are most easily swayed by a religious motive: hence they would have a new religion. The tremendous fraud of that absurd religion has perhaps never been better exposed than by a trifle,—the discovery in the so-called Mormon bible of a mistake noted in the manuscript of the romance from which the bible was made up, which a friend had advised the author of the romance to alter, but which he had not yet changed at the time the manuscript was stolen to minister to a fraud to which he was no willing party. There should be a profound secrecy to fascinate the foolish; promise of earthly comfort to those so badly off that the prospect of food and lodging would be enough to make them accept any politics or religion: it was of no consequence at all what sort of people came under their sway; the less intelligent, the more easily managed; anything to swell the ranks. Into this scheme crept polygamy, as a factor for bringing large masses of people under the control of individuals. Women and children willing to accept, and brought up to accept, the outrageous Mormon theories, outrageous in more points than that of plural marriage, would be brought under the control of one head. Instead of one wife and two or three children, the Mormon should control a dozen wives and forty children. The women should have a vote in a community where the authority of a few is best shown by the fact that votes in the assemblies are invariably unanimous. That its sensual side would help to attract the sensual would be so much

gain, though sensuality can hardly have been the first motive for introducing polygamy. If it had been, the leaders would have been satisfied with permitting polygamy; whereas, in the days when they were left to themselves, it is well known that they practically insisted on it. Make impossible any advantages to be gained politically by numbers, and the Mormon will be satisfied with the average number of children, and more than satisfied to live with only one wife.

To the impressionist, boarding comfortably at the Walker House and driving about a pretty city most beautifully located (though, be it known, the far-famed thrift of the Mormons in redeeming Salt Lake from the desert does not strike one as overwhelming, remembering how much more the thrift of a different class of people has done in less time for Denver), the ludicrous side of Mormonism will naturally present itself most vividly. His letters of introduction are to the better class of Mormons, although the friends who had given most of them had said, "We are sorry there are so few; but most of our Gentile friends have moved away, and most of our Mormon acquaintances are in the penitentiary." He sees uppermost the perfect absurdity, the ridiculous situations, of it all, and it adds to his light-heartedness—when conscience takes him to task for being amused by anything so hateful—to find the United States really and truly at work, the people really and truly scared, and the better class of Mormons quietly shrugging their shoulders in private conversation, with a grimace that means, "Make it impossible for us to be polygamists, and we will thank you from our hearts." Out in the country, among the worst class of Mormons, where they are free from the restraints and watchfulness of a city, one hears of bitter cruelties arising from the state of things,—of brutal men, not incurring double obligations to two wives, but saving themselves from all labor by putting two wives to work instead of one. It is easy for the imagination to picture the hideousness that is out of sight, with tacit acknowledgment that probably the hideousness and cruelty and suffering are infinitely greater than the imagination can conceive; but on the surface the absurdity of the thing strikes one first, with the comfortable reflection that it cannot be possible for anything so ridiculous to survive long. It is possible, too, for an optimist to look over the vast crowd at the Tabernacle, and to think, as he gazes at the most pitiable, most unintelligent faces he has ever seen, while he notes the sleek, comfortable, and contented appearance of the people, that perhaps, in the mercy of God, even Mormonism, for just this class of persons, has been a rise in life, it being always remembered that the great bulk of the Mormon people care nothing for polygamy, and are foolish Mormons only in their acceptance of what is to most of

us a self-evident fraud, and in their blind obedience to unprincipled leaders.

It is the peculiarity of the form of evil-doing which Mormonism brings in its train, that it is possible for many of the evil-doers to be honest in intent and sincere in conviction. Such evil must be uprooted ; but it requires peculiar methods. It must be undermined, not attacked. It is not a case for the pruning-knife, nor even for the axe. It is a case for quiet loosening of the earth about the roots by a gentle but judicious spade, with the burning sun of clear, scorching daylight pouring down continually on the exposed roots, and finally for several decisive lifts with an unhesitating shovel that shall fling the obnoxious growth upon the ash-heap. The Mormon must be approached, not from our point of view, but from his. It will be of no use to shriek at him that he is an idiot and a knave : if he is a cunning leader he knows that he is a knave, if he is an ignorant follower he does not know that he is an idiot. In neither case will he care in the least what you call him. The knave must be shown that his political aims and intrigues are futile ; the idiot must be made to understand that he is an idiot. It is impossible not to see that the bitter persecution they suppose themselves to be enduring is a very strong bond of union among classes to whom the idea of martyrdom always appeals strongly. Go to the Tabernacle ; listen to what is supposed to be a religious service, but is really a bitter political tirade, and it is impossible not to see that the poor, dull-witted, ignorant listeners are rolling the sentences of the speaker about martyrdom, persecution, suffering for the truth, as choice morsels under their tongues. For this martyrdom is not such as to cause any great difference in their comfort. The persecution does not take the form of lessening their creature comforts ; it does not lower their wages, nor banish them as social outcasts, nor decrease their opportunities, nor forbid them from worshipping God in any way they please. It merely says that they are idiots for worshipping Joseph Smith, and insists that they shall not have two wives. Most of them greatly prefer not to have two wives, and many of them are beginning to think that leaders who refuse to take the penalties of their position, and who keep out of the penitentiary by skulking, are not, after all, heroic, fascinating, lovable Prince Charles Edwards, to be aided in their skulking and admired for their sufferings, but the conscienceless, selfish, ambitious pretenders that the rest of the world have long known them to be. Under these circumstances, in no way made uncomfortable by persecution, it is delightful to hear themselves called martyrs. Social stigma does not disturb them, for they are recruited from classes who never enjoyed any social distinction. It is highly probable that no one ever became a

Mormon without, in the quaint old phrase, bettering himself in creature comforts. The part these have played in tempting poverty-stricken, sin-laden, indolent, wicked, toil-worn "converts" can hardly be overestimated. A home, land, work,—what have not these meant to the forlorn creatures that have been enticed to the New World? Even those who went first into the wilderness gave up nothing, it is safe to say, in leaving the worse wilderness of sin and folly and lack of opportunity which they left behind them. Creature comforts have built up the Mormon clique: it remains for intelligence to destroy it. For Mormonism, as for barbarism and heathenism, the surest cure is civilization. The railway through Utah, with its attendant milliners and dress-makers, bringing into juxtaposition with the Mormon Griseldas Gentile wives in honored happiness, and making no longer possible the seclusion which bred brutal cruelty and impossibility of escape, might almost be trusted alone to undermine polygamy. But civilization, though so sure a cure for many evils, is too slow a one for the hateful influence of Mormonism. There must be the shovel to dig up, as well as the spade to loosen. There must be the prick of the bayonet when we begin to hear of United States flags at half-mast on the Fourth of July. The quicker the evil of Mormonism is recognized as political, not social, the quicker the social evils in the train of political intrigue will wither and die.

To destroy Mormonism, it is not enough for us to hate it; we must make the Mormon himself hate it. Before we try to kill it by superior strength, we must understand what forces keep it alive. Intelligent convictions could never be killed, even by superior strength. But a Mormon's convictions are not intelligent, though sometimes sincere. Three forces have tended to keep alive what it would seem as if the merest common sense must have strangled almost as soon as born: in the Mormon leader, grovelling ambition, not caring what it rules over so long as it can rule, and rejoicing in its brute cunning; in the Mormon disciple, the sheer pleasure of improvement in creature comforts; in the Mormon woman, whose burden seems to an outsider too intolerable for her endurance to be credible, the perfect openness of her position. Terrible as it is, the world knows that she chose to accept it with all its horrible conditions. How far that goes to supporting a woman through the trials most abhorrent to her it is difficult to judge. The woman who *knows*, and who knows that you know that she knows, can bear an almost inconceivable amount of suffering, even of the kind most frightful to her nature; the woman who *discovers*, who finds that she has been a dupe, who hears the world whispering, "Poor thing! she didn't know!" can suffer infinitely greater torture over a lesser degree of

offence. What you *tell* your wife against yourself she will forgive to an almost incredible extent ; what she *discovers* against you she will never forgive. Nothing can be forced upon the Mormon wife which she did not tacitly say to all the world in the first place that she expected and was willing to endure. This is no apology for her doing so : it is merely a reason for comprehending how so many Mormon women live through the agony which their position must force upon them, however honestly they believe that they are martyrs for the Lord. The Mormon wife knows that you cannot say of her, " Poor dupe ! " even if you say, " Poor fool ! "

Such are some of the forces that help to keep Mormonism alive. They are hateful, they are dangerous, they are insidious ; but they are not so hopeless as if behind them lurked such convictions as moved the Puritan Fathers.

Alice Wellington Rollins.

TO WALT WHITMAN.

THE April torrent, shining at its source
 A thread of glass above the dappled clay,
 Has burst the banks along the narrow course
 And sent a freshet roaring on its way :
 From hill to hill the crested waters go,
 The swollen eddies heaving in their train,
 As foam and drift and rain and melting snow
 Urge the brown billows to the tumbling main.

So has that large and crystal heart of thine
 Let loose the slipping earth on either side,
 And stirred the dregs of passions half divine
 To flood its channel with a turgid tide ;
 But age draws on to waste the manly frame,
 Whose broken walls shall set the current free,
 And all the stream of mingled pride and shame
 Roll down its burden on the limpid sea.

Dora Read Goodale.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER XIII.

JACOB STILES.

IT can hardly be expected that the reader will recollect a passing allusion once made by Mr. Herbert to a certain young *protégé* of his, named Jacob Stiles. The fact is that Mr. Herbert was not very fond of alluding to this youth, whose benefactor he had been, having reasons for keeping silence about him besides those which modesty must always impose upon the truly charitable.

Jacob Stiles, as his name (which was a source of deep grief to him) almost seemed to imply, was an object of charity, and since his early childhood had never been anything else. It had come to pass that, as Dick Herbert was riding homeward one autumn evening shortly after he had attained his majority,—and consequently some fifteen years before the date of the present narrative,—his path was abruptly stopped by a diminutive urchin, who piped out, “Oh, if you please, sir, father said I was to arst you what’s won the Leger.” Dick, then, as always, a man of few words, gave the desired information, glanced curiously at his ragged, black-eyed little questioner, and rode on. The incident might have escaped his memory, had not the result of that particular St. Leger brought about a tragic occurrence of which he, in common with the rest of the neighborhood, was speedily informed. This was the suicide of one Stiles, a stranger in those parts, who had recently been taken as a rough-rider into the employment of a local horse-dealer, and who was found hanging in his master’s stables on the morning after the race, with the following brief confession in the pocket of his coat: “It’s the Leger as done it. I don’t want no more of this life. Will some kind friend please to save my poor little lad from the workus?”

This appeal found its way to the somewhat soft heart of Dick Herbert. He sought out the boy, found him in one of the cottages in the village, recognized him as the same whom he had encountered on the previous evening, carried him off to Farndon Court to be washed, fed, and comforted, and retained him there with a view to discovering, as he said, “what could be made of him.” A great many things might have been made of him, for he proved to be one of the sharpest boys that ever was known; but perhaps a judicious person, remember-

ing the proverb about silk purses and sows' ears, would have reflected that there were certain things into which he could not possibly be turned. Dick Herbert was only twenty-one at that time, and was not quite as judicious as he subsequently became. He was delighted with the little fellow's shrewd replies to his questions; he was still more delighted to see with what tenacity that atom could stick to a horse; and when he discovered that Jacob, in addition to his other talents, could draw with a precision and spirit amazing in one of such tender years, he concluded that, if ever there was a case in which a thorough education would be a boon worth bestowing, it was here.

This was all very well; but to remove the boy entirely out of the station to which he had been born was another affair. To do Dick justice, he had at first no intention of falling into any such error. He proposed to have his *protégé* educated, and then to give him a start in whatever trade he might seem to be best fitted for. But there were difficulties in the way of carrying out this sensible programme. Jacob learned with surprising rapidity; in everything that he undertook he excelled; as he grew older he manifested a decided dislike to associating with the servants, who, on their side, cordially reciprocated his sentiments. Thus it came about that when he was at Farndon for the holidays he spent most of his time in the company of his patron (who preferred not to be called his master), and was made a great deal of by his patron's bachelor friends.

Farndon Court was then a house in which only bachelors and married men on leave of absence were to be met; for old Mrs. Herbert, who was still alive, dwelt at a watering-place in the West of England, the climate of Berkshire not agreeing with her health. One may conjecture that had any lady presided over Dick's household that clever young outcast, Jacob Stiles, would not have been permitted to dine with his betters and adjourn to the billiard-room or the smoking-room with them later in the evening. But if the lad got any harm from such associations it was not apparent upon the surface. His schoolmasters gave glowing reports of him; his career was decided upon: he was in due time to become an artist, and there was every ground for believing that he would also become a successful one. Whence he derived his pictorial skill was a mystery of which his defective pedigree could afford no solution, but a very simple application of the law of inheritance sufficed to account for his great love and knowledge of horses; and it must be owned that this endeared him to Dick more than all his other gifts put together. Mr. Herbert can hardly be said to have been at any time upon the turf; but he usually had one or two animals in training, and he kept a few brood mares with a view to raising

thoroughbred stock. Now, Jacob's eye for a horse was nothing short of marvellous. Not only was his opinion invaluable as regarded the purchase of yearlings, but he could tell, almost at a glance, whether a foal would ever come to anything or not. "Confound the boy! he can't make a mistake!" Dick would exclaim, admiringly.

He himself, however, was quite capable of making mistakes, and he made a very serious one when he fell into the habit of taking this admirable judge with him to the principal race-meetings. It was an innocent pleasure, Dick thought; and in his case it certainly was so. He did not bet, and was careful to warn his young companion solemnly against that fatal practice. Notwithstanding this admonition, Jacob did bet,—possibly that, too, was a *damnosa hæreditas* which it was hard for him to resist,—and the worst of it was that he had to bet on the sly. Unluckily for him, his ventures were not only successful but were never found out; this form of gambling became a passion with him, and Mr. Herbert's prolonged absences from home afforded him opportunities of indulging in it by which he was not slow to profit. His conscience did not fail to reproach him for so doing; but self-reproach is seldom of much value as a curb.

When Jacob was nineteen years of age, Nemesis, in the shape of a disastrous Ascot week, overtook him, in company with many others of higher social position. His money was all spent, settling-day was near, and he was at his wits' end. One morning he saw Dick Herbert's check-book lying upon the library table: he hastily tore a scrap of paper out of it and scribbled thereon an imitation of that imprudent gentleman's signature which would have been more exact if his fingers had not trembled so much. How could he have supposed that so foolish a fraud would escape detection? He may have counted upon Dick's well-known carelessness in money-matters; but it is more likely that he yielded to temptation in one of those moments of terror and bewilderment which are taken into consideration by merciful jurymen when they return a verdict of 'suicide while in an unsound state of mind.' He took the check into Windsor, had it cashed by a clerk, and the very next day Mr. Herbert received a note from the manager of the bank, requesting him to call at his earliest convenience.

When Dick, in obedience to this summons, entered the manager's private room, that functionary, with a very grave face, regretted to inform him that a check for two hundred pounds,—an obvious forgery, —purporting to bear his signature, had been presented across the counter and inadvertently honored by one of the clerks. "And I am very sorry to add, Mr. Herbert, that the money was paid to the young man Stiles."

"Oh, indeed?" said Dick. "Let's have a look at it." And, after examining the paper, "So that's what you call a forgery?"

"Surely, Mr. Herbert, you must see that it is."

"Oh, no," answered Dick; "don't see it at all. Why should it be a forgery? 'R. N. Herbert,'—that's the way I always sign, isn't it?"

"Mr. Herbert, do I understand you to recognize this as your signature?" inquired the manager, solemnly.

Dick nodded; and then the manager stared at him, and he stared at the manager; and the latter said no more, but thought a good deal. "Would it not be well, Mr. Herbert, that in future we should supply you with checks made payable to Order and not to Bearer?" was his only remark, as his visitor rose.

Dick answered, "Yes, if you like," picked up the check, and rode home.

As he was dismounting from his horse he caught sight of Jacob, hailed him, led him into the library, and, producing that terrible slip of blue paper, held it up before his eyes. "Your writing, I presume?" he remarked, laconically.

The unfortunate criminal could not get out a word of reply. His knees trembled under him, he turned pale, and a cold sweat broke out upon his forehead. Herbert had his hunting-crop in his hand.

"Jake," he said, quietly, "I'm going to give you a thrashing." And, without more ado, he caught the young man by the collar and administered the punishment alluded to with the utmost vigor of a powerful right arm.

Jacob never uttered a word or a groan. It was no nominal thrashing that was inflicted upon him; but perhaps he did not care about the pain. When it was over, he had just strength enough left to crawl away to his room and hide himself. He richly deserved all that he had got, and was let off, upon the whole, very cheaply. One must not venture to claim sympathy for a man who rewards innumerable kindnesses by forging his benefactor's name. We are all sinners, and frankly admit as much once a week, if not oftener; we do things that we ought not to do, and leave undone what we ought to do; but as for lying, thieving, and cheating—*allons donc!* such mean offences are far beneath us, and we have every right to despise those who commit them. Perhaps so; but this poor wretch was base-born, and may not have possessed our noble instincts. Possibly even for him some allowance may be made by generous minds.

Dick Herbert had a very generous mind; but there never lived a man to whom it was less possible to make allowance for certain sins. It may be that he held too exalted views of the virtue of his fellow-

creatures ; at any rate, he trusted them implicitly until they deceived him ; after which, no earthly power could induce him to trust them a second time. He had done his duty to Jacob in administering to him a lesson not likely to be forgotten. When the offender came and threw himself at his feet, in an agony of shame and remorse, he freely forgave him, saying, " We will never mention the subject again ;" and he never did mention it again. But it was no longer in his power either to esteem or to like the young fellow, nor was it in his power to hide the contempt that he felt for him. His kindness did not cease, but his friendliness did ; and Jacob, who was as sensitive as he was sharp, felt and appreciated the distinction.

Whether the above catastrophe was the making or the marring of Jacob's career must remain an open question, since no one can pronounce judgment upon what might have been. It cured him at once and forever of betting ; he made a vow, and kept it, that the ring should know him no more ; but it may be said to have spoiled his temper, which perhaps was not naturally a sweet one. His life, even when he was among his fellow-art-students, in London, was somewhat solitary ; when he was at Farndon it was completely so. He had his own rooms, and, as he showed that he preferred to shut himself up, he was not often asked to leave them. It is difficult for a man who has been soundly horsewhipped to conceal all traces of the fact ; and the servants, who had never had any love for Jacob, guessed what had happened to him. If they did not find out the exact truth, they arrived at something not very far removed from it, and gave themselves the satisfaction of sneering at him in a way which he could not resent. By one hasty, dishonorable act he had incurred permanent obloquy, and he knew it. For years the dominant idea in his mind was a sense of the cruel harshness of fate, and of the injustice which took no account of repentance. Then Miss Herbert came to live at Farndon, and it was not his good fortune to commend himself favorably to Miss Herbert, who alleged, with perfect truth, that the young man had been placed in an absurdly false position by her brother.

False or not, there was no remedy for it now. He must remain where he was until his brush should bring him in a sufficient income to enable him to set up his household elsewhere ; and even when that wished-for day came he would not be free—he never could be free—from the weight of an immense obligation. In the mean time, his conduct continued to be exemplary, and his talent was recognized by all competent judges. Ambition, of a kind, he had, but it was not a hopeful kind of ambition. He developed into a rather sullen and taciturn young man,—not a pleasant young man,—possibly even a dangerous one, it might be fancied

by the look of him. Yet his thoughts were seldom bad thoughts, only intensely bitter. His feeling towards Herbert would be difficult to define, and he certainly never attempted to define it to himself. He admired the man, he respected him; he would have loved him if things had fallen out differently. As it was, there were certain moments when he felt as if earth could afford him no greater joy than to detect his benefactor in the commission of some ignoble action. It will be perceived that poor Jacob had great natural disadvantages to contend against.

The little station of Farndon Road is only about a mile and a half from Farndon Court, and, as Dick had not been sure how soon he would be able to get away from Lord Middleborough's wedding, he had given no orders that he should be met. When he left the train, however, he found Jacob Stiles waiting for him in a dog-cart, and was a little surprised by a mark of attention which had been frequent enough in the old days, but which he had latterly ceased to look for.

"Halloo, Jake!" he said, "what brings you down here?"

"I had to go into Windsor about something," replied the other, "and I thought I might as well drive round to the station, in case you came down by this train."

"I intended to walk," said Dick; "but, since you are here, I don't mind taking a lift. No; you drive," he added, as he climbed into the dog-cart and his companion handed him the reins. "I'm going to smoke a cigarette."

Jacob did as he was requested, and drove on some little distance before saying, "I wanted to tell you that I have sold another picture." He spoke with his eyes lowered, which was a trick that he had.

"Have you?" said Dick. "Glad to hear it. I hope you got a good price."

"Yes," answered the other, "I think so. I think I got as much as it was worth."

He had a slow, somewhat deprecating method of enunciation, which, taken in conjunction with his thin, pale cheeks and his habit of holding his head low, caused strangers to think that he must either be very unhappy or be weighed down by some guilty secret,—an impression which, as we know, was tolerably correct. But for these peculiarities, he would have passed muster easily enough, having a face which was rather handsome than plain, and a well-knit, well-proportioned figure.

"The gentleman who bought that picture has given me an order for two more," he went on, "and I am to do some illustrations for the *Grosvenor Magazine*."

"Come, that's capital news. Did you drive round to tell me about it, Jake?"

The young fellow raised his eyes—they were very dark and very brilliant eyes—for the first time, and shot a quick, sidelong glance at his questioner. "I thought you would be glad to hear," he answered. He seemed as if he were going to say something more, but apparently changed his mind, and, drawing the whip gently across the horse's flanks, slightly increased the pace at which they were moving.

"By the way," observed Dick, presently, "I have got a piece of news too. I'm going to be married."

This time Jacob's eyes were opened to their utmost extent, and were turned full upon Dick's face, which remained impassive. "To be married? You!" he exclaimed. "Do you really mean it?"

"Oh, yes; I have been thinking about it for some time past. It is a Miss Lefroy; not a sister of Lady Middleborough's,—her cousin. You and she ought to become friends, I should think; for she takes a great interest in art, and paints like a professional."

Jacob smiled very slightly: he may have been thinking that neither the future Mrs. Herbert nor any other lady was at all likely to make friends with him. From dwelling so continually upon one thought, he had come to have a morbid conviction that he looked like a forger, and that everybody must suspect him of being one. Presently he said, in a formal, hesitating way, as if he were repeating a speech previously learned by heart, "I am very glad that you are going to be married at last. I hope you will be as happy as you deserve to be."

"Thanks," answered Dick, briefly. After a minute or two he asked, "Did you happen to take a look at the Electricity foal to-day?"

"Yes. I don't much fancy him myself; but Miss Herbert thinks he will be the best one we ever bred. She arrived just before luncheon. I suppose you knew she was coming?"

"No, by George! I didn't," replied Dick, looking a trifle perturbed. "The last time I heard from her she said she wouldn't be here for another fortnight. I rather suspect, you know," he went on, musingly, "that Carry won't altogether like this. In fact, I'm sure she won't like it. If you come to that, it would be ridiculous to expect her to like it."

These remarks partook so much of the nature of a soliloquy that Jacob did not feel called upon to make any response to them, and nothing more was said until they reached the hall door, where Miss Herbert, who had been out riding, happened at that moment to be dismounting from her horse.

She was a tall, dark, well-made woman, who looked both young and handsome in her riding-habit, but who, under other circumstances, was quite evidently thirty years of age. She resembled her brother in

nothing at all, except in a certain abruptness of speech, and was far less universally popular than he. Nevertheless, she had a very large acquaintance, and was said to have refused many eligible suitors. She had a considerable fortune of her own.

"Well, Carry," said Dick, as he descended from the dog-cart, "so here you are again. Where are you from last?"

He did not pay much attention to her reply, but walked up the steps beside her, and, with his usual promptitude in coming to the point, said, "I have something to tell you. I am going to be married in the course of the summer, to Hope Lefroy, the niece of the Helston Abbey man."

"As I have never set eyes on the girl," observed Miss Herbert, without any manifestation of surprise, "I can't tell whether to congratulate you or not."

"You may congratulate me. And I say, Carry, I should like you two to be friends, if you could manage it."

"I doubt whether we shall be able to manage it. Do you recollect ever to have come across a case of sisters-in-law living in the same house who were friends? I don't."

"Well, let us try to make yours an exceptional case."

They had entered the drawing-room by this time. Miss Herbert had seated herself in an arm-chair, and had laid her gloves and whip down on the tea-table at her elbow. Dick leaned with his shoulders against the mantel-piece and his hands in his pockets.

"You are bound to see a good deal of one another," he continued, "and you know, Carry, you are an infernally disagreeable woman sometimes. You don't mind my saying so, do you?"

"I am sure you would not be deterred from saying so by such a trifle as my objecting to be called infernally disagreeable."

"Ah, but you can be infernally agreeable too, if you like. I wish you would take it into your head to be agreeable to her."

"My dear Dick, I hope I am not so silly or so ill bred as to quarrel with your wife; but if you expect to see us tripping out of the dining-room after dinner with our arms twined round each other's waists, you had better prepare yourself for a disappointment. Demonstrations of that kind must be undertaken by you."

Dick laughed. "There won't be any demonstrations of that kind; don't be alarmed. We shall be a very sensible, matter-of-fact couple, and we have no intention of going in for love-making. Besides, I dare say I shall be away from home pretty often."

"Oh, you have already arranged that? If it is not an impertinent question, may I ask why you are marrying a girl with whom you are

not in love? I can understand that she may have her reasons for marrying you."

"We both have our reasons, and very good ones too. I needn't run through the list of them. I really think you will like Hope; but I won't say any more. If I praise her too much I shall probably set you against her."

"Naturally," observed Miss Herbert, and then changed the subject.

Jacob no longer dined with the family; his meals were served to him by reluctant servants in his own sitting-room up-stairs,—another painful incident of his false position. Sometimes, however, if there was nobody staying in the house, he would make his appearance in the smoking-room at a late hour; and he did so this evening.

Dick looked up from the *Field* and nodded to him as he entered and advanced towards the fire, his cheeks somewhat pale, and the embarrassment of his manner more marked than usual. It was only after he had twice opened his lips without speaking that he managed to say,—

"I told you I had sold another picture. I have been saving up what I have earned lately, and here it is." He held out a bundle of bank-notes. "It's—it's—the two hundred pounds that I stole," he said, a sudden flush mounting to his cheek-bones as he forced himself to utter that uncompromising word.

Dick frowned, as he had a way of doing when he was distressed. "What nonsense, Jake!" he exclaimed. "I thought we had agreed not to mention that affair again. It is all over and—done with." He had been going to say "forgotten," but checked himself.

"It can never be done with for me," answered the young man, upon whom the significance of the substituted phrase was not lost. "The curse will be upon me to my dying day. If I never commit another offence against God or man, it will make no difference. It can't be helped, I suppose."

Dick was not much moved by this outburst, which struck him as exaggerated and uncalled-for. "My good fellow," he said, not very felicitously, "I don't want the money: it wasn't the loss of two hundred pounds that I cared about."

"I am quite aware of that," replied the other, bitterly; "but I hope you will take the money, all the same, to please me. It's—a wedding-present, if you like," he added, with a faint smile.

"I am very willing to accept your present, Jake, if that will make you any happier," said Dick, taking the notes and tossing them carelessly into a drawer.

Unlike the generality of rich men, he cared less about money than about any other earthly thing, and treated this considerable sum as if

it had been the merest trifle. He wanted to add something kind, but scarcely knew what to say. The pale, sullen face and the downcast eyes which refused to meet his impressed him disagreeably. The form of consolation which finally commended itself to him was not quite the best that could have been hit upon :

"Come, Jake, don't look so gloomy over it. Nobody but ourselves knows what happened three years ago, and nobody else ever will know. You have made a fresh start : go on and prosper, and, in God's name, give up worrying yourself about what can't be undone."

Jacob made some inarticulate murmur and presently went away. He had been quite prepared for his reception ; he had felt sure beforehand that Dick would never say, "Let us be friends again ;" yet he was sore and disappointed. If those few words could have been spoken, his character might even now have been altered ; but the words that he had heard were so many fresh wounds, which would smart for weeks and months to come, and might not improbably poison his sick mind beyond hope of cure, as the sting of an insect will sometimes prove fatal to those whose blood is in a diseased state. But how was a straightforward, plain-dealing fellow like Dick Herbert to understand all this ?

CHAPTER XIV.

MRS. PIERPOINT.

ONE afternoon, some weeks after the announcement of Hope's engagement to Mr. Herbert, a young gentleman, whose somewhat perturbed mien contrasted with the very careful accuracy of his get-up, rang at the door of one of the smallest houses in Green Street, Mayfair. He asked for Mrs. Pierpoint, was admitted, and presently groped his way into a diminutive drawing-room, darkened to suit modern requirements, and a little overcrowded with the Satsuma and Kioto ware, the old silver and enamels and miniatures, which are the outward evidences of modern taste.

Behind a tea-table in a corner of the diminutive drawing-room sat a diminutive lady, who immediately said, "I know what is the matter. You have heard that your flame is going to be married, and you have come to tell me that it is all my fault."

"And so it is your fault," Captain Cunningham declared, dropping into a low chair and casting his hat away from him with the air of one to whom glossy hats could henceforward be neither a care nor a consolation. "If it hadn't been for you, this would never have happened."

"If I could think so," remarked Mrs. Pierpoint, "I should be able to flatter myself that I had not lived altogether in vain; but I am afraid I must not claim all that credit. The utmost that I have done has been to save you from getting into one more stupid scrape."

Mrs. Pierpoint had been for some years Bertie Cunningham's friend, confidante, and adviser. Her age was nearer forty than thirty; but she had preserved her girlish figure and as much as could be expected of the beauty for which she had once been famous. Time could not mar the perfect profile formed by that low brow, that little Greek nose, that short upper lip and rounded chin. Some lines, it is true, showed themselves about the mouth and eyes, and the complexion was no longer what it had been; but the abundant brown hair was as yet unstreaked with gray, only the gold having faded out of it. She was a bright, vivacious woman, who liked hunting in winter, and society in spring, and yachting in summer, and Bertie Cunningham all the year round. Some people were pleased to say disagreeable things about her; but, as these things were not true, there is no need to dwell upon them. She had a husband with whom she managed to live on terms of amity, though there had been a time when she had believed that this would be impossible to her. Many things are found possible which do not appear so at first sight. Mrs. Pierpoint had learned to shut her eyes to what she did not wish to see, to accept what there was no satisfactory mode of escape from, and to conceal any sufferings that she may have felt from a world which dislikes nothing so much as the contemplation of suffering. It is probable that her moral standard was not a very exalted one; but she was a brave, kind-hearted little soul, who tried to do her duty according to her lights, and spoke evil of neither man nor woman.

"If it hadn't been for you," Bertie Cunningham went on, reproachfully, "I should have got those people to ask me down to Helston at Christmas. You know I should."

"And afterwards?"

"Afterwards?—*afterwards!* Well, I should have seen her, and she wouldn't have gone and engaged herself to this fellow; that's all. Oh, you may call me conceited if you like; I don't care. I'm much too miserable to care what I am called. Herbert, of all men! She can't possibly love him, you know. Now, don't go and say that she does."

"Would it be any comfort to you to think that she did?"

"Yes,—no,—I don't know. I'm beyond reach of comfort. You don't understand what it is; you're so awfully stony-hearted. I should just like to see you desperately, miserably in love with somebody!"

"I fancy that I have outlived the power; but thank you all the same. I have seen you in that condition once or twice before, and I don't feel much alarmed about you. You'll be all right again in a few weeks."

"That is a most horrid unfriendly thing to say," cried Cunningham, "besides being perfectly untrue. You never in your life saw me in love before. Some fancies I may have had,—there's nothing to laugh at,—I say, I may have had a passing fancy or two; but nothing in the least like this. This is the real thing, and I shall never get over it."

"Do you think you will die of it, then? Have a cup of tea in the mean time."

"I said nothing about dying," returned the young man, with some asperity; "I said I should never get over it; and I never shall. If I were talking to anybody but you, I should say that my heart was broken; but I won't say so to you, because as a matter of course you would begin to laugh. You *are* laughing already. Well, I suppose there must be something killingly funny in the suffering of a friend, since it amuses you so much; but I don't quite see the joke myself."

"I am not laughing," said the little lady, who indeed had only smiled. "I am really sorry for you, and I quite believe that it hurts for the moment; only I can't pretend to regret Miss Lefroy's engagement. You know as well as I do that you never could have married her, and therefore——"

"Oh, yes; that's the way you kept going on all the winter. I wish to heaven I hadn't listened to you!"

"Do you know that you are becoming rather rude? But never mind; I didn't expect gratitude. What I was going to say was that, as you could not have afforded to marry Miss Lefroy yourself, it really cannot signify much to you whom she marries or when she marries. To be sure," added Mrs. Pierpoint, thoughtfully, "I would rather have heard that she was engaged to any other man than Mr. Herbert. It may lead to complications."

"What complications?" Cunningham asked.

"You know what I mean. I am afraid you will be apt to make love to the wife when you ought to be making love to the sister."

Cunningham groaned. "I wish you were not so determined to marry me to Miss Herbert! I am not going to marry her; I am not going to marry at all. Why on earth should I?"

"Because it is good for you. Because you want money; because Carry Herbert is by far the best-looking heiress that I know, and because you really did like her very much not so long ago."

"Like her!—oh, yes, I liked her well enough; but that was before

I saw Hope—Miss Lefroy, I mean. Everything is changed now, and there is only one woman in the world whom I could possibly marry. I say, do you believe Dick Herbert is in love with her?"

"I know nothing about it, but I presume so. According to you, her charms are sufficient to account for his being in love with her."

"Yes; but I always imagined that Herbert was a regular woman-hater, and he gave out ever so long ago that he didn't mean to marry. I suspect Lady Jane has made up the match."

Mrs. Pierpoint was beginning, "If she has, it is much to her credit——" when Mr. Francis was announced, and she rose to shake hands with the new arrival. "We were just talking about your friend Mr. Herbert," she remarked.

"Were you?" said Francis. "Then let us talk about something else."

"After that, we certainly can't talk about anything else until you have explained yourself. Don't you approve of his marriage?"

"Does anybody ever approve of the marriage of his best friend? Isn't it a well-known fact that the chances are twenty to one in favor of his best friend's wife hating him like poison? In this instance the chances may safely be counted as fifty to one, because the only time that I ever spoke to Miss Lefroy I was happily inspired to tell her that a woman who married poor Dick from worldly motives would infallibly make him and herself miserable."

"She is marrying him from worldly motives, then?"

"Judging by the spirit in which she received my remarks, I should imagine that she was; and I am not in Miss Lefroy's secrets. I shall buy a very nice wedding-present for Dick; I shall see him through on the fatal day and then bid him a tearful farewell. I give him eighteen months to repent of his bargain and return to me in sackcloth and ashes. That would bring us to just about the proper time of year for the big game in Abyssinia."

"You are indeed a friend of the right sort. And what is Mrs. Herbert to do when you go after the big game in Abyssinia?"

"Mrs. Herbert, I take it, will amuse herself with little games in England. I don't wish to be the prophet of evil; I may be quite wrong, and they may turn out the happiest couple under the sun; but I have opinions of my own upon the subject of matrimony in general and of Dick Herbert as a married man in particular."

He had views, which he was rather fond of unfolding, upon most subjects, and perhaps he would have been willing to state his matrimonial views now; but it was already past six o'clock, and other visitors, before whom such subjects could not conveniently be discussed, began

to drop in, one by one, until the little room was almost choked with them.

Among the latest arrivals was Miss Herbert, who was welcomed by Mrs. Pierpoint with that peculiarly affectionate cordiality which women are wont to display towards another of their sex in the presence of the man to whom they desire to marry her. Why they should behave in this manner it is not easy to discover; for the man, unless he is very dull indeed, sees and understands it all, and, as a general thing, it makes him both uncomfortable and obstinate. It is not everybody who, like Bertie Cunningham, is prepared for all kinds of feminine stratagems and is confident of his own power to resist them.

That experienced youth knew quite well that a chair close to his would be found for Miss Herbert, and he also had good grounds for believing that Miss Herbert had a crow to pluck with him; but he did not allow these things to disturb his equanimity. He got her a cup of tea, resumed his seat, smiled pleasantly, and waited for her to begin the attack. She looked very handsome in that subdued light, and, broken-hearted though he was, it was always agreeable to him to contemplate a handsome woman. The clouds which had gathered upon her brow when she first caught sight of him began to disperse as she returned his gaze.

"Captain Cunningham," said she, "how ought one to treat a correspondent who never answers one's letters?"

"Go on writing to him till he does answer, I should think," replied Bertie, promptly.

"That might become monotonous. Perhaps a simpler plan would be to give up writing to him altogether."

"I can't help fancying," said Bertie, "that these observations are meant to apply in some mysterious way to me. If so, I can only say that that is the plan which you have adopted. I haven't had a letter from you for a very long time; but I am sure I answered every time that you wrote. If you didn't hear, it must have been the fault of that disgraceful post-office, which is always mislaying my correspondence. I mean to make a formal complaint to the Postmaster-General about it one of these days."

Miss Herbert smiled. Perhaps she believed him; perhaps she only wanted to believe him. He was bending forward, his elbow resting on his knees, and was looking up into her face with those innocent dark-blue eyes which many a woman before her had found irresistible. The most absurd of all the illusions that we cherish are those which we know to be illusions; but it not unfrequently happens that these are just the ones with which we are most unwilling to part.

Miss Herbert drank her tea silently ; the smile was still hovering about her lips as she handed the empty cup to her neighbor. In general, her voice, if not exactly harsh, was hard ; but nothing could have been gentler than the intonation with which her next words were spoken : " I wonder whether you will take the trouble to come and see me sometimes, now that I am in London."

" Of course I will," Bertie answered. " Where are you staying ?"

She gave him one of her cards. " Dick has taken a house for the season," she said. " I suppose you have heard about poor Dick ?"

The young man winced slightly. " Yes, I've heard. What in the world is he doing it for ?"

" Really, that is more than I can tell you. There appears to be no pretence of affection on either side."

" I knew it !" exclaimed Bertie, off his guard. " I was certain that there couldn't be anything of the kind !"

" Why were you so certain ?" asked Miss Herbert, suspiciously. " Are you acquainted with the girl ?"

" Well, yes ; just acquainted," answered the other, recollecting himself. " That is, I have met her twice in my life. It didn't strike me that she was at all in Dick's style. This really ought not to be allowed to go on, you know."

Miss Herbert laughed. " If you think that Dick can be prevented from doing anything that he has made up his mind to do, you must have had very few opportunities of studying his character. After all, why should it not be allowed to go on ? It is very unlikely that he will live and die a bachelor, and I don't know that Miss Lefroy will not suit him as well as anybody else. I was introduced to her yesterday, and I thought her a very decent sort of person."

A decent sort of person ! Bertie stroked his nascent moustache, and held his tongue with some difficulty. He valued peace too much to put the thoughts that were in him into words ; but he was not sorry that the conversation at this juncture became general. When Miss Herbert took her leave he had recovered himself sufficiently to bestow that slight pressure upon her fingers which he supposed that she expected.

As soon as he and Mrs. Pierpoint were once more alone, the latter remarked, dryly, " I am glad to see that you are still capable of making love to a lady who has the merit of being marriageable."

" You call that a merit ! Besides, I didn't make love to her at all : how can you say such things ? I have never made love to her."

" Oh !"

" Well, I am speaking the truth. I know what it will be : some

fine day you will manage to get me into such a position that I shall be obliged to propose to Miss Herbert or some other heiress, and then I shall be nicely caught!"

"You must acknowledge that, if I have anything to do with the catching, I shall at least be disinterested. You heard what Mr. Francis said just now about the wives of one's best friends, and I suppose the same rule applies to the husbands. This is a peculiarly hard case, since both you and Carry Herbert are friends of mine. I wonder whether you will both show me the cold shoulder as soon as you are married."

"I can't tell what she might do," said Cunningham; "but I can answer for myself. Cold shoulder wouldn't be the word. If ever you bring such a thing about, my implacable resentment shall pursue you all the days of your mortal life."

"This is very sad and very discouraging," said Mrs. Pierpoint; "but I think I will take my chance all the same. Perhaps you won't hate me; you may even live to thank me—who knows?"

CHAPTER XV.

HOPE DOES HER DUTY.

SPRING had passed imperceptibly into summer; the trees in Eaton Square were as green as London trees can contrive to be; the season was in full swing; the ceaseless turmoil of the vast city had become slightly increased in one of its quarters; a few of its inhabitants were spending hundreds and thousands of pounds upon entertainments which afforded no very keen delight to anybody; others were dying of hunger in garrets; at Westminster statesmen and would-be statesmen were calling one another bad names and occasionally doing a little business. That astonishing mixture of tragedy and farce which goes by the name of life, and which, from force of habit, none of us find astonishing, was, in short, being enacted as usual; and the circumstance that a single individual among those millions had rather rashly engaged herself to marry a man whom she did not love was, doubtless, trivial enough. What can it matter whether one atom in the swarm lives or dies, is happy or unhappy? Since, however, all is relative, since the world in which we dwell is but a speck in the immensity of space, and since it and we might be extinguished to-morrow without even a momentary cessation of the music of the spheres, it is evident that we have only to apply the same theory upon a somewhat larger scale in order to con-

vince ourselves that nothing which has ever happened upon the surface of this planet is of any consequence whatsoever,—a proposition which seems too bold to be gulped down by mortal swallow. And so we return to the comforting conclusion that small things are just as important as great, and that Hope Lefroy's destiny was at least of supreme consequence to herself.

There were moments when she felt it to be so ; but for the most part she allowed herself to float down the stream of fate, not without a restful sense of relief in the thought that her struggles against the current were ended. Herbert came to see her from time to time,—not by any means every day ; Gertrude endeavored, with more or less of success, to interest her in the purchase of her trousseau ; Lady Jane purred over her contentedly ; the more distant members of the Lefroy clan came to offer their felicitations and their wedding-gifts ; the days slipped away somehow or other, and were not such bad days, taking them all in all. She went as little as possible into the world, the comparative recency of her father's death giving her an excuse for declining invitations ; but she could hardly refuse to be present at her aunt's annual ball, and it was upon that occasion that she encountered Captain Cunningham for the first time since her engagement.

It must be confessed that the sight of the young guardsman agitated her a little for a moment ; he himself was agitated, and possibly did not try very hard to veil his agitation. But it was rather her memory than her heart that was stirred, and she speedily regained her self-possession. "No, thanks," she said, in answer to his immediate request : "I am not going to dance to-night."

"Oh, but just once,—for the sake of old times," he pleaded.

"Well, perhaps once," she answered, hesitatingly. "But not now ; later in the evening, if you're disengaged then." And with that she turned away.

After all, why should she not have just one last dance ? Without quite knowing it, she looked forward to her marriage in much the same way that many people look forward to death,—as the end of everything, a huge barrier, beyond which there may or may not be some new kind of happiness, but surely no renewal of dancing or laughter or other frivolous delights.

Cunningham was too adroit, or too much engaged, to claim the promised dance before two o'clock in the morning, the consequence of which was that he was awaited with some little impatience. He looked sad and interesting ; he said very little, but placed his arm round his partner's waist, and as she was whirled away into the throng it seemed to her for an instant as if careless youth had come back, and all the

events of the past year might be forgotten, and she might fancy herself at her first ball again.

An insignificant circumstance interfered with the continuance of this illusion. The house in which Hope had first been introduced to London society had been a very large one, whereas that in Eaton Square was only of moderate size. In so restricted a space collisions could with difficulty be avoided, and anything like the poetry of motion was quite unattainable. After making the circuit of the room once, Hope paused, and, disengaging herself from her partner, declared, with a touch of petulance, that it was out of the question to dance in the midst of such a rabble. "We may as well sit down," she said, and suited the action to the word.

"Ah!" sighed Cunningham, as he followed her example, "if we could only go back to this time last year!"

"That is just what I was thinking: it seems so much more than a year ago!"

"I suppose it wouldn't make much difference if we could," the young man said, with another sigh. "What must be will be. Only, so long as things haven't actually happened, it always seems as if other things might be possible, don't you know?"

To this incoherent sentiment Hope made no reply, and he continued: "I wonder what we shall be doing this time next year. Probably I shall be wishing I could have this evening back again. Next year you will be Mrs. Herbert, and perhaps your husband won't let you dance."

"I don't think Mr. Herbert is likely to lay any prohibitions upon me," answered Hope, coldly.

She was not pleased with him for alluding to her marriage. There are certain reticences for which women are always grateful, and she had credited Cunningham with some delicacy in that he had refrained from offering her any empty congratulations. Of course he must suspect what her motives for marrying were, and, as he was no relation of hers, of course he could see no cause for rejoicing in such a match. But he might have let the subject alone.

Fortunately, he did not seem inclined to pursue it. His next words were, "Do you remember that day last winter when I met you in the Park?"

"Quite well," answered Hope.

"And I told you I should get your people to ask me down to Helston at Christmas. How I wish I had!"

"We should all have been glad to see you; but most likely you were better amused hunting in Leicestershire with your friend Mrs. Pierpoint."

"How did you know that I was there?" asked the young man, in some astonishment.

"Everything is known. Did you wish it to remain a secret?"

"Oh, dear, no! there is no secret about it. Pierpoint told me I could ride his horses while he was away, so I went down to Melton for a few weeks and stayed with a cousin of mine. Only I thought, from the way you spoke—that is, I hope you know that I would a thousand times rather have been at Helston than in Leicestershire."

"Really? I can't quite understand why."

But in truth she did understand what he meant her to infer; and, if she had not, the eloquent expression which he now threw into his eyes would have enlightened her. This knowledge, however, did not cause her heart to beat any the faster. Captain Cunningham might possibly, under different conditions, have become something to her; but he was nothing to her now; she was quite sure of that; nor did she believe much in his sincerity. No doubt the impassioned gaze with which she was at that moment being honored had been directed at half a dozen sets of features in the course of the evening. But there she did him an injustice. Had he been less seriously in love with her, he would not have hesitated to be a good deal more explicit; but Hope was not to him what other women were, and, since he could no more ask her to throw Herbert over and marry him than he could propose to a princess of the blood royal, he heroically refrained from going beyond hints and glances; which, according to his code, was no small concession to the behests of duty.

These meetings with no response, the conversation gradually languished. Neither he nor she felt altogether at ease; the interview was a disappointment to both of them, and Hope was not sorry when Herbert lounged up to her side and put an end to it. With Herbert she did feel at ease: never was there a less exacting *fiancé*. If she happened to be in a talkative mood, he sat and listened to her with apparent pleasure; if, on the other hand, she preferred to remain silent, that seemed to suit him equally well. She told herself a dozen times a day that she ought to be very thankful, and that she never could have got on so smoothly with any one else in the world. It was necessary that she should tell herself this, because every now and then he provoked her to an extent for which she was puzzled to account; and indeed, although storms are not to be desired, there are few tempers capable of holding out against a perpetual equatorial calm.

There was no disturbing Dick Herbert's good humor: otherwise he might have been made a little anxious by the fits of nervous irritability to which Hope became subject as the day of her marriage drew nearer.

"Do you realize what you are doing?" she asked him suddenly, once; "do you know that you are marrying a woman who has the makings of a termagant in her?"

He smiled, and replied that he was willing to run that risk.

On another occasion she besought him to tell her whether he did not in his heart believe it to be wicked to marry without love. "It must be wicked!—I am sure it must be! Though I don't think the Bible says anything about it."

"Neither the Bible nor I have a word to say against the practice," Dick answered.

"But perhaps you think it wrong, though you don't say so. Wouldn't you like to be off your bargain? Come!—there is still time."

"Well, hardly, is there? Think of the feelings of your family."

Hope burst into an hysterical laugh. "What *would* they do to me! It would be almost worth while to break the engagement off, if only for the sake of passing through such a startling experience. But of course I am talking nonsense," she added, becoming grave again. "I should never have the moral courage to retreat now: perhaps if I had had any moral courage I should never have advanced. It has all been your doing from first to last."

"I don't mind accepting the entire responsibility," said Dick.

That was the worst of him: he didn't mind anything. It was this unreasonable complaint that Hope inwardly formulated against a man who let her do exactly what she pleased now, and who would in all probability continue to let her do what she pleased hereafter. Unquestionably such a treasure was thrown away upon her; and so, in truth, her friends appeared to think. When they came to congratulate her, they one and all expatiated upon Dick's good qualities, and had an unflattering way of implying that she was a great deal more lucky than she deserved to be. Even Mills, who could not be accused of undervaluing her former mistress, was abundantly satisfied with the match, and spoke of Mr. Herbert in terms of such extravagant, not to say ignorant, eulogy that Hope could not help calling attention to one small defect of his. "He is sixteen years older than I am, you know, Mills."

"And a very good thing, too, Miss Hope. I don't feel no confidence in young men, nor yet no respect for 'em," said Mrs. Mills, whose own husband was considerably her junior. "What you want," she went on, "is somebody to take care of you; and that Mr. Herbert will do. I'd a deal sooner it was him than the other."

"What other?" Hope inquired.

"Why, him as you walked with that day in the Park, my dear. I

was took with him at first, I don't deny, for I have always been partial to good looks, having none myself; but when I come to think it over, I didn't feel so sure of him. No, my dear, it's best as it is, you may depend."

"The gentleman whom you speak of never asked me to marry him," said Hope; "and no doubt everything that happens is always for the best. At all events, you will be a gainer, you poor old Mills, for you won't be dragged away from your duties any more now to sit in artists' studios all the morning."

"The Lord be praised for that!" ejaculated Mills, piously. "Not that I grudged the time, as well you know, Miss Hope; but, dear me! it wasn't the right thing at all for a young lady like you to be going to such places. I felt so all along, though it wasn't for me to speak; and that there Mr. Tristram, I believe he thought the same as I did."

"Very likely," answered Hope.

She had no doubt that Tristram, in common with everybody else, held that opinion. In her inexperience she had imagined that it might possibly be the right thing to earn her own bread; but evidently this was not so. The right thing was to remain, by hook or by crook, in the station to which she had been born; the right thing was to be rich. If riches did not chance in her case to be synonymous with bliss, that was her own fault. The consciousness of duty performed should be sufficient for all well-ordered minds.

It was in the very last days of her spinsterhood that Hope held the above colloquy with Mills. She had gone to Henrietta Street to take leave of her old nurse and her old rooms, and had contemplated continuing her pilgrimage to South Kensington in order to take leave also of her old master. But now she gave up that idea. What would be the good? What pleasure could there be in hearing conventionalities from the unconventional Tristram? These might more appropriately be spoken after the ceremony, to which he had been invited and at which she presumed that he would be present. So she went straight back to Eaton Square and shed a few tears in private.

No modern Joshua being at hand to arrest the remorseless progress of time, the sun rose punctually at 4.30 A.M. on Hope's wedding-morning, to pursue his wonted course of shining upon the just and upon the unjust, among the former class of which persons might surely be included a young woman whose faltering steps had led her at last into what she believed to be the path of duty. When he sank once more beneath the horizon-line, Hope Lefroy had become Mrs. Herbert, and Lady Jane, resting from her labors, breathed a fervent thanksgiving that the proceedings of the day had passed off without a hitch.

The good lady had not felt quite sure that there would be no hitch ; but that numbness of the whole nervous system which is often brought about by a crisis, and which is no bad substitute for courage, enabled Hope to bear herself from first to last with the most creditable composure. Her wedding was only a little less magnificent than that of her cousin had been. Dukes and duchesses were not quite so well represented at it, and the reporters of the daily papers appeared at the church in somewhat diminished numbers ; but the requisite bishop was not lacking, nor had any expense been spared in the way of floral decoration. Dick Herbert, in a new suit of clothes, got through his task with ease and distinction, supported by the dissatisfied Francis, who had assumed a smiling mien in spite of his dissatisfaction. The only thing that Hope afterwards remembered to have seen during the service was Tristram's shaggy head rising above a sea of others ; and she noticed that he was studying the scene with a pensive, melancholy air, as if thinking that a picture might possibly be made out of it. But it was certain that Tristram would never paint anything so hopelessly commonplace as a fashionable wedding. He said something to her—she did not clearly understand what—when he shook hands with her after the rite was concluded. There were so many people to be shaken hands with, and so many meaningless words to be listened to !

However, the ordeal did not last long. Hope, placing herself in the hands of the new maid who had been engaged for her, exchanged her bridal array for a travelling-dress ; immediately after which she seemed to wake out of a trance, and found that she was seated beside her husband in a brougham, moving rapidly towards the station, whence they were to depart for Folkestone and the Continent.

She faced round upon him with quivering lips and dilated eyes. "Now," she exclaimed, "I hope you are satisfied !"

"It seemed the best thing to do," he answered, calmly.

Then she turned away, looking out of the window, and did not speak again until the short drive was at an end.

Gertrude, when the company had dispersed, was moved by curiosity to put an indiscreet question to her mother : "Mamma, do you think they will be happy, those two?"

"They have everything to make them so," Lady Jane declared, boldly.

"Not quite everything, have they? I suppose he must be fond of her ; but she has said from the beginning that she is not the least in love with him. It seems rather dreadful ! I hope I shall not marry a man whom I don't care for."

"I sincerely hope not, my dear," said Lady Jane : "I should never

venture to advise any one to do that. And yet love is not so absolutely essential as young people are apt to think. I have known many instances in which people who have married from—other motives have got on very well.” She sighed faintly. Perhaps she did not speak upon the subject without some personal knowledge of it to guide her. “At all events,” she concluded, cheerfully, “it is a thousand times better for Hope to be living at Farndon, and mixing in the society to which she has been accustomed, than masquerading about London in the disguise of a female artist.”

Mr. Lefroy walked down to his club, where he met several of his late guests. “Well, Lefroy,” said one of them, “you look very beaming. Has the Birmingham Caucus been swallowed up by an earthquake?”

“No,” answered Mr. Lefroy; “but I’ve married my niece to one of the best fellows that ever stepped.”

“Quite so; but you might have married her to anybody, for that matter. To my mind, hers is far and away the most beautiful face that has been seen in London this year.”

“Well, yes,” assented Mr. Lefroy. “Oh, yes, she is perfect to look at, certainly: still, I don’t mind admitting to you that I’m glad to get her off my hands. No vice, you understand; but awkward to drive,—very awkward to drive.”

“And you think she’ll go steadier in double harness, eh?”

“I haven’t a doubt of it. She’ll go steady enough now; no more shying or bolting. Only I’m not sure—this is strictly between ourselves, of course—I’m not *quite* sure that I should care to change places with Dick Herbert.”

CHAPTER XVI.

A WELCOME.

FORTUNATELY for its occupants, Farndon Court has never been a show-place; but that does not prevent it from being one of the most charming houses in Berkshire. The original structure, which certain prints still extant depict as a somewhat gloomy mansion of the Jacobean style, was burnt to the ground in the early part of the present century, and Dick Herbert’s father, then a young man who had recently returned from making the grand tour, had it replaced upon another site, by as near a reproduction as his architect could achieve or would consent to of a Renaissance French château, with steep roofs, jutting

wings, and high windows which at a later period were fitted with plate-glass. The edifice has been a good deal criticised, but no one has ever thought of disputing the beauty of its position. It stands on an eminence, approached from the north by a long, straight avenue, while on the south (towards which quarter the windows of the principal reception-rooms look) is a broad terrace, terminated by a stone balustrade, some ten feet beneath which are level lawns and geometrically-designed flower-beds, according well enough with the formal character of the building. From the limit of these the ground falls gently to the shores of a lake of respectable size, and beyond that woods stretch away as far as the eye can reach. From every side, indeed, of this happily-placed dwelling an undulating sea of greenery extends into the far misty distance. All the charm of woodland scenery is there, without that sense of oppression which the too near neighborhood of trees is apt to convey. The park is not large, nor, for the matter of that, is the entire property a very extensive one; but it has the appearance of being boundless, no line of demarcation being perceptible at the points where it touches Windsor Forest.

As for the interior of the house, it was comfortable, though hardly what in these days would be considered pretty or capable of being rendered so. The rooms were spacious and lofty, but of course lacked those nooks and corners upon which we have learned to set so high a value; and the furniture, which had been purchased at an epoch when gilding, damask, and huge mirrors were held to exhaust the resources of art and luxury, was—as Dick's friends had frequently informed him—meretricious in the last degree. By the time that Dick had decided to give his home a mistress it had become extremely shabby into the bargain, and, as he had the best reasons for distrusting his own taste in such matters, he thought he could not do more wisely than summon a celebrated upholsterer, turn him loose in the house, and briefly instruct him to "do it up and make it decent in a couple of months."

The celebrated upholsterer accepted the commission with glee. He came down from London, accompanied by his myrmidons, and carried out his orders in a thoroughly painstaking and conscientious manner. He did the house up and made it decent according to his notions, which were those of the most modern school, and did not allow himself to be hampered by any slavish adherence to congruity. The abomination of gilding was promptly reduced; the walls became clothed, some in tapestry, some in an imitation of stamped leather, others in papers of a sombre hue; an immense consignment of old oak—or, at any rate, of oak which seemed to be old—arrived and was distributed about the premises; a pleasing irregularity displayed itself in the arrangement

of the brackets which supported the late Mr. Herbert's collection of old Chelsea and Bow; all the doors were taken off their hinges, and others, made of solid wood, were put in their place. With those immense windows, there was no excluding the light; but the best that could be done with heavy curtains was done. Then the upholsterer rested from his labors, feeling that he had performed his duty, and in due course sent in an account which caused even Dick Herbert to purse up his lips and whistle.

Late one afternoon towards the end of September Miss Herbert was pacing pensively up and down the terrace already alluded to. She had arrived the day before, had inspected, with elevated eyebrows and a mental appraisal of the cost, the transformation effected within-doors, and she was now awaiting the owner and his bride, whose home-coming was expected to take place that evening. It has been said of an eminent statesman that he possesses every virtue except that of resignation. Of Miss Herbert it was never said that she possessed every virtue; but from the list of those that she did possess the same deduction would assuredly have had to be made. Perhaps she was one of those persons who are born to rule: she had, at all events, been accustomed to rule over Farndon for a long time, and the prospect of resigning her authority was not agreeable to her.

Her musings as she gazed out at the yellowing woods and the mists rising from the lake were in keeping with the melancholy that belonged to the season and the hour. She herself was entering upon the autumn of life, and there were moments when she was painfully aware of the fact. Looking back upon the bygone spring- and summer-time, she felt that she had not made hay while the sun shone, or that at least she had made it after a fashion which had left her nothing to show in the shape of crop. She had certainly amused herself very well during a considerable number of years, if that could be called making hay. When she had been young and handsome and an heiress, she had found the world at her feet, and, finding it there, had been unable to resist the temptation to kick it. She had had many suitors, whom she had fooled to the top of their bent and had dismissed, without scruple or mercy, as soon as they began to weary her. Whilst she walked on the terrace at Farndon that September evening, she was thinking to herself, as the generality of us think, that if she could only take a fresh start and begin life over again she would act in quite another way; but to take a fresh start was impossible, because, although she was still handsome and still an heiress, she was no longer young; and nobody knew better than Miss Herbert that that made all the difference. It had suited her to assume that those lovers of hers had been attracted to her originally

by mercenary motives. If she had succeeded in capturing their affections, and if they had suffered when she jilted them, that was her fair revenge, and they had no business to complain. But now she was inclined to be less severe in her judgment of them, having a reason of her own for sympathizing with all lovers, and especially with disappointed ones. Not one of those men had ever touched her heart; she had been wont to assure them that she really had no heart to be touched, and had almost believed that she was speaking the truth in so assuring them. It was not until her beauty was already on the wane that, in an evil hour, she had encountered Bertie Cunningham, and had learned that neither years nor experience nor a sceptical temperament are any sort of protection against the malady to which all mortals are liable.

That amiable, selfish, and pleasure-loving young man had played the part of Nemesis with a success of which he was in no wise conscious. He had flirted with Carry Herbert; he had admired her greatly at first; there had been a moment when—his finances being in a terribly disordered condition—he had been upon the verge of proposing to her; but a lucky week at Newmarket had set him on his legs again, and he had decided to keep his liberty. All this Miss Herbert knew and understood perfectly well. She was furious with herself for loving this boy as she did; her reason told her that her love was not, perhaps could not be, returned; yet to give up hope and let him go was more than she could accomplish. Sometimes she cheated herself into thinking that he had loved her once; sometimes she cherished the still more absurd delusion that she might be able to make him love her yet. But what tortured her most of all was her knowledge that she would accept him without hesitation even though he should tell her in so many words that it was her money, not herself, that he desired.

An admission of that kind is not a pleasant one for a proud woman to have to make to herself, and it is hardly surprising that at the age of two-and-thirty Miss Herbert should have been a soured and disappointed woman as well as a proud one. Her brother's marriage was a serious vexation to her. She had never played second fiddle, and could neither imagine herself in that position nor see any way of escape from it. Had she been able to feel as she had felt a year or two back, the matter would have been simple enough. She would have married A or B (there was still more than one such person available) and migrated to another little kingdom. But now she shuddered at the bare thought of what would formerly have seemed to her the most natural solution of the difficulty. Perhaps the one comfort remaining to her was the right which she felt to despise all those who married for the sake of money or convenience. In this category she considered that she was

justified in including Hope,—which was more or less of a special comfort to her.

“Of course we shall detest each other,” she muttered, standing out there among the falling leaves. “If Dick goes off and she is left here, as she probably will be before long, we must try to keep the house full of people. A prolonged *tête-à-tête* would be insupportable.”

Somebody who was crossing the lawn with a hurried step caught sight of her at this moment, paused irresolutely, raised his hat, and passed on. But she stopped him with a somewhat imperious movement of her hand. “How do you do, Stiles?” she said (she always addressed him in this way, as if he had been a servant, and it was one of several reasons that he had for disliking her). “I did not know that you were in the house.”

“I have been here for a week, Miss Herbert,” answered Jacob. (It was his habit to call her “Miss Herbert” instead of “Ma’am,” and that was one reason, among others, why she disliked him.)

“Oh, really? And why are you not down at the station, cheering and throwing up your hat?”

“I did not wish to put myself forward,” replied Jacob. “I heard that some of the tenants were to go down to the station on horse-back,” he added.

“Well, you are a tenant—of a kind, are you not? I should have thought you would have felt bound to give vent to your joy like the others. But perhaps you don’t rejoice; perhaps your tenancy is coming to an end.”

Jacob glanced quickly at the clear-cut features above him, which wore a slightly derisive expression. “Nothing has been said to me,” he answered, hesitatingly. “Did—did Mr. Herbert speak to you about it?”

“Oh, no; only there are going to be changes, and, as you are aware, I myself have always considered your position a very equivocal one.”

“I believe that you always have, Miss Herbert.”

“And it seems not unlikely that the new mistress of the house may wish to make a fresh arrangement of rooms,—the more so as she is by way of being an artist and will probably require a studio of some kind.”

“I can leave at any moment,” Jacob said, with a faint flush on his cheeks.

“I don’t know that you will be required to leave, Stiles. Mrs. Herbert may take a liking to you; only, if I were in your place I should be prepared for the chance of her doing the reverse. A new mistress is apt to be a rather arbitrary sort of person.”

"I should think," observed Jacob,—“very likely I may be wrong,—but I should think that she would be guided in most things by her husband's wishes.”

"I should think—and it is not so very likely that I am wrong—that she would be guided entirely by her own inclinations.”

"May I ask, Miss Herbert," inquired Jacob, with a great show of deference, "whether you have met this lady?"

"Of course I have met her."

"And is she—er——?"

"Pretty? Oh, yes, she is pretty."

"I see," said Jacob, demurely, with his eyes cast down as usual.

There are few things more disagreeable than sitting down inadvertently upon a wasps'-nest. It was a sensation of this kind that Miss Herbert experienced when the above discreet insinuation reached her ears. It was beneath her dignity to take any notice of it, and indeed it had been beneath her dignity (if she had thought of that in time) to speak about her sister-in-law at all to this low-born young man; but the truth was that she had stopped him because, being thoroughly out of temper with the world at large, she had longed to say something disagreeable to somebody. Now, it is always a mistake to say disagreeable things to your inferiors; for they either hold their tongues—in which case you feel that you have been a brute—or else they have the audacity to retort, and then, if you have any respect for yourself, it is you who must remain silent. The sound of the village bells, followed by that of distant cheering, put an end to a colloquy which had lasted too long. Miss Herbert turned away and walked to the other end of the terrace, while Jacob escaped into the house.

From the spot where Miss Herbert was now standing she could, by craning her neck a little, get a glimpse of the avenue, and thus she presently became aware of the approach of a somewhat disorderly cavalcade. The form of Mr. Potter, the land-steward, could be discerned, leading the way on his roan horse; behind him jogged a throng of burly farmers, in the midst of whom was Dick Herbert, driving a mail-phaeton, with his wife by his side; a considerable number of farm-laborers were keeping up with the carriage on foot, shouting lustily as they ran.

"How truly ridiculous!" exclaimed Miss Herbert, under her breath. "What idiots they look! and how poor Dick must hate it all! If I were he, I should offer them an instant reduction of rent and drinks all round to go away."

Then, as the angle of the house hid the procession from view, "I suppose I must go and do my share of the humbug now," she murmured;

and, passing slowly through the drawing-room and the hall, she reached the entrance just as Dick pulled up his horses and turned to make the little speech which was awaited from him. It was a very little speech : his sister listened to it from the top of the steps and was shaken with inward laughter :

"I'm awfully obliged to you fellows for giving us such a hearty welcome. So is Mrs. Herbert : she wishes me to express her thanks. We shall value very much the piece of plate which you were so kind as to present to us on our marriage. Hope to meet you all at dinner before long. These are bad times for farmers ; not particularly good ones for landlords either. But it can't be helped : so we won't say any more about it. Good-night, all of you."

After this brief sample of Dick's eloquence there was a good deal of cheering, and then the assembly dispersed,—the humbler portion of it, no doubt, getting its thirst assuaged before leaving the premises.

Miss Herbert advanced to greet the bride. "Shall I kiss her? Probably it will be expected of me." So she bent forward and just touched with her lips the cool, fresh cheek which was presented to her. Then, drawing back a little, she took a keen survey of her supplanter. "Why, the woman looks positively radiant!" was her unspoken comment. "Can she be really enamoured of Dick, after all?"

At that moment Hope certainly bore all the outward semblance of a happy bride. Her eyes were sparkling, the excitement or the fresh air had brought the color into her face, and she looked, as Miss Herbert was fain to admit, even prettier than she had looked on her wedding-day. Dick, who had stopped to say a few words to the servants, joined the two ladies before either of them had spoken, and then they all three entered the drawing-room together.

"What a pretty room!" exclaimed Hope.

A bright fire was burning in the grate ; the wax candles in the sconces which had been placed between the tapestried panels shed a mellow light upon chairs, tables, curtains, and other articles of furniture, which were undoubtedly pretty in themselves, and a plentiful supply of flowers had been brought in from the hot-houses.

"I suppose it is pretty," agreed her husband, dubiously, stroking his chin, while he surveyed the achievements of the upholsterer. "It has rather a stagey sort of look to me ; but I suspect that is my lack of artistic perception. Have you been over the house, Carry?"

"I have," answered Miss Herbert.

"And what do you think of it?"

"I think that I would rather you paid the bill than I."

"Oh, bother the bill!" said Dick. "My only fear is that Hope

may tell me it is all wrong. I shan't let her see more of it than I can help to-night. Suppose we go and dress for dinner now."

At dinner Miss Herbert had opportunities for gauging the affection that existed between the newly-married couple, and was compelled to abandon all her preconceived ideas upon that point. "They are nothing more nor less than a pair of lovers," she thought, not without some disgust; "and I foresee that it will be my pleasing occupation to be perpetually hiding myself lest I should be in their way." She remarked aloud, "You have made a very long honeymoon of it. Where have you been, and what have you been doing, all this time?"

"Upon my word, I don't quite know," answered Dick. "We have been dawdling about,—Switzerland, and Venice, and the Italian lakes, you know."

"Living in hotels among herds of tourists, and being dragged off every day to see sights by a courier. Weren't you bored to death?"

"Well, no," replied Dick, "I don't think so. Were we bored, Hope?"

"I was not," answered Hope, with a smile.

"You see, we were in Venice most of the time, and there were plenty of pictures for her to look at there," observed Dick, explanatorily.

But that did not account for the meaning look which Mrs. Herbert had sent across the table at her husband and which Carry had caught on its passage. Really, it was a little provoking. If these two people had married for love, why on earth could they not have said so, instead of cheating others into the belief that they merited pity and contempt? To be sure, they might still deserve both; everything depends upon the point of view; but Miss Herbert felt that if she were to be logical her stand-point must now be one of sympathy. In any case, this kind of thing was not likely to last long; and she was kind enough to give Hope an inkling of what might be anticipated as soon as they had adjourned to the drawing-room after dinner, leaving Dick to his claret and his cigarette.

"I suppose," she began, "that Dick is full of shooting-engagements, as usual."

"I have not heard of any," Hope answered.

"Perhaps he hasn't read his letters yet. Generally he is in great request at this time of year. He doesn't shoot his own coverts till later, in the season. I have always tried to pay visits in the autumn, because it isn't particularly lively to be quite alone in a place like this; but of course we can ask people down to stay now."

"Shall I not be invited to go with Dick, then?" asked Hope.

Carry laughed. "Very likely you will be invited, for form's sake; but I don't think I should accept, if I were you. Women are not really wanted at those big shooting-parties, you know."

"But I don't know," said Hope: "the truth is that I know nothing at all about such things. There were plenty of women at Helston while the shooting was going on."

"Oh, Helston is another affair altogether. Shooting there isn't the serious business that it is in the houses which Dick frequents. Besides, I fancy that even the most devoted of husbands appreciates a holiday every now and then. As for Dick, he has been in the habit of doing exactly as he pleases all his life long, and he is a little bit too old to change now."

"Possibly it might please him to take me with him," suggested Hope.

At this Carry laughed again. "Oh, it might, no doubt; but if I were in your place I wouldn't make too sure of that. If you want him always to look as amiable as he did this evening, I should strongly advise you to let him have a long tether."

"I have not the slightest intention of keeping him at home against his will, or of following him about when he doesn't want me," answered Hope; "only I certainly shall not care to have visitors here during his absence. I can put up with my own company better than most people."

She spoke with apparent good humor; but the sound of her voice showed that she was slightly annoyed, and Miss Herbert thought that that allusion to her own company was probably meant to be significant.

It was perhaps just as well that Dick came in from the dining-room before any further exchange of ideas could take place between two ladies each of whom was thoroughly determined not to make the stupid mistake of quarrelling with the other.

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

AUNT SUKEY.

A BITTERLY cold, marrow-piercing, blood-congealing New-England winter has sent scores of people with delicate lungs to regions where breathing is a luxury, not a penance,—among them, pretty, frail Mrs. Hawkins, who finds herself established in a large, old-fashioned plantation-house near the village of Whitman, Georgia. To sit

by an open window in December, drinking in great draughts of the deliciously balmy, pine-laden air, to walk in the sunshiny, neglected old garden and gather baskets of violets, Cape jessamines, Lamarques, Marshal Niels, and other floral treasures such as she has been in the habit of admiring in her rich neighbors' conservatories or longing for at city florists' as they lay embedded in green moss behind plate-glass windows at a dollar apiece, seems to the little lady the *ne plus ultra* of enjoyment.

It is dashed by the thought that her Charles is a lonely husband, chained to a desk the best part of each day, and walking cheerily or drearily through a strong atmospheric solution of carving-knives to the modest suburban home that somehow gets farther out in the country every day. But all the same she revels in her new surroundings.

"The house is big and quiet and comfortable; the garden is big and quiet and sunshiny; the people are big and quiet and kind. Think of being in a place where there is no snow, ice, sleet, wind, rain, noise, or dust apparently, where roses nod persistently against the window-pane, and the sun streams in a broad, beautiful sheen across the door-sill. Think what it is to get all the flannel out of your lungs and lose all the woolly tones of your voice, to cease to think perpetually of your wraps, overshoes, and umbrella, to no longer take as much care of yourself as you would of your own grandmother, to snap your fingers at draughts and doctors and get yourself quite off your mind. Think of being with people who live like aldermen and are as kind as Sisters of Charity, have never heard a strain of 'Pinafore,' and only ask thirty dollars a month for the privilege of living under the same roof. Is it not incredible? I ask myself every day if I am on this continent and in this century," she wrote home. And, truth to tell, she was in good quarters, with Southern sunshine and warmth and kindness enveloping her as in a mantle. In a few weeks a faint imitation tea-rose bloomed on the wan cheeks, she began to regain her rounded, girlish outlines, and developed an amount of energy that clamored for expression all the more for years of enforced subjugation and idleness. And then, with the infatuation of the half-cured invalid, she committed a grave imprudence. With soul intent upon millinery, she ran out in the hall one day and dragged in her largest saratoga, opened it, lifted out a heavy tray, found the white ribbon which was to adorn the bonnet she was making, and straightway dyed it crimson.

Great was the consternation of her kind hostess when she found her lying white and speechless on the floor; and the first thing done was to send for the doctor and Aunt Sukey, the two family props. Both responded promptly,—the first a pompous medical man, very ornate in

manner, imposing in his technical phrases, and capable of assuming a great variety of dignified attitudes, in which a gold-headed cane presented by a former grateful patient played an important part; the second an ex-slave, a tiny old woman, with all her features drawn to a focus, a wrinkled nose, and half-shut eyes.

"So glad you have come, Aunt Sukey!" said the lady of the house, in a cordial whisper.

"What de matter? Hamridge, you say? I knows all 'bout dat; nussed Kalline's Emma wid 'em nigh on five years, till de Lord took her inter glory," replied Aunt Sukey, in a low voice, taking off her shawl as she spoke. Limping across the room, she deposited what she called her "armbureller" in the corner, came back, and stood by the bed.

"How do you think she looks? Dreadfully pale, isn't she?" said the mistress.

"Wait till I gits my eye-specs," said Aunt Sukey, frowning, and, fishing in the depths of a huge pocket that ran down nearly to the hem of her dress, she eventually produced a pair of blue goggles, adjusted them on the end of her nose with great deliberation, and looked over them at the patient. The doctor had given his directions and gone, and, in response to the anxious looks of the little group about the bed, Aunt Sukey merely gave a kind of grunt and looked inscrutable; then, drawing up a chair, she said, "You kin go, chillun. I don't want no whisperatin' en circumferatin' goin' on in a room whar I'se called to nuss." With this she settled herself well in the arm-chair, pursed up her mouth to a rather finer point than before, gave her bandanna a slight hitch over the left ear, and took command, as bold as an admiral on his own quarter-deck.

Many days passed before Mrs. Hawkins took much interest in what was going on around her. Beyond a general impression that the affairs of her world, the sick-room, were under wise and beneficent control, she knew nothing. The thousand-and-one little things on which the comfort and often the life of a patient depend were carefully attended to. Food and medicine were administered with clock-work regularity, and she seemed to see in feverish half-dreams the figure of a queer old black woman, who might have been a kobold or a banshee or anything else that was uncanny as far as she could tell, hovering above her, curled up on the floor beside her, nodding sleepily in the big chair opposite, but always alive to her every want and movement.

Opening her eyes one night after a long and refreshing sleep, Mrs. Hawkins saw the old woman over in one corner of the room sitting by a table on which a tallow candle flared and smoked. Her spectacles

were pushed well back, her head-handkerchief drawn down to meet them, one eye was screwed up, and her mouth drawn around towards the closed eye, while with the open one she glared intently at a needle held about two feet away, at which she made various and sundry "passes" from time to time in a vain effort to force a coarse waxed thread through its eye. Presently she succeeded, her features relaxed, and, slowly picking up a garment off the floor, she began working with stiff, rheumatic old fingers, the effort to keep her eyes open sending the wrinkles in her forehead running up to the fringe of gray hair above.

"Who—who is that?" quavered Mrs. Hawkins, in a feeble attempt to account for the queer figure before her.

"Sukey, honey. You jes' turn right over and go ter sleep ag'in," said her nurse, looking up for a moment and then going on with her work.

"And who is she?" said the confused patient, half to herself.

"She's de cat's mudder," said Sukey, shortly, giving her eyes a disapproving roll towards the bed and feeling the remark a personal indignity, then, waving an enormous pair of shears towards her in order to punctuate the important truth, added, "I see yer ain't very perlite. Sick or well, reckermember dis,—manners gwine carry yer funder 'n money."

Mrs. Hawkins was not in the habit of being called "honey" by her servants, neither was she accustomed to being criticised by them: so she resented vaguely what she conceived to be an impertinence, and wondered vaguely how she had given offence, and lay still, revolving both questions in a head that felt like a bee-hive, until she fell asleep again. Next morning she was able to examine her companion more narrowly than she had yet done. Aunt Sukey, when she had attended to all her patient's wants and propped her up skilfully on a huge, square pillow, put her hands on her hips and her head on one side as she examined her critically, and said, "You're better. De Lord's got work fur you to do here yit, and yer gwine git well." Mrs. Hawkins was about to pour out a string of questions and comments, but she was interrupted, "Hesh, chile! Yer ain't to talk. *He* said so," with a contemptuous jerk of the head in the direction of the village; "and, dough *he* dunno much, it's a mighty big fool dat ain't right onest in a lifetime."

Aunt Sukey was frequently called in to nurse the doctor's patients, and a bitter jealousy and raging contempt for him was one of the strongest sentiments that animated her.

This, with some other of Aunt Sukey's peculiarities, soon struck Mrs. Hawkins, who, knowing nothing of the genus, studied her as if she had been a curious insect under a microscope. She noticed that while Aunt

Sukey's dress was spotlessly clean it was most obtrusively patched in a dozen different places with bright bits of new calico, whose fresh tints made the garment look painfully faded by contrast.

"Poor old soul! How fearfully poor she must be! and yet how neat and industrious!" thought Mrs. Hawkins. "I wonder why she always wears the skirt of one dress and the body of another. I shall give her a nice new one when I get well. What a quizzical old face it is, and how well that towering bandanna and the white handkerchief across the breast set it off!" (Then, aloud,) "What a good nurse you are, Aunt Sukey, and how kind you've been to me!"

"There's some don' think so," replied Aunt Sukey, moving about the room, putting everything in its place, as she spoke. "But I nussed ole mistis wid ipecactic fits fur seben years, and master wuz allus havin' de screwmatics. Ez fur dem chillun, I jes' took 'em en fetch 'em troo eberything dat cum along till dey wuz grown en married; en now dey sends fur mammy ef dey gits a pain in dey big toe, 'most. I wuz raised by a mighty 'ristocratical family, honey,' way off dar in Virginny; maybe yer know 'em? Caroline County,—our place wuz dar. Probyn's de name. No sech people 'bout hyur. Me en Miss Lucy—she dat wuz Miss Anna's ma—is de only ones uv our fam'y dat ever wuz in dis part uv de country. Yes, dey raised me, en I stayed brung up when I got my freedom. Dere ain't a nigger in dis town now what can open de do' fur quality. I wuz tole ter open de front do' quiet as a t'ief in a watermillion-patch, en den I stan' back 'gin de wall fur let de company pass, en den I drap a curtsy, en say, 'Walk in, ladies. Ole mistis didn't know yer wuz a-comin', en she's jes' stepped out; but Miss Anna'll be down dreckly.' Now, one er dese wuthless yaller niggers bang open de do', en stan' dere wid dere hands in dey pockets like a scarecrow in a corn-field, en stare, en stare, en say, 'What yer want? Who yer want ter see?' En dey calls dat *manners!*" Aunt Sukey's face wore a look of withering scorn as she pointed out the deficiencies of Young Africa, and presently she went on: "I allus did 'spise 'em. Long ez dey'se got anyt'ing in dere stummucks ur on dey backs dey ain't gwine work,—not a lick. I sez to 'em sometimes, when I gits mad, 'Linkum would tie yer up en give yer fifty ef he had de chance, en den dere would be back rations owin' to yer.' Passel uv lazy, triflin', good-fur-nothin'—" (Here she dropped the large, clean towel that she always carried over her arm, and stooped stiffly to recover it, saying, parenthetically, "I allus carry dat roun'; en ef I want ter wipe a plate or bresh off anyt'ing, dar it is.") "Well, Jawn, my son, born de same year ole master's Robert, he done married one er dem fly-up-de-creek yaller gals, en fetch her home ter lib. He went to kawldige, en she

went ter kadermy, en de fust t'ing I knowed dey wuz man en wife 'fore de justush uv de peas. Jawn he used ter be a good boy 'fore dat, but a bad wife ud spile de angel Gabriel. He's done got kinder 'shamed uv his ole mammy here lately; en dat Ria's de sassiest imp dat ever made my blood bile. She's allus sayin' I ain't got no edjercation. Dis mornin' she ast me whar de skillet wuz, en I say I dunno dezackly, en she laafe, en say to Jawn, 'Tell your mamaw dat it ain't pronounce dat way: it's *adzackly*.' En I up en say, 'Jawn bin callin' me mammy eber sence he wuz knee-high to a duck, en ef he call me "mamaw" I gwine whop him, ef he wuz a hunderd.' En den I slam de do' en come away. She t'inks 'cause she has went to a kadermy, en has got a china saucer at de back uv her head, wid a bonnet top er dat, dat she's a lady. One time, not long ago, Ria got 'ligious, en we wuz at a camp-meetin', en de sperrit flung her on de floor, en dat saucer went crack! en de pieces flew every which er way. Ria wuz mad, I tell you. En I thought I would er split. 'T'ank de Lord I ain't got no shinyon,' sez I."

Mrs. Hawkins laughed feebly over this incident and the enjoyment it seemed to afford Aunt Sukey, who cackled shrilly at the remembrance and showed one snag of a front tooth (the last of the whitest set of ivories that ever lit up a black face) and a broad expanse of gums framed in deep wrinkles. Presently she stopped abruptly, assumed her most dignified air, refocussed her mouth, and said, "Stop talkin', chile. I don't want ter lecturefy yer, but you've got to stop when you're tole."

Mrs. Hawkins laughed again, remembering what her share in the conversation had been, and tried to extract fresh reminiscences from Aunt Sukey; but for the rest of the day she was speechlessly industrious and mounted guard at the other end of the room.

That night she announced her intention of going home, and, having brought Mrs. Hawkins's tea and the lights, went out into the hall and closed the door, only to reappear a moment later, and, thrusting half her body in the door, remark, "Ef I'se livin' en well, I'll be back in de mornin', maybe."

"Why, Aunt Sukey, do you feel ill?" asked her patient, impressed by her doubtful tone and the air she had of taking a long farewell.

"It may be de Lord's will ter take me," said Aunt Sukey, dolorously and enigmatically, as she left the room.

"Is she worn out nursing me, do you think?" asked Mrs. Hawkins of the mistress, who was sitting by.

"Oh, not at all. She has no more idea of being snatched away by a sudden or violent death than I have; but it is one of the peculiarities

of the race, like their distaste for confessing themselves in good health. If you were to ask Aunt Sukey every day for a year how she was, she would have a fresh ailment and answer for every occasion. She would say that she was 'creepin' through mercy,' or 't'anksful,' or that she had 'a bone in her arm,' or 'a misery in her head,' but she most certainly would never say that she was well. 'Enjoyin' bad health' would be the nearest approach to it, perhaps."

"What a queer creature she is!" said the invalid. "I have never been so much snubbed and tyrannized over in my whole life."

"What a dear creature, you mean. I don't know any one that I have a heartier love and respect for. I feel—indeed, we all do—that we can never repay the tenderness and goodness and fidelity she has shown us, both before and since the war. For months after she was freed, the dear old thing used to bring her wages regularly to my mother and beg and implore her to make use of the money, knowing how dreadfully poor we had become. Wasn't it sweet of her! We wouldn't have touched it unless we had been starving, of course; but we have never forgotten it," said the mistress, rather surprising Mrs. Hawkins by her enthusiasm, it being a fixed idea with that lady that every Southerner's hand was raised against the newly-emancipated.

Bright and early next day Aunt Sukey made her appearance with a lovely spray of columbine in her hand, which she gave her patient, saying, "Dere's some flowers fur yer, chile. Mighty pretty, ain't dey? Dey calls it de concubine, en it runs all over de poche uv my cabin. How does yer feel right now?"

"Much better, thank you," said Mrs. Hawkins, putting up her handkerchief to conceal her smiles at Aunt Sukey's shocking botanical revelations. "I think I shall sit up after a while."

"Gracious mussy! What's de chile talkin' 'bout! Set up? No indeed en double deed. Don't yer be so previous. I gwine clean yer up and lay yer out presently, en dar you'll stay fur a week."

"Where do you live, Aunt Sukey?" asked the patient. "I'd like to go and see you when I am well enough to take a drive."

"Well, yer goes out Main Street till yer come to a corner, en den yer branch off dere till yer gits to a street dat runs paralevel wid anoder street, en yer goes along fur a while till yer gits to a lane, en presently yer see a house dat emanates from de back, en dere I is. Dere ain't no water on de place, en it's mighty ill-convenient. I'm makin' my derangements to leave en go funder in town. I kain't stay all day wid you, honey, widout yer needs me bad, cause de S'iety gwine turn out dis evenin' fur a big buryin'. But Miss Anna she say she'll nuss you."

"Society? What society do you mean?"

"De 'Nevolent S'iety, chile. Ain't yer never heerd of 'em? Why, whar yer bin raised? I keeps de regalium myself, en when I dies I ain't gwine be buried like a nigger dat ain't got no friends, I tell you! I'se gwine have a big funeral. I done got my close, en de S'iety will come marchin' along behin' de cawfin in a perseshun, en Brudder Beverley will be drawed out en wrassle a long time in pra'r, en den dey'll sing 'De Golden Slippers is on her Feet,' en glory! hallelujah! en den de doxologum, en kiver me up slow en soft, en leabe me to de Lord dat made me. Dey allus does dat way fur sisters in good standin,' en, ef I sez it, dere ain't no sister dat can trow dirt at me."

A smile of extreme gratification lit up Aunt Sukey's face as she dwelt on her future obsequies, and it was easy to see that it was a favorite subject of meditation with her.

"I am glad to hear that you are so pious, Aunt Sukey. What church do you belong to?"

"I'se a deep-water Babtis', honey. Dat's de real high, ole church, ef yer believe me, dough it's got backslidin' members. What does de Book say? Dar ain't none good; no, not one. I prays de Lord, constant, ter keep me in a state uv salivation; but it's mighty slipperifyin' work bein' a Christian. Yer goes along nice en smooov fur a while, en yer say, 'Hi! dis is fine!' en de debbil grease yer up so slick dat yer kain't ketch hold uv yerself, en fust ting yer know dar yer is, hangin' by a bramble-bush over de bottomless pit, smellin' de sulphur uv yer own wickedness! En den dar ain't nothin' fur do but trus' de Lord en look up, en he'll pull yer out wid his strong arm and set yer top eend fo'most."

The old woman nodded her head emphatically and spoke with earnest simplicity. "Ria she is a Peskypalian. She say dere ain't no style 'bout de deep-water Babtisses, en she done jined a church whar dey've got a orgin in is allus jawin' back at de preacher. I 'clare it's sinful, dat it is! Ria's mighty festiverous dis mornin'. She say she gwine ter a big ball en gwine help recebe de company. Dere ain't nobody 'vited but teachers en cooks en misses en house-servants. En all de ge'men is waiters at de Peyton House, 'most. Dey don't 'low no washerwomens dar, Ria says, it's so genteel. Says she ter me, 'Mamaw, I tink I'll wear a simple white dress, wid a rose in de side uv my hair. It ull be so elligint.' En I wuz kinder cross, 'cause I hate all dat fool-ishness, en I speak my mind, en say, 'Alligator look better in de mud dan in de parlor. I do' wan' ter see roses in none uv yer wool.' Yer oughter seen Ria. She jes' raired. I ain't allus been a washerwoman. I used to wuz maid to Miss Anna's ma, en den nuss; en dere ain't no

driben snow whiter 'n my close. De diffunce is, I been taught to do eberyting. Dey dunno how ter do nothin'. Jes' like poor white trash goin' round beggin' 'n' stealin' fur a livin'! But dere, chile! why don' you keep quiet? Dat ole coon sure ter say it's my fault; en I done tole yer 'bout it, but yer will talk."

That day Mrs. Hawkins got by express a box, which, being opened, was found to contain some delicacies for her, and a black silk dress, of the cheap and very shiny description, for Aunt Sukey from Mr. Hawkins, with a message expressing his gratitude for her care of his wife. Great was the rapture of the old soul.

"I ain't had a black silk sence ole master died. De fam'ly's gone down in de world now, en I don' get presents like I used ter. Well, I declare! Dis is a quality gif', sho 'nuff; en I certainly is proud. I wonder what dat Ria'll say. Tell de ge'man dat I'se mighty t'anksful, en I'se gwine be buried in it. Dis is goin' in de chis', certain."

"What do you mean, Aunt Sukey?" said Mrs. Hawkins, watching her as she folded and gloated over her new possession.

"De cedar chis' what ole mistis lef' me. It say in de will, 'To my faithful Sukey, to reckermember me by.' Yes, chile, I'se allus been trus' by de fam'ly. En dis ull come in mighty useful, kase I ain't got no close."

Aunt Sukey's face as she made this statement was a study. First she chuckled convulsively, then looked up at Mrs. Hawkins and became preternaturally solemn, chuckled again, and said, "Nice present like dis kinder raise my sperrits, I'se so berry poor. Hi! dat Ria ull stick to me now like de tar-baby, en be slobberin' over me from mornin' till night."

With this she folded her dress in a new way, her fingers lingering caressingly among its shining pleats, and then carried it off with an alert step, her very back expressing gratification.

When she came back next day, the radiance had quite vanished, and she was so evidently disturbed that Mrs. Hawkins finally said, "You look troubled, Aunt Sukey. What is the matter?"

"It's 'bout money; en I is aggravoked, dat's certain. Yer see, I been savin' my money ever sence de wah; en 'bout a year ago Jawn, dat's my son, he come to me en say, 'Mammy, dey say you got fifty dollars hide away in dat chis' o' yourn. 'Tain't safe. Yer gwine be kill fur it some night ef yer don't look out. Yer'd better give it ter me, en I'll put it in de bank, en dey'll give yer a book, en nobody kain't tech it 'ceptin' you, ef dey wuz itchin' fur it ever so.' So I on-lock de chis' en give Jawn dat money. En I ain't never seed it sence. I ax Jawn ag'in and ag'in 'bout de bank, en he say de bank closed, ur

de bank warn't payin' no divydums, en oder 'suceeses like dat. En yesterday Jawn he come home en say, 'Mammy, de bank's done broke!' En I say, 'Whar's de pieces? I wants de pieces.' En dat hussy Ria laafe en laafe till de tears run down. En dat's all de saterfaction I got."

"What a shame!" exclaimed the listener. "I shall try to find out what bank it was put in, and make them give it back to you again."

Aunt Sukey shook her head mournfully. "'Tain't no use, chile, dough I am 'bleeged to yer. De trufe is—I don' like ter say it, but Jawn he wuz de bank, I'm 'most shore."

She was dusting the mantel-shelf, and made a vigorous onslaught with the turkey-tail duster, as she spoke, on the pictures above. Mrs. Hawkins caught a profile view of her features,—the lips thrust out, the eyelashes wet with tears, and the feathers quivering in the trembling hand.

"I suspicioned it, kinder, fur a long while. Jawn ain't done no work fur six mont'; dat Ria ain't done none fur a year; en dey bofe uv 'em been gallivantin' en dressin' en goin' on like Christmas in de quarters all de time. De black race is de bes' race de Lord ever made, but dey'se powerful weak 'bout some t'ings. Yes, Jawn wuz de bank. I'se 'shamed to say so, but it's de trufe. Whar did Ria git dat ten dollar she give fur git up dat ball? Say! Yes, I'se mightily 'shamed. My skin is black, *but my principles is white,*" said she, turning around with an air of real dignity, her eyes full of tears. "Sence I wuz dat high" (putting out her hand to measure it) "it's allus been said, 'Sukey can be trus';' en it hurts me here" (laying her hand on her breast) "to think dat my son is a t'ief."

The poor old woman broke down here, and, sinking on the floor, dropped her head on her knees, and cried bitterly: "Oh, Jawn, Jawn, my son! Ter steal from yer ole mammy, what's work for yer ever sence yer wuz bawn, en would gib yer her heart's blood! O Lord, take me out dis world! Take me!" she moaned, as she rocked herself backward and forward, in accents of real grief,—the same grief (expressed in nearly the same words) as that of the Hebrew king.

Moved by the honest creature's distress, Mrs. Hawkins said all she could to comfort her, and after a long silence, during which nothing was heard but the rich tones of a mocking-bird singing joyously outside and an occasional moan or long-drawn sigh from Aunt Sukey, a pathetic old figure of despair still crouched on the floor, her arms thrown up over her head and the sunshine streaming over the uplifted, deeply-lined, tear-washed face, she rose suddenly, threw her apron over her head, and left the room.

This occurred on Saturday; and on Monday morning Mrs. Hawkins, who was sitting by the open window in an invalid-chair, enjoying the mild, flower-laden air, heard angry voices wrangling in a high key at some distance, and presently Aunt Sukey darted around the corner of the house, with body erect and flashing eyes that seemed to send out red gleams of intermittent light as she strode past the croquet-field. It was quite evident that she was in a towering rage. She was talking to herself. "Ef dat nigger don' pay me dat money what he owe me, I gwine beat him! ef he don' pay me den, I gwine put de law to him!" she quavered out, in shrill, trembling tones of excitement, as though she was talking of applying a mustard-plaster or a torch.

"You look angry. What's gone wrong?" queried Mrs. Hawkins, as she entered the room.

"It's dat trifin' Brudder Beverley," she exclaimed, glad to have a listener. "Yer see, long while ago, 'fore Jawn play me dat bad trick, Brudder Beverley he come to me en sez, sez he, 'Sister Sukey, de S'iety is in need uv funds, en you is one uv de prudent, leadin' members: won't yer lend de S'iety thirty dollars, to be paid out de fust abstractions dat comes in back to yer ag'in?" En I didn't want ter lend dat money at all, en I say, 'I dunno as I'se got dat amount.' En he laafe, en say, 'Oh, shur, Sister Sukey. We all knows yer is de most respectable member uv de S'iety. Dere ain't no risk 'bout it, 'cause de money'll be gib back to yer berry soon, wid five dollars more ter boot. I'se de president uv de S'iety, en I knows.' Well, chile, I onlock de chis' dat time, en ontie my stockin', en git him what he ax fur. En what yer t'ink he say now? He swear to goodness dat he ain't never borrered dat money at all, en he sez dat I'se tryin' ter cheat de S'iety! It's de most outdashus lie dat wuz ever tole by dat ole oily hypocrite. He kin preach de rag off de bush, en all dem fools gwine believe him, too. But my mind done made up. I'se gwine put de law to him."

The efficacy of the application she never doubted for a moment, and the importance of it almost reconciled her to the loss of the money.

"That seems a wonderful chest of yours, Aunt Sukey. How much more money have you got in it? I guess it's full of nice things, isn't it?"

A look of alarm swept over Aunt Sukey's face at this, and then she laughed uneasily, and said, "Law, chile, yer makin' fun of Aunt Sukey. What a poor ole ooman like me got? Dey done got all I had; en dat ain't de wust. De whole capoodle gwine believe dat ole 'possum, 'ceptin' Sister Mirybel. She say, when I tole her 'bout it, dat Brudder Beverley libin' at her darter Ann's, en dat he got a new shoot uv close en a silber-head stick wid dat money, she's jes' shore. She

'cuse him uv it, too, right to his face, en she say he look mighty mean fur a minit, en den he cast down his eyes en say, 'Hesh, Sister Mirybel! what does de Scriptur say? "Dou shalt not muzzle de ox dat treadeth out de corns." En ag'in, "De laborer is wuth his hire."' En den she call him a t'ief; en he done put her right out de S'iety,—her en me, bofe uv us!"

Aunt Sukey wept at the idea, and went on, "Dat ain't all my troubles. 'Pears to me I'se being pick like chicken 'fore camp-meetin'. Saturday night I had dat trouble, en I didn't sleep right soun', en I t'ought somethin' wuz wonderin' roun' my room,—ole master's sperrit, maybe,—so I crope down in de bed, en kiver up my head, en never stir endurin' de night. Well, next day wuz Sunday, en when I git up I look on de peg fur my blue dress wid de yaller facin's Miss Anna gib me, en it warn't dere! 'Dat's Ria,' sez I; en I went roun' to the Peskypalian church right off dat minit fur ketch her, and dere was Ria on her knees 'fore de Lord's table in my dress, shore 'nuff. I wait till Ria git back to her place near de do', and den I call, 'Ria!' en when she see me she flung outen de church home, en ondress like lightnin'; en when I git dar I jes' raise my hands en say, 'Well, at de Lord's table!' En she fling my dress on de bed, en say, 'Dere! take yer ole dress. It's bin turn upside down en hind part befo', got a hole in de back, en done los' its color. Does yer suppose I'se gwine let a dress dat you kin hol' up to de winder en see daylight t'rough stan' 'tween me en glory? De Lord knows 'tain't wuth nothin' noways, en he ain't gwine reckermember no dress like dat ag'in' nobody.' Den I lose my temper, en I jes' took dat Ria boddashusly en turn her out de house."

Aunt Sukey's dramatic gestures and extreme animation of manner made her description of her domestic differences highly diverting, apart from the ethics of the situation, so that, in spite of her efforts to control her risibles, Mrs. Hawkins could not suppress a hearty laugh; and, the mistress coming in just then with a tray of delicacies encircled in fruit and flowers, nothing more was heard of Aunt Sukey that day.

About a week later she hobbled in one day with her arm in a sling and her whole person wearing an indescribably shrunken, miserable air.

"Dear me, Aunt Sukey, are you ill? Have you hurt your arm? I hope not," said Mrs. Hawkins.

Down went the corners of the old woman's mouth. "I kain't lif' my hand to my head, chile. I'se been voodooed."

"Voodooed? What do you mean?"

"Konjured, honey. Dat Ria's konjured me. I find two straws outen de broom cross' ober de do'-sill dis mornin', en I know what dat

mean. Chicken-gizzard under my pillow, too. I knows who put 'em dar. I ain't never gwine be well ag'in till I breaks de spell."

"Good gracious, Aunt Sukey!" cried Mrs. Hawkins, indignantly, "is it possible that you can believe such stuff and nonsense as that?"

"'Tain't nonsense. Don't I tell yer I kain't lif' my hand to my head?"

"Well, what of that? You've got rheumatism, that's all; and I will give you some liniment for it. Rub it well, and you'll be all right in a few days."

"'Tain't no use, chile, thank yer. Yer knows when yer's konjured. I'm studyin' how to break de spell. Dat's de only way to git shut of dis here pain."

Mrs. Hawkins argued and ridiculed eloquently for ten minutes, and showed clearly, as she thought, the absurdity and impossibility of being "voodooed;" but Aunt Sukey only shook her head dolefully and went on with her work, muttering, "Miss Anna done took Ria fur house-maid. I'se got to break it in dis house. Neber be well ag'in till I breaks it."

Nothing more was said; but Aunt Sukey took no remedies, got no better, and looked more and more wretched every day.

Spring had now come and nearly gone. Mrs. Hawkins had more than regained all she had lost, and determined to go home. On the day agreed upon, her husband came for her, and was charmed beyond expression by the improvement in her health. "You have no idea how well and pretty you look," said he. "The air here has been magical in its effects. Blessed be Georgia and the Georgians forever! Aunt Sukey, pack her things and get her ready. We leave this evening."

"Don't be so 'previous,' Charley. You are not going to whisk me away 'boddashusly' until I am ready. Oh, I forget that you are not used to the new and delightful dictionary of terms that I have borrowed from Aunt Sukey. I have been wanting some of them all my life, and never had the sense to manufacture them as she has done. Won't the 10.30 train to-morrow be the best for us to take?" whispered his wife.

A discussion of their plans followed, and Mrs. Hawkins's suggestion was accepted, the interval being very agreeably spent on the part of the husband in making acquaintance with the family, and in reluctant adieux, with promises of unlimited correspondence, on that of the ex-invalid.

Coming down to breakfast next morning in the pleasant dining-room (a late addition to the house, with a bow-window jutting out into the garden), they found the mistress very pleasant and cordial and full of

hospitable care for their comfort, but either very tearful over the prospect of parting with them or suffering from a bad cold in the head.

"Sit down," said she, sneezing as she spoke. They complied, and presently the other members of the family dropped in. One by one, then in twos, threes, and entire concert, the company began to follow the mistress's example. Sneeze followed sneeze with ever-increasing celerity and violence. Eyes were wiped and handkerchiefs generally in requisition, until at last they all rose and rushed out into the garden, unable to support the stifling, peculiar atmosphere of the room another moment. They all asked each other what it could possibly mean, repeatedly, and investigation by the gentlemen revealed a wide train of red pepper laid around the bow-window, inside and out, with a particularly liberal supply on the window-seats and the door-sills, which the fine morning breeze had duly sifted up their nostrils. Ria, who was one gigantic sneeze as she stood behind her silver-tray waiting to serve breakfast, was summoned by the mistress, with all the other servants, to explain what such an extraordinary state of affairs meant, but could only sneeze out tearful, choky denials of any knowledge of or share in the transaction. All the others denied and disclaimed with one accord, until Aunt Sukey's turn came: she, like St. Paul, stood out and was bold.

"I'se de one, Miss Anna. I did sprinkle dat pepper. De Voodoo priestess tol' me dat ef I could get a ring uv pepper round Ria 'fore de sun drunk up de dew, en make her sneeze twice runnin', dat de spell would break what she konjured me wid. En, t'ank de Lord, it's broke. De berry minit she snoze, I felt somethin' go crack! in my arm; en now it's jes' as well as de udder one. But I'se mighty sorry to make de rest uv yer so uncumfable."

The mistress hereupon delivered an address that was excellent in matter, though rather tart as to its temper (which I have no doubt had the effect of confirming Aunt Sukey's prejudices instead of dissipating them), and, time pressing, the travellers hurriedly swallowed a cup of coffee and drove to the station, followed by the hearty good wishes of the family and the rather sheepish glances of Aunt Sukey, who took up a position at the front gate out of reach of the mistress's eye, and beamed delightedly over the *douceur* Mrs. Hawkins slipped in her hand.

Two years later, Mrs. Hawkins, who had kept up a regular correspondence with the mistress, got a letter from her in which she said, "You will be sorry, I am sure, not to get any more of the messages with which Aunt Sukey has constantly charged me. The good, faithful creature died about two weeks ago, and since I lost my mother I can recall no event that has distressed me more, severing as it did the

last link that bound me to the happy, cloudless past of my childhood. I was away at the time, and it is really a grief to me to feel that the poor old soul's dearest, often-expressed wish about the conduct of her funeral should not have been observed. John and Maria behaved in the most unprincipled way, the servants tell me. They laid her out in her very oldest and shabbiest clothes, and buried her with as little ceremony as though she had been a dog,—the president of her beloved society, with whom she had had some quarrel, refusing to officiate. I have tried to atone for it as far as I could by having a modest monument put up to her memory,—a memory that I shall always cherish with sincere affection. I was surprised to learn that she had sixty dollars laid by in the chest my dear mother gave her, besides twenty-seven dresses, unmade, a quantity of other clothing, and a miscellaneous collection of odds and ends, the carefully-hoarded savings of a lifetime. It gave me a pang last Sunday to see Maria flaunting in the black silk dress you so kindly gave Aunt Sukey, and I wonder her ineffable airs and indescribable graces did not effect an immediate resurrection of her poor mother-in-law."

Fanny Courtenay Baylor.

APACHE.

FROM the awful desolation of the Llano Estacado
 I have traced my red dominions with your blood upon the sand;
 You may see its current tingeing through the tawny Colorado,—
 Are you mad, that you imagine I shall stay my lifted hand?
 I defy you and I hate you! Do you threaten me with death?—
 Me, whose fervid spirit surges with the centuries' hot breath?
 Turn and ask this flaming desert,—it has lain forever so;
 It has scorched the helpless *mesa* with its seething overflow;
 Molten, pitiless, remorseless,—ask it if I fear to die!
 I am one with this,—immortal,—and the bloodshot suns of years
 Burn within my soul, as ages they have burned this alkali;
 I shall be again the desert,—what have I to do with fears?
 You shall die, and I shall clasp you to my heart with hot embrace,
 Whispering words of awful vengeance in your pallid, speechless face.

Charles Henry Phelps.

OUR EXPERIENCE MEETINGS.

I.

MY LITERARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IN 1869, when I was about twenty-three years old, I sent a couple of sonnets to the revived *Putnam's Magazine*. At that period I had no intention of becoming a professional writer: I was studying civil engineering at the Polytechnic School in Dresden, Saxony. Years before, I had received parental warnings—unnecessary, as I thought—against writing for a living. During the next two years, however, when I was acting as hydrographic engineer in the New York Dock Department, I amused myself by writing a short story called "Love and Counter-Love," which was published in *Harper's Weekly*, and for which I was paid fifty dollars. "If fifty dollars can be so easily earned," I thought, "why not go on adding to my income in this way from time to time?" I was aided and abetted in the idea by the late Robert Carter, editor of *Appletons' Journal*; and the latter periodical and *Harper's Magazine* had the burden, and I the benefit, of the result. When, in 1872, I was abruptly relieved from my duties in the Dock Department, I had the alternative of either taking my family down to Central America to watch me dig a canal, or of attempting to live by my pen. I bought twelve reams of large letter-paper, and began my first work,—*"Bressant."* I finished it in three weeks; but prudent counsellors advised me that it was too immoral to publish, except in French: so I recast it, as the phrase is, and, in its chastened state, sent it through the post to a Boston publisher. It was lost on the way, and has not yet been found. I was rather pleased than otherwise at this catastrophe; for I had in those days a strange delight in rewriting my productions: it was, perhaps, a more sensible practice than to print them. Accordingly, I rewrote and enlarged *"Bressant"* in Dresden (whither I returned with my family in 1872); but—immorality aside—I think the first version was the best of the three. On my way to Germany I passed through London, and there made the acquaintance of Henry S. King, the publisher, a charming but imprudent man, for he paid me one hundred pounds for the English copyright of my novel; and the moderate edition he printed is, I believe, still unexhausted. The book was received in a kindly manner by the press; but both in this country and in England some surprise and indignation were ex-

pressed that the son of his father should presume to be a novelist. This sentiment, whatever its bearing upon me, has undoubtedly been of service to my critics: it gives them something to write about. A disquisition upon the mantle of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and an analysis of the differences and similarities between him and his successor, generally fill so much of a notice as to enable the reviewer to dismiss the book itself very briefly. I often used to wish, when, years afterwards, I was myself a reviewer for the London *Spectator*, that I could light upon some son of his father who might similarly lighten my labors. Meanwhile, I was agreeably astonished at what I chose to consider the success of "Bressant," and set to work to surpass it in another romance, called (for some reason I have forgotten) "Idolatry." This unknown book was actually rewritten, in whole or in part, no less than seven times. *Non sum qualis eram.* For seven or eight years past I have never rewritten one of the many pages which circumstances have compelled me to inflict upon the world. But the discipline of "Idolatry" probably taught me how to clothe an idea in words.

By the time "Idolatry" was published, the year 1874 had come, and I was living in London. From my note-books and recollections I compiled a series of papers on life in Dresden, under the general title of "Saxon Studies." Alexander Strahan, then editor of the *Contemporary Review*, printed them in that periodical as fast as I wrote them, and they were reproduced in certain eclectic magazines in this country,—until I asserted my American copyright. Their publication in book-form was followed by the collapse of both the English and the American firm engaging in that enterprise. I draw no deductions from that fact: I simply state it. The circulation of the "Studies" was naturally small; but one copy fell into the hands of a Dresden critic, and the manner in which he wrote of it and its author repaid me for the labor of composition and satisfied me that I had not done amiss.

After "Saxon Studies" I began another novel, "Garth," instalments of which appeared from month to month in *Harper's Magazine*. When it had run for a year or more, with no signs of abatement, the publishers felt obliged to intimate that unless I put an end to their misery they would. Accordingly, I promptly gave Garth his quietus. The truth is, I was tired of him myself. With all his qualities and virtues, he could not help being a prig. He found some friends, however, and still shows signs of vitality. I wrote no other novel for nearly two years, but contributed some sketches of English life to *Appletons' Journal*, and produced a couple of novelettes,—"Mrs. Gainsborough's Diamonds" and "Archibald Malmaison,"—which, by reason of their light draught, went rather farther than usual. Other short tales, which I hardly care

to recall, belong to this period. I had already ceased to take pleasure in writing for its own sake,—partly, no doubt, because I was obliged to write for the sake of something else. Only those who have no reverence for literature should venture to meddle with the making of it,—unless, at all events, they can supply the demands of the butcher and baker from an independent source.

In 1879 “Sebastian Strome” was published as a serial in *All the Year Round*. Charley Dickens, the son of the great novelist, and editor of the magazine, used to say to me while the story was in progress, “Keep that red-haired girl up to the mark, and the story will do.” I took a fancy to Mary Dene myself. But I uniformly prefer my heroines to my heroes; perhaps because I invent the former out of whole cloth, whereas the latter are often formed of shreds and patches of men I have met. And I never raised a character to the position of hero without recognizing in him, before I had done with him, an egregious ass. Differ as they may in other respects, they are all brethren in that; and yet I am by no means disposed to take a Carlylese view of my actual fellow-creatures.

I did some hard work at this time: I remember once writing for twenty-six consecutive hours without pausing or rising from my chair; and when, lately, I reread the story then produced, it seemed quite as good as the average of my work in that kind. I hasten to add that it has never been printed in this country: for that matter, not more than half my short tales have found an American publisher. “Archibald Malmaison” was offered seven years ago to all the leading publishers in New York and Boston, and was promptly refused by all. Since its recent appearance here, however, it has had a circulation larger perhaps than that of all my other stories combined. But that is one of the accidents that neither author nor publisher can foresee. It was the horror of “Archibald Malmaison,” not any literary merit, that gave it vogue,—its horror, its strangeness, and its brevity.

On Guy Fawkes’ Day, 1880, I began “Fortune’s Fool,”—or “Luck,” as it was first called,—and wrote the first ten of the twelve numbers in three months. I used to sit down to my table at eight o’clock in the evening and write till sunrise. But the two remaining instalments were not written and published until 1883, and this delay and its circumstances spoiled the book. In the interval between beginning and finishing it another long novel—“Dust”—was written and published. I returned to America in 1882, after an absence in Europe far longer than I had anticipated or desired. I trust I may never leave my native land again for any other on this planet.

“Beatrix Randolph,” “Noble Blood,” and “Love—or a Name,” are

the novels which I have written since my return ; and I also published a biography, "Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife." I cannot conscientiously say that I have found the literary profession—in and for itself—entirely agreeable. Almost everything that I have written has been written from necessity ; and there is very little of it that I shall not be glad to see forgotten. The true rewards of literature, for men of limited calibre, are the incidental ones,—the valuable friendships and the charming associations which it brings about. For the sake of these I would willingly endure again many passages of a life that has not been all roses. Not that I would appear to belittle my own work : it does not need it. But the present generation (in America at least) does not strike me as containing much literary genius. The number of undersized persons is large and active, and we hardly believe in the possibility of heroic stature. I cannot sufficiently admire the pains we are at to make our work—embodying the aims it does—immaculate in form. Form without idea is nothing, and we have no ideas. If one of us were to get an idea, it would create its own form, as easily as does a flower or a planet. I think we take ourselves too seriously : our posterity will not be nearly so grave over us. For my part, I do not write better than I do, because I have no ideas worth better clothes than they can pick up for themselves. "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing with your best pains," is a saying which has injured our literature more than any other single thing. How many a lumber-closet since the world began has been filled by the results of this purblind and delusive theory ! But this is not autobiographical,—save that to have written it shows how little prudence my life has taught me.

Julian Hawthorne.

A FEW LITERARY EXPERIENCES.

IN trying to recall just when I began to "write," I find myself drifting among very childish memories. Unless I greatly mistake, I could not have been much over nine years old when I conceived the idea of composing a story. I remember its name perfectly. I called it "Mrs. Morse ; or, A Widow's Trials." At this time I had a mania for names, and on the first foolscap page of my maiden manuscript I placed eighteen, feminine and masculine. They designated the half-orphan progeny of my heroine, Mrs. Morse. She had been left with them at the opening of the tale, and she was supporting them (Walter, Olivia, Julian, Claribel, Harold, and thirteen others) under circumstances of the most poignant want. Their want was, indeed, so poignant that they were all stated to be in the early throes of starvation on my first foolscap page. Then I am distinctly conscious that I created a

villain who held Mrs. Morse in his power, and who incidentally forced his way into her one miserable apartment and gloated over her. I had no definite conception of what I meant by letting my villain gloat. But it looked well, and I seemed to have some sort of authority for its being a tendency on the part of villains, so I introduced and rather amplified the circumstance. All the rest of the story is misted with forgetfulness, except one luridly dramatic point of it, near the close. One day, while Mrs. Morse, surrounded by her eighteen clinging children with their beautiful names, was being gloated upon more industriously than usual, the villain suddenly resolved to carry her off. I have not the least recollection of why or whither he desired to carry her off; but I feel certain that my unhappy Mrs. Morse accomplished her salvation by a *deus ex machinâ* which I thought singularly fine. Seizing a bottle of brandy, which by some blessed chance happened to be within arm's reach of this starving and prolific widow, she dexterously poured its contents down the villain's throat; and, while he was strangling from the results of this opportune alcoholic assault, Mrs. Morse, eagerly followed by her enormous offspring, rushed from the clutches of her baffled tormentor. . . .

Meanwhile, I had dropped into poetry, perhaps as a relief to the more exacting duties of my new career as a novelist. How I would like to see some of those early rhymes! And I am almost certain that the readers of *Lippincott's* would be, on the whole, less bored than amused by them,—a prophecy much more confident, by the way, than any which I would be prepared to make regarding my later verse. But when I had reached the manly age of eleven I had begun to look with amused scorn upon the literary follies of my boyhood. If I am not mistaken, "Mrs. Morse" was now destroyed (would that she had not been!) in a spirit of gentle pity. I now felt myself *lancé* and fully equipped. For some occult and never-to-be-explained reason, I abandoned foolscap. My future stories were all written in copy-books. And it is extraordinary how many copy-bookfuls of fiction I produced during the next two years. On the reverse pages of these thin pamphlets I would announce new works as "in preparation," or "shortly to appear," imitating the advertisements of contemporary publishers. But, alas! even the very titles of these stories are mostly forgotten. Now and then recollection serves me, however, when I strive to review their vanished glories. One copy-book story I clearly remember. I thought it my "Waverley," my "Père Goriot," my "Vanity Fair." It was called "Rosa: A Tale of Spain and Portugal." I wrote the title before I wrote the story,—as was usually my custom. The hero (whose name, I believe, was Don Alonzo) had passed several chapters

of existence in Spain, when I suddenly recollected that my narrative was also to deal with Portugal. Disheartened but not crushed by this consideration, I promptly put Don Alonzo on board of a ship, wrecked him disastrously after a day or two of seafaring, and made him swim through a portion of the Bay of Biscay until he reached the Portuguese shore. Here ended my first copy-book. The second copy-book dealt with Portugal, since my hero had been safely landed there; and so, while filling it, I felt that I was conscientiously meeting the demand of a large and exacting future public.

It is hard to fix upon the precise period when all these absurdities of ambition melted into thin air. I suppose the change was wrought by an exodus from private home tuition into the louder and more actual life of the ordinary New York school. From fourteen until my graduation at Columbia College, when I had reached the age of twenty, I wrote little, and had no clear belief that I could ever write with skill or point. My father (from whom I have inherited whatever powers the most kindly of my critics may accredit me with possessing) was a man of extraordinary mentality and great reading. An Englishman by birth, he had reached these shores at a comparatively youthful age, and, as I now reflect upon his ended days, I cannot but feel that the gifts which he has so meagrely transmitted to me, his only son, would in his own personality have shone forth most brilliantly had not a commercial life been forced upon him. A few of his old friends, who still live, remember his great mental endowments with admiration, and I trust that I may be pardoned, because of the joy and pride which they will take in this brief reference, for having alluded to an intellect of which I am so poor and unworthy an heir.

My father desired, and most eagerly, that I should study law after leaving college. But I rebelled, and became—a teller of tales, a writer of verses, a maker of plays. My first published novel was written with the usual fervor of adolescence, and given to the world with expectations of untold magnitude. It fell wretchedly flat, and caused me the usual sufferings. My second novel, "Ellen Story," did a little better, but not encouragingly so. Meanwhile, I had printed stories and verses in the current magazines, and the then editor of the *Atlantic*, now a novelist of accepted fame, had repeatedly given me his most active support. Many of my early lyric poems, such as "The Toad," "The Bat," "The Humming-Bird," "Immortelles," and "A Straggler," not to mention such sonnets as "Baudelaire," "Asters," "Betrothal," and "Medusa," first saw the light in the pages of that still vigorous and charming *Atlantic*. But, although my merits both as a versifier and a fictionist were then (I allude to the years from 1870 to 1876) in a

certain way recognized, I doubt if the money which came to me could solely, as the phrase goes, have supported me like a gentleman. I had still made no "hit" in the world of letters, whatever that may mean; and when my first book of poems, "Fantasy and Passion" (published in 1878), delighted my gaze, I had passed through many despondent hours. I could write much just here about the languor shown towards all modern verse by the present age; and yet, when I bring to mind how little verse I nowadays desire to publish, and how cordially what I do desire to publish is received by those to whom choice makes me send it, I feel that perhaps many other co-workers in the same field have reason to complain much more piteously than myself. Since producing "Fantasy and Passion," I have brought out another poetical volume, "Song and Story." This book certainly possesses more ambition than the last, however it may fall short as accomplishment. It represents years of the most thoughtful toil, and the reward for which I strove in writing it is one not to be calculated by popularity. In a brief essay like this the chance to air opinions, to answer one's hostile critics, is temptingly ample; and yet it must be surrendered. There is no telling just how far down a man might slip if he once gave himself full swing. It is possible that he might reach a very low level,—even that of the gentlemen who write newspaper "notices" of his books, and so often with neither taste nor intelligence.

My place in poetry is unsettled, though perhaps not wholly disallowed. I cannot say that I have been by any means a luckless poet, if regarded from the practical point of view; for the commercial value of my verse (to put it somewhat coarsely) is larger now than ever before. Egotism is the stumbling-block in any such confession as this, and if I seem to be an egotist I shall have struck most unintentionally against that which I wish to avoid. It is my own belief that my poetical faculty is my most authentic one. When I am impelled to write a poem, there always appears to be but a single truly effective way of attaining this object, while in dealing with prose I am often more doubtful concerning methods, as if it were a dialect less natural to me than the metrical one. And here it may not be amiss for me to state frankly what I have tried to do as a writer of verse. I have avoided obscurity, aimed at a rich yet robust style, shunned mannerism, affectation, and mere diletante archaism, striven to have my poetry reflect the time in which I live, cultivated with zeal the delightful possibilities of rhythm and melody, and cordially detested the prevailing impulse to employ sound as the inferior of sense.

But enough of poetry. Prose has thus far been my mainstay. In 1880 I wrote and published "A Hopeless Case." The novelette was

no pecuniary *trouvaille* to me, and yet it had the good fortune to please certain minds whose approbation was not idly bestowed. Before this (in 1876) I had written "Rutherford," which had run through many numbers of a journal called *The Library Table*. But "Rutherford" was not put into a volume till some time later, though it is esteemed by certain competent judges to be my strongest prose work. In 1881 (or was it '82?) I brought out "A Gentleman of Leisure." This book, selling well up in the thousands, led me to believe that I was perhaps really endowed with the novelist's gift. I then wrote "An Ambitious Woman," which Mr. Whitelaw Reid at once accepted for serial publication in the *New York Tribune*. By this time I had realized that the great city in which I had been born and reared was full of opportunities for the writer of fiction. My "Ambitious Woman," warmly recognized and widely read, marked an epoch in my literary life. Henceforth, if years are spared to me, I shall concern myself solely, as a story-teller, with the rich material that I think is afforded by the populous and growing city of my birth. I am perfectly content with my New York, and willingly leave to other novelists their preferred domains of exploit. Without the least boastful designs, I feel confident that experience has equipped me notably and exceptionally for the task which I have set myself. How far talent and ability may have done so is a question which I shall not even remotely suggest. "Tinkling Cymbals" followed "An Ambitious Woman." It was printed in that bright and readable magazine, *The Manhattan*, before its publication as a book. It has not, for some reason, achieved the popularity of its predecessor, though I gave it great care and patiently repolished every line of it before finally letting it see the light. "The Adventures of a Widow" came afterwards, and was printed as a serial in the *Canadian Week*. If I am not mistaken, this novel failed to please the Canadians, who like their fiction peppered with "incident," and were no doubt a good deal bored by its total lack of conventional plot and its close adherence to human portraiture. I was in Europe when "The Adventures of a Widow" appeared as a volume, but I saw some very stinging reviews of it in certain New York journals. The acid quality of these reviews did not surprise me, for the story dealt with just such men and women as would be called upon to criticise it; and that these should take the easy course of denouncing my work as "caricature" and "exaggeration" entirely fulfilled whatever prophecies I might have had the leisure to draw. Equally severe have been the censures levelled against my "Social Silhouettes," reprinted recently from *The Tribune*. I have scarcely seen a single civil criticism of them in any New York newspaper; and yet it is almost certain that the writers of these contempt-

uous columns have never mingled among the people whom I endeavored to describe, and are for the most part as ignorant of so-called aristocratic New York doings as I myself am ignorant of society in either San Francisco or Vienna.

I mentioned that I have been a maker of plays; and there may be a few theatre-goers who remember "The False Friend" and "Our First Families." These were my two dramatic successes. "Americans Abroad" and "Sixes and Sevens" (a harmless little farce, which was not worth half the rancorous critical energy it aroused) were my two dramatic failures. I may again produce a play at some New York theatre, though I am almost convinced that the time is not yet ripe for our men of letters to seek distinction on the American stage. We not only have to fight the whole European market; we have to fight the very best plays of that market,—plays which have achieved vogue and popularity abroad. And then it is very doubtful whether the drama as treated by real dramatists is needed here at all. There is a very slight demand for it now in England, and there are very few good plays brought out in England. The French and the Germans want good plays—and get them. It seems to me that as soon as America wants good plays by native authors she will get them too. I hope that time may not be far off, but I cannot help thinking that it is most dishearteningly far off.

When I reflect upon the career that I have chosen, I have no regrets that I did choose it. However ill I may have followed it, there is none other that I could have followed as well. I am not dissatisfied with the gross results, either as regards reputation or pecuniary emolument, which have thus far accrued to me. I can never rid myself of a conviction that both have been much more generous than I deserve. I only wish that my readers loved to have me write for them as much as I love to write for them. There is a great deal more that I want to write for them (now, in my thirty-eighth year), and if they receive my future work as kindly and indulgently as they have received my past work, I shall esteem myself peculiarly fortunate.

Edgar Fawcett.

AN ACCIDENTAL AUTHOR.

As this paper is to be part of an experience meeting, I may as well begin it by relating how I have been pursued by a scientific lunatic who formerly hailed from Florida. In 1870, while associate editor of the Savannah *Morning News*, I was introduced by a prominent gentleman of that city to a preacher from Florida. I do not know to what religious denomination this preacher belonged, but he appeared, at first

sight, to be a very serious person, full of grace and fervor. He was a fluent talker, and after I had known him a day or two he imparted to me certain information which he declared was of the utmost importance to the country and to myself. He said he had discovered that the earth, instead of being round, was shaped like an egg, and that, instead of revolving around the sun, it was itself the centre around which the sun revolved; that the seasons, the periods of heat and cold, were the results of the endosmose and exosmose processes; and so on and so forth. My friend proved to be a great bore. He not only had his theory, but he had composed a poem to describe and substantiate it,—a tremendous poem as to length,—and this he left with me, stating that he expected me to be the medium or the means of bringing his extraordinary theory and his remarkable poem to the attention of the public. I was a young man then,—younger in experience than in years,—and a spirit of mischief, almost inconceivable in its stupidity, led me to write a satirical paragraph or two about this preacher's theory. He sent for the manuscript of his remarkable poem, and made his way Northward, probably to Chicago, and has busied himself with my biography from that day to this. There is nothing malicious in his inventions, and I have no doubt they are worth something in the shape of advertisements, but their wild improbability has given them a place in the current newspaper literature of the day.

For instance, few readers of this magazine have failed to see the announcement in the daily papers that "the author of 'Uncle Remus' is a native of Africa, having been born at Joel, on the northeast coast, of missionary parents." This is only one of many inventions which have been put forth by my Florida friend. He never fails to send me a marked copy of the paper in which his inventions first appear, attaching his initials, as if to remind me of the penalty of satirizing his poem. But, as I have said, he is not malicious. He merely insists that I was born in Africa, and that my hair is snowy white as the result of a "strangely romantic career." He is determined that I shall figure as a myth. I desire to say here that I have reconsidered my youthful views in regard to his poem; moreover, I am willing to give his theory of the exosmose and endosmose processes a complete, if not a cordial, endorsement. When one's dearest enemy has access to the columns of a Chicago newspaper it is time to suggest a truce. I gladly hoist the white flag.

I was born in the little village of Eatonton, Putnam county, Georgia, December 9, 1848, in the humblest sort of circumstances. My desire to write—to give expression to my thoughts—grew out of hearing my mother read "The Vicar of Wakefield." I was too young to appreciate

the story, but there was something in the style or something in the humor of that remarkable little book that struck my fancy, and I straightway fell to composing little tales in which the principal character—whether hero or heroine—astonished and silenced the other characters by crying *Fudge!* at every possible opportunity. None of these little tales have been preserved, but I am convinced that, since their keynote was *Fudge!* they must have been very close to human nature.

In 1862 I saw an advertisement in a little weekly paper, *The Countryman*, calling for an apprentice to learn the printing-business. This advertisement I responded to, and it was not many days before I was installed in the office of the only genuine country newspaper ever printed in this country. *The Countryman* was edited by Mr. Joseph A. Turner, and was published on his plantation, nine or ten miles from any post-office. In truth, *The Countryman* was published in the country. A partridge built her nest within five paces of the window where I learned to set type, and hatched her brood undisturbed. The cat-squirrels frolicked on the roof, and a gray fox, whose range was in the neighborhood, used to flit across the orchard-path in full view. *The Countryman* was published on a plantation, and it was on this and neighboring plantations that I became familiar with the curious myths and animal stories that form the basis of the volumes credited to Uncle Remus. I absorbed the stories, songs, and myths that I heard, but had no idea of their literary value until, some time in the seventies, *Lippincott's Magazine* printed an article on the subject of negro folklore, containing rough outlines of some of the stories. This article gave me my cue, and the legends told by Uncle Remus are the result.

While setting type for *The Countryman* I contributed surreptitiously to the columns of that paper, setting my articles from the "case" instead of committing them to paper, and thus leaving no evidence of authorship. I supposed that this was a huge joke; but, as Mr. Turner read the proof of every line that went into his paper, it is probable that he understood the situation and abetted it. At any rate, he began to lend me books from his library, which comprised a collection of literature both large and choice. The books forming this library have since been dispersed, but there were at least five hundred volumes in the collection that modern book-lovers would pay high prices for.

This was the accidental beginning of a career that has been accidental throughout. It was an accident that I went to *The Countryman*, an accident that I wrote "Uncle Remus," and an accident that the stories put forth under that name struck the popular fancy. In some respects these accidents are pleasing, but in others they are embarrassing.

For instance, people persist in considering me a literary man, when I am a journalist and nothing else. I have no literary training, and know nothing at all of what is termed literary art. I have had no opportunity to nourish any serious literary ambition, and the probability is that if such an opportunity had presented itself I would have refused to take advantage of it.

Joel Chandler Harris.

SCORES AND TALLIES.

MR. FRANK GALTON somewhere tells an amusing story, since profusely copied by all the anthropologists, of how during his South-African wanderings he once wanted to buy a couple of sheep from an unsophisticated heathen Damara. Current coin in that part of the world is usually represented, it seems, by cakes of tobacco, and two cakes were the recognized market-price of a sheep in Damara-land at the time of Mr. Galton's memorable visit. So the unsuspecting purchaser chose a couple of wethers from the flock, and, naturally enough, laid down four pieces of tobacco to pay for them before the observant face of the astonished vender. The Damara eyed the proffered price with suspicious curiosity. What could be the meaning of this singular precipitancy? He carefully took up two pieces, and placed them in front of one of the sheep; then he took up the other two pieces with much wonder, and placed them in turn in front of the other. Goodness gracious, there must be magic in it! The sum actually came out even. The Damara, for his part, didn't like the look of it. This thing was evidently uncanny. How could the supernaturally clever white man tell beforehand that two and two made four? He felt about it, no doubt, as we ourselves should feel if a great mathematician were suddenly to calculate out for us *a priori* what we were going to have to-day for dinner, and how much exactly we owed the butcher. After gazing at the pat and delusive symmetry of the two sheep and the four cakes of tobacco for a brief breathing-space, the puzzled savage, overpowered but not convinced, pushed away the cakes with a gesture of alarm, took back his sheep to the bosom of his flock, and began the whole transaction over again *da capo*. He wasn't going to be cheated out of his two sound wethers by a theoretical white man who managed bargains for live sheep on such strictly abstract mathematical principles.

Now, to most of us the fact that two and two make four has been so familiar an idea from childhood upward that we can hardly realize

its true abstractness and its immense philosophical and mathematical value. But the poor heathen of Mr. Galton's story knew better: he saw that there was profound reasoning involved in it,—reasoning utterly beyond the level of his uncultivated South-African intelligence. That two apples and two apples make four apples, that two sheep and two sheep make four sheep, that two men and two men make four men,—those are mere matters of individual experience, which any man at any time can settle for himself experimentally upon his own ten fingers. But that two and two make four,—that is an abstraction from innumerable instances, containing within itself the root and basis of all subsequent mathematical science. The man who first definitely said to himself, Two and two make four, was a prehistoric Newton, a mute, inglorious, and doubtless very black-skinned but intelligent Laplace.

For just look at the extreme abstractness of the problem laid before the Damara's mind when the over-educated European calmly asked him to accept four cakes of tobacco, all in a lump, as proper payment for two individual sheep, severally valued at two cakes apiece. It is in reality a sum in proportion: "If one sheep is worth two cakes of tobacco, what will be the value of two sheep?" And the Damara had never been to school, or learned from Mr. Bernard Smith's arithmetic the right way to work a rule-of-three sum. It all looks so easy to us because we know the trick already. But how did we come to learn the trick? That is the real question. How did the white European and his ancestors manage to get so far ahead in counting of the unsophisticated heathen Damara?

I don't know how far the Damaras themselves can count; but the Chiquitos of America, a very low Indian tribe, couldn't count beyond one; for any larger sum than that, their simple language used terms of comparison alone,—as many as one's eyes, as many as a crow's toes, as many as the fingers on one hand, and so forth up to six or seven. The Tasmanians could get as far as two: beyond that they stopped short; their simple scheme of numeration was merely this: one, two, a great many. The Australian black-fellows in Queensland go a step further: they reckon thus: "one, two, two-one (3), two-two (4);" and after that they say, "more than two-two," meaning thereby an indefinite number. One South-African tribe easily beats this rudimentary record, and knows how to count up to ten. But eleven, or both hands and one over, it regards as the *ne plus ultra* of human computation. When a British detachment once marched against it, the scouts brought in word to the elders of the tribe that an immense army was coming to fight them,—“an immense army; eleven white soldiers!”

On the other hand, some savages have really very advanced systems

of numeration ; for example, the Tongans, whose native numerals go up as far as one hundred thousand. Even this degree of proficiency, however, did not quite satisfy the devouring mathematical passion of Labillardière, who asked them what they called ten times that number, and so on, until he had finally made them give him names for all the subsequent decimal stages up even to one thousand billions. The polite Tongans, anxious to oblige a benevolent and generous scientific gentleman in so unimportant a matter, proceeded at once to supply him with words, which the unsuspecting explorer immediately wrote down, and duly printed as mathematical terms in the accounts of his travels. But—alas for the duplicity and the unscrupulousness of savages!—the supposed numerals in their higher ranges were really the rudest and naughtiest words in the Tongan language, with which, as missionaries subsequently discovered, the evil-disposed Polynesians had successfully imposed on the bland and child-like innocence of a scientific stranger. Such are the dangers of leading questions addressed in an imperfectly-understood tongue to the wicked minds of the children of nature. The children of nature promptly respond in the precise spirit of an East-End Arab.

The basis of all arithmetic, it may be safely asserted, lies in the primitive habit of counting on one's fingers. Not only do all children and all savages so count at the present day, not only do we all learn our first arithmetical lessons on that simple and natural portable abacus, but also all our most advanced numerical methods bear still upon their very face the evident marks of their evolution from the old mode of reckoning on the human hand. For the decimal system itself is a living result of the fact that every man (bar accidents) has ten fingers, and ten only. Nay, the very word "digits," by which we still express in the most abstract manner the symbols of the numbers, points back at last to the ten upheld black fingers of the original savage.

At the very first outset, indeed, the decimal system didn't have things all its own way. It was vigorously and strenuously opposed in the beginning by its vigesimal rival, the system that went in for counting by twenties, or, in other words, by fingers and by toes, not by fingers alone. Primitive man varied in his practice. Sometimes he counted his fingers only, and sometimes he counted his toes as well. From the one plan springs the system of reckoning by tens, from the other plan that of reckoning by scores or twenties.

Both systems are at bottom, of course, identical. You want to count a great many objects,—say, for example's sake, two hundred cocoa-nuts. You begin by taking one man, and counting a cocoa-nut for each one of his ten fingers ; after that, you set him aside. You have reckoned

ten, or one man ; or, if you like, you put a pebble aside to do duty for him : it stands for ten,—a decimal symbol. So you go on, making fingers and cocoa-nuts balance one another, till you have got to the end of the whole heap ; and you sum up your calculation briefly by saying that the cocoa-nuts equal twenty men. To this day, when we write 200 we are keeping up the memory of that very act. Our decimal system marks, as it were, one man, 10 ; two men, 20 ; three men, 30 ; four men, 40 ; and so on *ad infinitum*. The 0 stands in place of a man : it is the abstract sign of a completed series.

The vigesimal system of reckoning by scores proceeds in just the same manner, only it numbers fingers and toes together, and sets aside one man only when it has counted up to twenty. This, not the decimal system, was probably the original method of all the Northern nations,—certainly of all the Celtic peoples,—and traces of it still remain in our old English numerals threescore and fourscore, as well as in the habit of reckoning sheep and various other agricultural objects by twenties. In French, the two systems still live on amicably side by side. Up to *soixante* the reckoning is decimal ; but the old-fashioned *septante* has been completely ousted by *soixante-dix* (threescore and ten), while *oc-tante* and *nonante-trois* give place to pure scoring in the case of *quatrevingt* and *quatrevingt-treize*.

Why did the habit of counting by tens finally get the better in all civilized societies of the still earlier habit of counting by twenties ? Simply, I believe, because civilized peoples tend more or less to wear shoes ; and shoes obviously interfere with freedom of action in getting at the human toes for purposes of calculation. Barefooted savages naturally enough reckon by twenties ; but booted civilization does its decorous counting by tens alone. Writing and the use of the slate and pencil strengthen the decimal impulse, once set on foot ; for you write with your fingers (unless you happen to rival Miss Biffin), not with your toes ; and our children nowadays, while they count on their fingers with great unanimity, would probably be shocked and scandalized at the barbaric notion of anything so rude as counting on their feet.

But why is twenty called a score ? Only because it represents a whole man, and is therefore scored or marked down on the tally or counting-stick as one person. In its original signification, of course, to score means merely to nick or cut a mark, especially on a short piece of wood. The word is etymologically much the same as scar ; and we still talk (when poetically inclined) of a mountain-side scored by the ceaseless torrents, or of a brow deeply scored by the ravages of time. In these degenerate days, to be sure, the score at cricket is duly entered in a ruled book, together with an analysis of the bowling, a record of

the overs, and a general commentary as to who was bowled, caught, or run out. But I can myself remember, in a very remote neighborhood, when I was a boy, seeing the score kept in the true primitive fashion by another boy seated on a fence, who cut a notch with his knife for every run on one of two sticks, green-barked and brown-barked, each representing one of the two sides.

A sort of sanctity was attached to the proceeding,—the sanctity that results from ancient usage. For that was the sort of swing that gave the score its present name: it was a real survival from an antique savagery. Just so the primitive arithmetician, while yet the whole world was young, counted up to twenty on a man's fingers and toes, and then made a notch on a stick to denote "one man up," or, in other words, twenty. It was a safer and easier way of reckoning than counting by men alone; because, in the first place, one man (for example, the reckoner himself) would serve as a numerator over and over again; and, in the second place, the score once marked on a stick remains forever, while the men are apt to get up and walk away, which is as disconcerting to the ardent arithmetician as the action of the hedgehogs in Alice's croquet to the enthusiastic player.


The survival of the practice of counting sheep by the score, in our country districts, very well illustrates this ancient Celtic vigesimal practice. When the new county voter (called in his non-political aspect Hodge or Giles) wishes to number a flock of sheep, he does so by first counting out twenty,—the counting itself being often done, not by the ordinary numerals, one, two, three, four, but by the old half-Celtic "rhyming score," "Eena, deena, dina, dus, Catla, weela, weila, wuss," and so forth, up to twenty. There, he has reached his higher unit, the score; in other words, one man, regarded as barefoot. So he makes a nick in a piece of wood, and begins his rhyming singsong over again. Thus he counts score after score, till he reaches at last the full number, say eight score and seventeen. At that he rests. He doesn't translate the numbers into the decimal notation: why should he? It would mean far less in his mind than his native numbers. Eight score and seventeen are to him a far more real and realizable amount than one hundred and seventy-seven. He sticks still to the vigesimal system. Twenty is for Giles the one true higher unit.

A tally in its origin was pretty much the same thing as a score, but it grows at last by usage and the courtesy of language into something rather different. It means in the final resort a piece of wood *taillé*,—that is to say, nicked or scored. But the French origin of the word points back to its being the offspring of the more civilized and Latinized decimal system, which replaced (for all save Giles and Hodge) our

old native English and Welsh method of counting by twenties. Moreover, it has now become inseparable from the very idea of a tally that it must needs tally with something or other. This sense of the word arises from the habit of giving the two parties to a bargain each a cut stick, on which the amount at issue between them was duly recorded by means of notches. As these sticks corresponded, or ought exactly to correspond, with one another, a tally came to be popularly thought of as necessarily implying correspondence. In the English exchequer—always conservative—such little bits of notched wood were given as receipts so late as the end of the eighteenth century; but at last they were accompanied by a written discharge as well, and only remained as a pure ceremonial and administrative survival.

It will further illustrate the absolute dependence of arithmetic upon the human fingers (including toes) if we recollect that in many savage languages the very words used to describe the abstract numbers are derived from the fingers or toes themselves. Thus, five in such a tongue will be the same word as “hand;” seven will be expressed by “one hand, two fingers;” and twenty will be put in the graphic form of “a whole man,” or “one man finished.”

People count long before they think of making definite signs or symbols for numbers, and when they begin to make symbols at all the earliest and simplest are mere long rows of notches or pebbles equal in sum to the number thought of. But in time picture-writing begins to develop itself; and then we get the earliest appearance of true ciphers. For example, the poor Indian of Pope and North America marked ten in his rude hieroglyphics—often rude in more senses than one—by a vague outline of a man, like that chalked on London walls by the surviving boy-savage,—a mere dot of a head, with a straight line for body, and two outstretched arms, ended by hands, standing on a pair of very open bow legs. The Roman numerals with which we are all so familiar, and which look so grand, learned, and awful when we get them in the developed form of MDCCCXLVIII., start in reality from an equally humble and childish origin. They are mere picture-writing. When the noble Roman of remote antiquity wanted to mark the number one, he drew a single straight line or digit to represent the uplifted forefinger. In our modern type we print it I. For two, he drew two digits, or II; for three, he wrote III; and four he represented, not by IV, which is a comparatively late modern innovation, but by the good old clock-dial symbol IIII. These, in fact, are nothing more than just the fingers of one hand. But how about five? Why should it be represented by the apparently meaningless symbol V? Simply because V is not V, but a rude hieroglyphic of one hand, the broad stroke

standing for the four fingers united, while the narrow one stands for the extended thumb. V, in fact, is nothing more than a very degenerate pictorial symbol, like the hand  still used by printers in certain circumstances to call special attention to a particular paragraph. As for X, that is usually represented as equivalent to two such hands set side by side; but this interpretation I believe to be erroneous. I think it much more likely (on the Indian analogy) to stand for "one man up," that is to say, ten, with a people who counted by fingers alone, or, in other words, employed a decimal notation. If this hypothesis be true, X represents a double of the Indian man-figure, with outstretched arms and legs like a colossus, the hand having disappeared entirely by disuse, as often happens in the evolution of what are called cursive hieroglyphics.

The other Roman numerals, L, C, D, and M, belong to a far later and more civilized period. I will not go fully here into the abstruse question of their origin and development, as learnedly traced by Canon Isaac Taylor in his interesting treatise: it will suffice, for most people, to mention briefly that they spring from discarded letters of the Greek alphabet, utilized by the practical Roman mind as numerals, and in two cases gradually twisted round by a false analogy into the semblance of C, the initial of *Centum*, and the delusive shape of M, the initial of *Mille*. This was distinctly clever of the primeval Roman; but he would probably have shrunk from so cruel a course had he foreseen the trouble that his procedure would give to subsequent archæologists, or the battles that would be waged by unborn nations over the origin and nature of his forgotten symbols.

Numerals like I, II, III, IIII, V, and X scarcely rise above the very lowest level of savage picture-writing. They recall the records of the noble red men of the West and the modern Esquimaux, who when they wish to state a number in writing do it, so to speak, as the logic-books say, "by simple enumeration," putting down an exact picture of the persons or objects involved in the transaction. Thus, the well-known chronicle of the achievements of Wingemund, chief of the Leni Lenape Indians, who attacked the English settlements in 1762, proceeds entirely on such a direct numerical basis. The chronicle was cut into the bark of a tree in Ohio more than a century since, and it proceeds after the following straightforward manner. Twenty-three braves went upon the war-path: therefore they are represented by twenty-three straight lines, bent slightly forward, to indicate progression. For ten days they marched through the forest: so the sun is displayed (with the very same broad good-humored face he still wears in English caricature) as having surmounted ten lines, each of which marks the horizon. They attacked

three English forts,—shown by three square bastions ; and one of them contained a couple of trading-stores,—exhibited as small oblongs within the fortifications. Ten vanquished enemies, each very much like an X with or without a head to it, stand on one side. Six of them, however, are headless, and represent the scalped. Four have small round knobs on top, and were therefore, doubtless, taken prisoners. This is, as it were, the raw material of the art-writing from which hieroglyphs, and alphabets, and numerical systems were finally evolved.

Still, the Roman V and X differ considerably, in one respect, from such Indian picture-writing, and show a corresponding advance in the direction of the numerals. They each represent not a particular object, but a number in the abstract. "*V homines*," means five men ; "*X homines*," ten men. It is not necessary to put pictures of the object five or ten times repeated : the figure alone sufficiently expresses the qualifying number. On the other hand, few people, probably, have any adequate idea of the great difficulties in which arithmetic would be involved were it not for the happy invention of the Arabic numerals. Here is a very simple little sum in addition put Roman fashion. The reader will find it "a nice amusement," as the model papa always tells his daughters, to work it out as it stands without having recourse to Arabic notation :

MDCXLVIII
MCCXLV
DCCXXXIX
MDCCCLXXXIV

None of these figures reaches two thousand, and yet what a hopeless task to sum them up without an abacus ! But that is, indeed, a small matter. Here are two better tests of the impossibility of arithmetic without Arabic notation. Multiply (all in Roman figures) MDCCXLIV by DCLXXXVI, and divide MCCXLIII by XLV. Nothing could be simpler than those two sums ; and yet it requires considerable intellect and very close attention to work them out on paper with the Roman symbols.

The fact is, an abacus, which is at bottom merely a form of score, or tally, was absolutely indispensable for arriving at anything like a high arithmetical result before the invention of the Arabic numerals. The only way to work out a big sum was then to take one lot of pebbles or cowries to mark the units, another lot for the tens, a third lot for the hundreds, and a fourth for the thousands. If one wished to sum up a large number, say to add 2347 to 8929, one put separately into each heap two pebbles and eight, three pebbles and nine (which necessitated

a remove or "carrying"), four pebbles and two, and nine pebbles and seven (carry again). No one heap, of course, could ever exceed ten: when it did, nine pebbles were taken out, and one was removed to the next heap. Observe how this primitive method of reckoning has colored all our subsequent arithmetical language and arithmetical conceptions. Just as digit means a finger, and points back to the period when men reckoned on their two hands alone, so calculus means a pebble, and points back to the period when they reckoned with little heaps of stones, or cowries. To calculate is merely to heap up pebbles, and the differential calculus itself is the way we manipulate the small marbles in order to produce certain high mathematical results. Even the very phrase "to carry one," "to carry two," still used by our school-children, retains a memory of the time when ten pebbles were taken from the heap of units as soon as it reached ten or more, and one of them was added in compensation to the other pile immediately above it.

The abacus is a device for making the pebble system more systematic and more respectable. By stringing colored balls on a wire frame, and making the white mean units, the red tens, the green hundreds, and the brown thousands, it is possible to add or multiply large numbers in a way practically all but impossible with the Roman numerals. Besides, this plan had the advantage of being, so to speak, automatic. You added tens and hundreds and thousands to the various rows without counting at all; and then at the end you read off the total according to the number of brown, green, and white balls on the different courses. The abacus substituted a mechanical device for a mental process: it made arithmetic an affair of the eye, not an affair of the brain or the intellect.

Still, no great advance in the mysteries of mathematics could ever be expected from arithmeticians who had to use such very rough-and-ready methods of procedure as these. The Greek notation was even clumsier than the Roman, consisting, as it did, of the letters of the alphabet, mostly in their alphabetical order, as if in English A meant one, B two, C three, and U twenty-one. The first step towards the establishment of the simple modern decimal system was made by the Romans, who at last bethought themselves of writing the letters standing for the unit, the ten, the hundred, and the thousand, with the number of units, of tens, of hundreds, and of thousands,—the coefficient, as mathematicians playfully term it,—written small on top of the significant letters. Thus, 2459 would be represented on this system by $\overset{\text{II}}{\text{M}}\overset{\text{V}}{\text{C}}\overset{\text{L}}{\text{I}}$. The man who saw his way to this great improvement was well on the track of the Arabic system.

But a fatal difficulty stood in the way of his further progress. If

we write $\overset{1}{M}\overset{1}{C}\overset{1}{X}\overset{1}{I}$, it soon becomes apparent to the meanest understanding (after which remark the judicious reader will hardly venture to pretend he doesn't see it) that we may safely omit the M, the C, the X, and the I, and leave the 2459 to stand on their own legs, their position alone sufficiently expressing their value as units, tens, hundreds, and thousands. As the mathematician would put it once more, we may neglect the serial terms and let the coefficients alone stand in their places. But when we write $\overset{1}{M}\overset{1}{C}\overset{1}{X}\overset{1}{I}$ we cannot thus abbreviate into *iiivvix*, because each digit of units, tens, hundreds, and thousands is not represented by a single symbol. We might, indeed, get over that difficulty somewhat by putting points between each series, thus: *ii.iv.v.ix.*; and the number so expressed might then be read 2459. But this is at best a clumsy device, and in practice the points would be always going wrong, and reducing our arithmetic to the same hopeless muddle as the weekly books in the hands of our wives and daughters.

What is really needed, then, is that each unit from one to nine should be separately expressed by a single symbol. What that symbol happens to be doesn't at all matter to the general principle: a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, would do quite as well as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. As a matter of fact, our existing numerals, called Arabic, are a compromise between the two systems of picture-writing and alphabetic signs. They come to us, like the beginnings of most mathematical science, from the remote and mysterious East; and they make their first appearance under hardly-recognizable forms in the Indian cave-inscriptions of the first and second centuries. One, two, and three are there represented by parallel bars, placed sideways instead of lengthways, and standing, of course, for our old friends the human fingers. It is easy enough to see how —, =, ≡ are readily converted into 1, 2, 3, the first being made upright on the analogy of the Roman I, and the other two being hastily run together with connecting lines into 2 and 3. The other units, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, are the initials or most prominent letters of the name of each corresponding number in the language of the inscriptions. We might make a similar English table thus: —, =, ≡, F, V, S, E, I, N. The immense advantage of the new numerals lies, of course, in the fact that each of them represents a single unit by a single symbol, and so allows us to express sums like 2, 347, 859, 427, and so forth, in a way unattainable under any other system. Nay, our symbolic conceptions are thus allowed even to outrun the resources of language, and the astronomer and the mathematician now habitually deal with strings of figures which it would be impossible for them so much as to express in words.

Most things, unfortunately, are called by wrong names. Our exist-

ing ciphers, though originally Indian, are now universally described as Arabic, because they came to the western world from India and Africa through the mercantile medium of the Spanish Arabs. From Spain they spread to the European nations, though not without considerable opposition by the way, such as invariably testifies to the goodness and soundness of every genuine human improvement. Whenever you hear a loud popular clamor raised against anything as wicked or foolish, you may be pretty sure it will really turn out in the end a valuable invention: what everybody says must be wrong. This simple conclusion flows as a matter of course from the familiar principle, first definitely formulated by "poor Carlyle," that there are so many billion people in the world, mostly fools. Paynim numerals met with little favor, accordingly, from the mediæval merchant. The bankers of Florence were forbidden, on the verge of the fifteenth century, from employing these dangerous Saracen signs in any of their account-books; and the University of Padua (so very like our own Oxford) ordained that its stationer should keep a list of books for sale with the prices marked, "not in ciphers, but in plain letters." The hapless modern purchaser rather desires, on the contrary, that prices should be marked, not in letters, but in plain ciphers. It is noticeable that the very word cipher, here employed, is itself Arabic, and its progeny includes not only the familiar French *chiffre*, but also, through the Italian *zefiro*, the much less immediately recognizable derivative, zero. Arabic numerals were at first confined in use to mathematical works; they were then employed for the paging of books; and it was not till the middle of the fifteenth century that they first found their way with any security into general commercial society.

It is curious to reflect that the whole decimal system itself, with all its faults and shortcomings and awkwardnesses, has been foisted upon us as a pure survival by the mere accident that man happens to have five fingers on each hand. Counting by tens is a legacy of savagery. If mathematicians had now to devise, *de novo*, a system of numeration, —if a new and universal French Revolution were to sweep away at one fell swoop all records of the past, and set humanity upon its legs once more on a *tabula rasa* of arts and sciences,—there can be no doubt that eight would be the number immediately hit upon by the worshippers of reason as the best possible basis for an arithmetical series. Eight would then be written 10, and 64 would be written 100, while the symbols 8 and 9 would be entirely discarded from the reformed arithmetic. For eight is a good square number, divisible all round, by two and by four, and halving evenly till it reaches unity, by the successive stages of four, two, and one; whereas ten lands you at once in five

and two-and-a-half, which are useless and impossible quantities to deal with practically. But the accident of savage man's predilection for counting on his fingers has burdened us for all time with this clumsy and awkward decimal system; while only the lucky fact that the Greeks and Romans wore shoes has prevented us from the still more terrible habit of reckoning everything by scores or twenties.

To go a step further back, as an ingenious American philosopher has pointed out, mankind uses decimals instead of octonals to-day because in the progress from the finned fish to the four-limbed amphibian the number of fin-rays on each limb happened to be reduced from eight or ten to five only. Hence most of the higher animals have five fingers or five toes on each extremity; and man in this respect conforms strictly to his early pre-human arboreal ancestor. If that ancestor had had only four toes, like so many quadrupeds, we might now count by eights or by sixteens; but the accident of his possessing five digits on each limb has saddled us forever with the foolish custom of reckoning everything either by tens or by twenties. Our most advanced mathematics bear obviously on their very face the marks of their irrational and savage origin, and more remotely recall the evolution of the race from a many-rayed mud-haunting amphibious progenitor.

Grant Allen.

A VACANT HOUSE.

"WE must do something," said Flora, her face strained into anxious curves.

"So you've said twenty-five times. I counted," responded Kelsie Chitwood.

"Well, what shall we do?"

"Pour our substance lavishly into the coffers of the best hotel."

"We can't, Kelsie; we daren't."

"Then go on following up advertisements and hunting a cheap boarding-place."

"There aren't any really cheap places where we *can* go."

"Oh, don't repeat so much," besought Kelsie. "My feet and heart and head are aching a trio. This town isn't half as good a capital for the State as Madison would be. We can go back to Madison and say we changed our minds about elocution- and music-lessons, because they don't know as much here as we do at home."

"No, ma'am," said Flora, setting her mouth squarely. "I won't give up."

"I will," said Kelsie. "I'll sit down here on the curbstone and be taken up for vagrancy. We've been nothing but tramps since early morning. There's nobody cares whether we ever get housed or not,—not even the music-professor or elocution-woman, who expect to get our hard-earned ducats out of us."

"I never would have believed a person would have such desperate times to get settled in a big town."

"Where there are so many houses to let, too," said Kelsie. "I've seen agents' cards on hundreds of them since morning. Look at this palatial brick, blind-eyed, shut up like a jail. Carved walnut vestibule doors; and they're not locked, either. Let's get inside them and sit down with our backs to the front doors, snug as mice in a cupboard, and rest ourselves."

"It's getting very late in the afternoon," said Flora, consulting anxiously the globule of a silver watch which she had worn tucked in the front of her dress since she was old enough to be trusted with the heirloom. "We must do something, quick."

"Twenty-six times," counted Kelsie.

The older girl's disturbed face continued to pucker around the eyes. Her complexion had the mature brown tint of withering golden-rod, and a perceptible fuzz extended down her cheeks beneath her ears. She had good, straight-gazing dark eyes, and a tailor-made trimness of apparel. In one hand she carried a small bag, and under the arm above it a strapped silk umbrella.

Kelsie was very pretty, and gave an impression of elegance. Her immense sombre eyes and golden foam of hair were filmed from the vulgar gaze by a gray veil so tied over a hat of projecting brim that it made only an enchanting transparency. Through this Kelsie's clear pallor and lovely features attracted every passing eye. Her long fur-edged wrap outlined a soft, small figure modelled for petting and protection rather than for muscular enterprise and wiry push. She dragged one little foot also, as if habitual lameness aggravated her present exhaustion.

"Let's go into this big empty house and stay to-night, Flora," she suggested, sincerely. "I just thought of it. That wouldn't cost us any money, and to-morrow we're sure to get some boarding-place."

"Oh, talk sense!" exclaimed Flora. "You might just as well say, let us sit on the curb till morning."

"No, I mightn't. For the curbstone is out-doors, and in the house we should be under shelter. We could surely find something to make

a fire of, and spread this big shawl in my shawl-strap on the floor, and lay our heads on our bags and sleep. We needn't bother about our trunks at the dépôt."

"Or about any supper or breakfast," said Flora.

"We can buy something to eat right over there," suggested Kelsie, indicating a bakery in the distance. "I think it would be splendid. Nobody ever thought of such a grand thing before."

"Except some baby trying to handle the moon," observed Flora, her contempt growing as Kelsie warmed to the subject. "I wouldn't allow myself to do such a dishonorable thing."

"Dishonorable!" said Kelsie. "It would be just a nice, neat, smart plan. Edward Everett Hale—*Reverend* Edward Everett Hale, lofty ladyship—has a story about some nice people who lost their baggage and money, and the young lady stayed all night in a church. She got herself locked in without the sexton's knowing it, and the man brought the key and let her out next morning. I think it showed enormous resource."

"We should show enormous resource," said Flora, "if we could walk into a fastened house. Shall we break a window, or go down chimney?"

"Don't you see the agent's office-address on that card? I know just where it is, and I'll get the key of him and be back in half an hour. Two street-car fares won't be much to fling away on such a venture."

"Kelsie Chitwood! What will you tell him?"

"Flora Baum! I'll tell him I want to look at the house. It won't scare him. He probably has applicants for rents once in a while."

"But we don't want to rent a house."

"We do for one night. You haven't got a bit of soar in you, Flora; and you were going to lead the expedition. If I were going to be a lecturer about equal suffrage, and so on, I'd try to get out of a few old ruts in the beginning. It scares you to death to do a thing nobody happened to think of before."

"It doesn't," claimed Flora. "But I don't see any sense in it."

"Do you see sense, then, in beginning to give way? If I give an inch I know I shall break down and have to go back to my step-father's before I know enough about music to make me independent. Maybe you want to collapse down on your uncle's folks and teach school and pinch two years more for an outfit and money enough to carry out your plans."

"Kelsie, you can say very cutting things. But we won't stand here

fussing. Stopping at a hotel one night," said Flora, still hesitating and arguing, "isn't going to eat us up."

"What I have in my portemonnaie is part of my blood and lifetime, and I'm going to fight over every drop of it."

"Why don't you say honestly you've just made up your mind to cut a caper?" exclaimed Flora, walking on.

Kelsie hurried beside her, and flew off at a cross-street.

"Well, walk as far as that bakery; but don't go any farther," she insisted.

"I never heard of such a silly trick!" grumbled Flora. She made other remarks to herself, poking the pavement with her umbrella, while she sauntered on without Kelsie.

The bakery happened to be a very clean one, full of appetizing, cakey odors. An apple-cheeked man, smiling as if in perpetual recollection of Christmas, stood behind the counter. He answered all Flora's inquiries with gentle eagerness, and told her he had cider which would keep sweet as long as there was a drop of it, because three pounds of stemmed raisins had been put into the barrel with it.

Dusk was descending with the smoke of great chimneys when Kelsie came back and held up the key to her friend. She found Flora with supper all spread for two, within a calico curtain where the apple-cheeked man sometimes served lunches.

"Ain't this cosy!" she exclaimed, sitting down under gaslight to currant-buns, cider, and buttered rolls. "We might come back here to breakfast; only when I propose to rent a great, huge house I don't like to take all my meals out."

"Did you tell such a story, Kelsie?"

"Oh, now, don't preach. I grow aged when you begin to strain after perfection, Flora. The agent was just as willing as he could be to let us look at the house. It rents at only fifty dollars a month. I told him you probably couldn't go over it until morning."

"That I couldn't!"

"I said 'mamma.' It's all right. He was a great big pussy-cat of a man, who came purring at me through his whiskers. I was very dignified,—quite above his sort. And in the morning the house won't suit at all, and I'll take the key back."

"Quite correct. And it won't suit this evening, either."

"Rolls we can take, and some prepared chocolate," pursued Kelsie. "I would like corn and a popper; but people can't be princely the very eve of moving in."

Thus remonstrating and resisting, Flora returned with Kelsie along the dusky street, ascended the stone steps, and stood within the huge brick

house's vestibule. The key let them in. Flora whisked behind the door with a guilty sensation while Kelsie locked it again.

"The house is probably full of ghosts," she threatened, speaking low to escape echoes.

"I believe all the folks' shadows that ever fell on these walls are here yet," responded Kelsie.

With perfect understanding they then ceased to talk while exploring the lower floor. On the right-hand side of the hall three great parlors in glittering white paint had all their leaves of communication open. The dining-room showed smeared wall-paper, and beyond this Kelsie did not care to go; but Flora cautiously glanced through the kitchen, and turned the cellar-key to listen downwards to the hollow silence under the house.

They then went up-stairs, their feet seeming to make a startling hoof-like clatter, and peered between dirty shutter-slats at the street-lamps twinkling distantly. The upper rooms were arranged on each side of a hall with a square regularity characterizing all domiciles of this house's date.

"We daren't camp in a front room," said Kelsie: "our light would show through the windows."

"It will show through the side- or back-windows just the same."

"Not if we pick a wise place," declared Kelsie. So they tiptoed about to keep the echoes still, and opened and closed again every offering door. The chambers were high and spacious, variously tinted as to wall-papers, but each gaping like a cavern to engulf wanderers.

The girls decided to stay in a side-room where there was a grate, and tall folding-doors securely fastened between them and a row of windows looking upon the street. Dust lay thick upon the floor and imitation-marble mantel, but it was a mere part of the general duskiness until they had a fire kindled. Having quite explored the premises, they went down the back stairs, ventured beyond kitchen and store-room into the fuel-house, and scraped up kindling and pieces of coal quite enough to overburden a rusty dish-pan left discarded there.

They struck matches and built their fire, and Kelsie rubbed the mantel and the floor in front of the grate with newspaper. She unbuckled her shawl-strap, spread down her thick travelling-shawl, and she and Flora sat down before the rushing flame.

"That fire won't last all night," said Flora, looking at her watch.

"Then let's toast our cheese," said Kelsie, reaching for the provisions they had brought with them, "and eat up the pop-corn balls now. A hat-pin is awfully nice for a toasting-fork, when any one is as nice and neat about a hat-pin as I am. But first let's straighten our change."

Each girl seriously took up her portemonnaie, summed up and halved the expense of their meal, and Kelsie handed Flora the exact number of nickels and pennies which were her due, less one street-car fare. This transaction being completed, they took off their hats, and basked and munched. Chimes struck in the distance, and at intervals a watchman's whistle came with startling blare through the walls.

"How do you feel now?" inquired Flora, indicating that all blame of the adventure still rested on the woman who tempted her.

"I feel as if my lame foot had been overworked to-day," responded Kelsie. "But I am glad we came. For you aren't afraid of anything at all, are you, Flora?"

"No," said Flora, shortly. "We locked the door the last time we came in, didn't we?"

"Tight. Do you think we'd better take the key out of the lock?"

"No. Better leave it in."

"I wish," said Kelsie, hitching towards Flora, and leaning down in her lap, "I could quit thinking every evening about that hung man who jumped on board a freight-train and came down through the skylight. There he sat and rode for twenty miles, scaring the men in the caboose stiff, and then he stepped off and ran up a bank, dragging his rope. Sometimes I do believe he is going to make me see him: I feel as if he could step in through any walls and I would have to look at him."

"It would be a good scheme," suggested Flora, "to stretch ourselves out and take a doze while we can. We shall have to be up pretty early to keep from freezing and escape having this business inquired into."

"But isn't it like returning straight to nature?" exclaimed Kelsie, willingly bunching up a pillow from the corner of her shawl. "I love to astonish myself with what I can dare and do, once in a while."

They talked some time longer, lying face to face, but with their eyes resting on the comfortable fire. Still the watchman's rattle came at regular intervals, and the long call of trains, interspersed with passing laughter and the faint spat of feet upon pavements. Saturated with warmth and weariness, Kelsie felt herself beginning to sleep, and only opened her eyes once more, lifting her eyebrows also with the effort, to see how funny and aimless Flora looked with her mouth relaxing open.

Whole hours of oblivion are nothing when we wake in the night: so it seemed to Kelsie she had but completely closed her eyes when somebody tickled her ear, besieging it with unwelcome breath. She murmured a remonstrance, drawing back, until the annoyance was able to shape itself into words:

"Kelsie, what is that noise?"

"What noise?" responded Kelsie, sitting up wide awake, and seeing with astonishment how dim the fire was.

Some creature was walking stealthily up and down the hall. The footfalls were distinct in front of their door, and sufficiently perceptible at either end of the unseen sentinel's beat.

"It's been going on so for half an hour," whispered Flora. "I didn't try to wake you until it began to turn our knob."

"Oh, Flora!" gasped Kelsie. "Then it's something with hands, and not a cat!"

"Did you certainly lock the front door?"

"Surely, and brought the key away in my pocket."

"I know the back part of the house is fast, for I fastened it myself. We are in a nice box! We daren't even raise a window and call to the watchman. And how are we going to get out of this house past that—whatever it is?"

"It will go away in the morning," shivered Kelsie.

Flora opened her watch, held it down close to the hearth, and indicated that her friend should look. "It's five o'clock now. This is morning." A bleak diminution of darkness, which was sifting through the windows or growing in the air, confirmed her words.

"I'd rather it was five o'clock than twelve," breathed Kelsie. "A great many of one's troubles do take themselves off in daytime. I've often felt tired of living, but I should despise to end my career in a wood-cut in the *Police Gazette*, with an empty house for my background. Two beautiful young ladies found killed. It goes so softly: it's a woman, Flora,—some sleep-walker or lunatic." She fell upon Flora with a tight grip as the door-knob was turned and shaken.

"This is horrid!" said Flora. "But don't be scared to death: that will do no good."

"Hear it hissing through the key-hole! Oh, Flora, let us jump out of the window. We'd better die that way than have it get at us."

"Kelsie Chitwood, if I had known you had so little self-control I never should have started away from home with you. You can't escape the consequences of your own actions in this world, and there's no use trying. We have to face the thing some time, and, now it's light enough to see, I'm going to open the door."

"If you do I'll jump on the mantel!"

"There's only one of it and two of us. It's probably some prowling negro, half drunk. You take my umbrella and I will club my bag, if we have to defend ourselves."

"Oh, Flora, you are so brave, and I am so deathly faint!"

"I'm going to open the door," repeated Flora, fanning the young girl with her hat, her jaws set resolutely and her eyes shining. "You'll probably come out of the scrape with flying colors, as you usually do, and I'll have to do the dragging and take the bumps."

"I suppose I do deserve to die for my various sins and shortcomings," gulped Kelsie. "And I'll stand as much as you can. You'll see that."

"Give me the key to the front door," said Flora. "Have you got all your things? We'll turn this lock softly, and wait until it's at the upper end of the hall, then make a dash and get down-stairs. You run ahead: I'll keep between you and it: your foot isn't strong. I'll be there to unlock the door by the time you reach it."

"I won't take any such advantage," declared Kelsie, in white heroism. "We'll walk out abreast and face it together."

"All right," assented Flora, speaking with the indifference of a condemned man standing on a fatal drop.

They were conscious of street-noises and broadening daylight as wholesome helps against their terror. The impalpable perils which seem to crowd upon us from depths of space and make us cower upon ourselves, in turn cower from us when we proceed against them.

Flora opened the door wide, and Kelsie walked out abreast of her, facing an old gray man, stooping in scant clothing topped by a dressing-gown. His lip drooped and trembled, and he had a piteous, searching look in his dimmed eyes.

"I want Hannah," he besought the girls, clasping his hands with a dramatic gesture, as if appealing to a jury. "Why have you locked her in that room away from me?" And then he broke down and sobbed out loud, with the knotty, unfluent agony of a man's outcries.

"Oh, the poor dear!" exclaimed Kelsie, all her rigidity relaxing to the soft attitudes and compassion of a child. "And, Flora, he must be chilled nearly to death."

About twelve hours later the two girls sat at the cosiest of hotel tables, with the evening paper between them, waiting for their dinner-order to be filled. The cheer, the brilliant light, the white-clad waiters and swift clatter of china and silver, exhilarated Kelsie. She looked pretty and exclusive and untroubled by worldly circumstance, as she put the tip of her finger on a paragraph and said to Flora, "Here it is."

"Judge Snellbaker, who disappeared from his home last week, was found this morning in an empty house on Pennsylvania Avenue by a Mrs. Baum and her daughter, from Madison, who were looking through

the house with the intention of renting it. It has been known several years that the judge was failing in health, but it now appears that his mind was completely shattered by his wife's recent death. He probably left home in search of her, and by some means got access to the Pennsylvania Avenue property, which the judge's family once occupied. The exposure, which might have been fatal to a man of his age and physical condition, has affected him but little.

"The large reward offered by his family in advertising for him was at first refused by Mrs. Baum and her daughter, though they were at length compelled reluctantly to accept it."

Flora put up a resentful lip as she read.

"I suppose it's just as nearly correct as the enterprising journalist ever gets anything," commented Kelsie. "He couldn't know with what reluctant joy we were compelled to gather in a competence which will clear our entire way for us."

"Mrs. Baum!" said Flora. "And when the Madison papers take it up, how am I going to explain my intention of renting a palatial house? It is a perfect tangle, that we shall never get out of."

"So are most of one's experiences in this world," said Kelsie. "You ought to be thankful if you get more good than bad out of anything. The uncertainty of what is coming is one of the charms of life."

M. H. Catherwood.

PATIENCE IN ART.

LEAVES.

NATURE, the greatest painter, wrought at these
 From early April till November frost:
 Although her work was done with silent ease,
 Think what a space those forms and colors cost!

MAN.

Nature takes twenty years to mould a man
 Into the goodliest, most transcendent cast;
 And grudgest thou to toil thy paltry span,
 When soul-like marble will the flesh outlast?

Charlotte Fiske Bates.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

LET Mr. Howells argue as he will, few of us, publishers or readers, regard the Novelist of the Future as unnecessary or impossible. Instead of despairing, we wish that his dispensation may be at hand. We certainly need him, if "The Bostonians" is a sample of the antiseptic cotton batting that is to be served to us as food. It does not poison us, but a very little of it satisfies. Perhaps we do not need the "Literary Centre," and indeed may not be looking in the right direction for the coming one. We may be like the people who turned to the east to see the first beam of sunrise, and not one of us wise enough to look to the west and catch the ray-flash on the glittering peak of a prophetic steeple. It is not well to be so positive about Bethlehem that we ignore Nazareth.

When we come to formulate our demands of the Coming American Novelist, we will agree that he must be native-born. His ancestors may come from where they will, but we must give him a birthplace and have the raising of him. Still, the longer his family has been here the better he will represent us. Suppose he should have no country but ours, no traditions but those he has learned here, no longings apart from us, no future except in our future—the orphan of the world, he finds with us his home. And with all this, suppose he refuses to be fused into that grand conglomerate we call the "American type." With us, he is not of us. He is original, he has humor, he is tender, he is passive and fiery, he has been taught what we call justice, and he has his own opinion about it. He has suffered everything a poet, a dramatist, a novelist need suffer before he comes to have his lips anointed. And with it all he is in one sense a spectator, a little out of the race. How would these conditions go towards forming an original development? In a word, suppose the coming novelist is of African origin? When one comes to consider the subject, there is no improbability in it. One thing is certain,—our great novel will not be written by the typical American. After a time the Yankee type will be replaced by some new combination from the effect of our life on the nations swarming to our shores; and, as far as nationality goes, The Novel might as well then be written by the African as by this new combination. Thus far he has given us the only national music we have ever had. Indeed, we may go further and assert that the plantation-songs are the only melodies in our day that are not growths from Handel or Beethoven. They are far more original than Wagner, because he is a legitimate result of progress in logical lines. Given Gluck and Beethoven, and Wagner is certain after a time. Of course by "plantation-songs" such music as Foster's "Old Folks at Home" is not meant, but the song of the African himself, not the one written for him and then sung by the white people. Whether the peculiar swing and rhythm of his melodies is a vague recollection of Africa or the offspring of his civilization, it is distinctive in musical history.

The African is also a natural story-teller. He tells a fable with as much point as Æsop, and with far more humor. He hits at folly, and laughs at his victim as the arrow flies. Perhaps his wit is more complete because he knows his limits and is content to talk of what he understands. He never goes abroad

for victims, but finds them at his fireside. That the friend who is hit laughs the most proves that the best wit is genial.

Observe how different are the falsehoods of Bridget from those of the African. The daughter of Erin lies because she thinks it to her advantage. She may desire to conciliate, to conceal, to cajole, to shirk, it may be cowardice or kindness, but she means to benefit herself, if only in your good opinion. The African needs no such incentives. He may hope the lie will serve a purpose, but the chances are that he lies simply because he had a good chance and he likes to improve it. A well-devised and well-worked-up lie pleases his very bones. He tells one unblushingly and frankly, and does not mind being detected. He owns up with hearty good will, and admires the "smartness" that sees through him. Every physician knows this little idiosyncrasy of the race, and when he finds one of the babies dying with symptoms of opium-poison he goes to the point at once, and asks how much paregoric was given. A direct question like this makes a short cut, and so saves time. If he asked whether paregoric was given at all, he would meet a quick denial, because the African woman is much too shrewd to "give herself away" in answer to such an obtuse question. And the African will take a great deal of pains with his imaginative efforts. He does not give them to you crude and bald. He is capable of working them up with dramatic effect, and often takes much trouble when his object—when he has one—could be secured by easier methods. He likes to play a *rôle*. In slavery days "George Hart" was content with his father's name on week-days and about the plantation, but his "young miss" was asked to mark his Sunday handkerchief with the more aristocratic name of his owner. On Sunday he wanted the church and the neighborhood to understand that he represented the Lee and not the Hart family. And just so the Northern negro will act his part. I am sure that a certain tall and most valuable colored gentleman of my acquaintance had little reason to complain of the people who paid him,—I can hardly say his employers. He said he had not, and indeed often assured "the madame" that he had no fault to find with his family, and that he told his friends so. He certainly had liberty. He had not merely his "days out," but divers kinds of business, such as his club or his laundress, called him abroad every night, until his mistress made the arrangement with him that he should stay at home the third Monday in every month, so that she could go to her sociable feeling that the house still had a head. One Thursday night this young man was, as usual, out, when a friend called to see him in great haste. The friend, who lived a mile away, had received a telegram from Baltimore intended for Philip, whose present address "was not known to his family in that city." The message brought the news that Philip's mother was very ill, and he must come to her at once. The friend had hurried to tell Philip, and was a good deal worried at not finding him. He had, however, shown his prudence by leaving the telegram at home, "because," as he said, "if I had found Philip I could have told him its contents, but if he goes to my house, as he does nearly every Thursday night, the family might have got it mixed." He hurried off, hoping to catch Philip somewhere while it was yet early. A little after ten o'clock Philip came home. He went directly to the kitchen, and, gently whistling, busied himself about the work of getting ready for the night.

There never was a man more stunned by bad news, and never a more considerate servant. He borrowed a latch-key, and at once went to his friend's house. When at midnight he returned, he had seen the telegram, had secured a time-table, had engaged a competent woman to take his place, and was cheerfully

melancholy after the manner of an undertaker. He felt his personal sorrow and his personal importance. Early in the morning Philip was up, and he left shining silver and well-blacked grates when he departed. But when he reached Baltimore he was too late, and he saw crape flying at the door as he approached the house. There was, however, a mistake in the telegram, the sick woman having been his grandmother. "Still," as he plaintively said, with tears in his eyes, "she brought us up, my sister and me, and she was like my mother to me." She had died with Philip's name on her lips. She asked again and again for him, and when his sister arrived from Washington, a few hours before her death, it only increased her desire to see "her boy." The old lady had been a property-holder, and she left Philip two small houses in Baltimore. Naturally, Philip thought of her no little after his return from her funeral, and he told his mistress many touching stories of her goodness to him when he was a child.

The point of this story? Simply this: Philip had no grandmother, he had received no telegram, he had been heir to no property. He had not been to Baltimore. The one grain of truth in the whole performance was that he had gone to a funeral out of town. Now, what induced these two men to concoct such a tale and act such a farce? Philip knew he could have readily obtained permission to go to the funeral, especially as he provided a competent substitute. It was simply the African's love of playing a part. He invented his little domestic tragedy, posed in it, and gratified his inherent dramatic instinct. He left no detail unfinished, and manufactured no improbabilities. He was the devoted and grateful son receiving his reward, mourning his benefactor. In my brief intercourse with Philip he was rich in similar inventions. He went to the sea-shore for a day, and came back full of delight, but said he could not understand why he had never been before. In the whole story he told of the day's adventures he did not interpolate a word of truth; and as for his never having seen the sea, he had been a waiter at Long Branch for five summers. But in all these tales there was a fine consistency. His inventions were never malicious, and he always posed as an innocent, appreciative hero. He told the neighbors that he had lived with the family fifteen years, and much credit did he give them for their kindness to him: they had been as good to him as had his grandmother!

Neither the Anglo-Saxon nor the Latin would take an equal delight with the African in such deceptions. The African is like a child. It is not enough for him to invent, he also wants to play his inventions. They are so purely acts of the imagination that he does not feel that morality is involved, and he does not care if he is detected. He is the actor, you the audience; if you think him in earnest he is proved a good player.

In Dumas we can see just such race-characteristics,—his fertility in plots, his daring yet possible situations. "Two and two," he cries, "make five!" and in a brilliant stroke he shows you the five. Do you doubt it? The proof rests with you. Is not that a figure five? Is it a three, a four? do you call it a *ten*? Of what use is it to say that of course you do call it ten? he only laughs the more. That he used other men's brains and wore the laurels himself is just what would have delighted James to do. It is not enough to do a good thing, to tell a good tale, to bamboozle an audience, unless one has a title-*rôle*.

With this pronounced personality, this originality, with such quickness to see and readiness to tell, with such intense power in living his own life, why should not this man, who has suffered so much, who is so easy to amuse, so full

of his own resources, and who is yet undeveloped, why should he not some day soon tell a story that shall interest, amuse us, stir our hearts, and make a new epoch in our literature?

Yet farther: I have used the generic masculine pronoun because it is convenient; but Fate keeps revenges in store. It was a woman who, taking the wrongs of the African as her theme, wrote the novel that awakened the world to their reality, and why should not the coming novelist be a woman as well as an African? She—the woman of that race—has some claims on Fate which are not yet paid up.

“ANGRY? He is frantic,—he is mad.” This is an answer which I remember hearing years ago to a question as to a person’s state of wrath; and the phrase aptly describes the attitude which many lovers of Goethe’s great drama assumed when the Lyceum version of “Faust” first revealed “the nakedness of its *cui bono*,” etc. There is, to be sure, a very sufficient and to the manager a very satisfying answer to the question, *Cui bono?* but it is no answer to those who feel, justly, I think, that the German poet’s work has been poorly dealt with. Englishmen’s notions about “Faust” as a stage-play in German are apt to be a little vague; so clever a man as Mr. Gilbert, to judge from his preface to “Gretchen,” seemed unaware that the drama was in its stage form a most telling piece; and Mr. Irving seems to have thought it out of the question to secure popularity for a play in English following the lines of the German acting versions. Popularity, as has been hinted, has certainly been secured and passed for the present to an unexampled degree for the curious hotch-potch presented as an adaptation of Goethe. It is, however, really “Mr. Irving and a panorama” that make the success; and certainly both acquit themselves admirably. As for Mr. Wills, it cannot be assumed that if he had dealt with the Faust legend, or with the Gretchen episode in Goethe’s drama, after his own fashion, he would have succeeded where Mr. Gilbert failed. What he has done is to take, as it were, a witches’ caldron and shred into it bits of the old legend, and of Goethe, and of Barbier and Carré, Gounod’s librettists, and of Mr. Wills. So much, however, has been said in various quarters as to Mr. Wills’s sins of commission and omission that it is scarcely necessary to dwell upon the structure or the wording of the piece. I may, however, briefly refer to one among many remarkable efforts in criticism which its production called forth. This is an article in the *Fortnightly Review* for January last, by Mr. W. L. Courtney (not to be confounded, as an English paper has confounded him, with Mr. Leonard Courtney). Mr. W. L. Courtney has made some remarkable discoveries,—that Mr. Wills’s added scene in the garden belonging to the house of Gretchen’s mother is an improvement on Goethe; that the cathedral scene, taken straight from Barbier and Carré, who here put Mephistopheles in the place of Goethe’s Evil Spirit, is also not only an improvement but a novelty; that Mr. Irving’s limp as Mephistopheles is an invention of Mr. Irving’s; and that “there remains, however, the doubt whether Mephistopheles ought ever to be seen by the naked eye.” On this amazing suggestion Mr. Courtney may well be left doubting.

The staging and acting of the Lyceum “Faust,” apart from its writing, are full of varied interest. There is to me, as to many, a disappointment in the fact that Miss Ellen Terry has a part which does not show her undoubted genius to advantage. How much of her comparative failure is due to the character itself, and how much to the ill-written and inconsequent lines given to it by Mr. Wills,

cannot well be determined. The worst part of Miss Terry's acting is found in the earlier scenes, the better in the concluding ones, notably in some passages of the prison scene, where, however, she makes an odd mistake by leaning on the prison wall, and thus accentuating the fact that it is a back-cloth which quivers at her touch. Since the first production of the piece the part of Faust has changed hands. Mr. Conway seems to have made little of it on the first night. I saw him a few nights later, and thought he gave a fine, manly rendering of what in the Lyceum play is a poor transcript of Gounod's tenor with an incongruous touch from Goethe thrown in here and there. The part is, in fact, one for an actor who has, like Mr. Conway, a fine juvenile presence and has also, not like him, an indifference to thinking out a character as a whole,—a feat which with Mr. Wills's Faust is impossible. Mr. Alexander fills the part creditably and prettily on the lines just indicated. He had previously done better in the one scene for Valentine,—a scene so strong and simple that thinking on the actor's part is not wanted. Then his talent for interpreting with skill and force words which explain themselves stood him in good stead. The same scene is now played with equal effect, if with less refinement (which in the case of Valentine is not demanded), by Mr. Tyars. Mrs. Stirling plays Martha, and Mr. T. Mead appears as one of the weird figures in the Brocken scene. Both performances are in striking contrast to the efforts of more modern histrions who have never "been through the mill," and whose manifest deficiencies are fostered by the long-run system,—a system which, after all, has so completely deprived the young actor in England of any real chance of learning his business that he is less to blame for his shortcomings than one might think at first sight. Mrs. Stirling makes Martha needlessly old; but if she chose to make up the part as Judy her true and accomplished art would still command admiration. Miss L. Payne, an actress of singular merit, whose Maria in "Twelfth Night" was a model performance, has little to do, and does it very well, as the leader of the mocking girls who cote Margaret at the well.

But, as has been indicated, the interest of the acting centres in Mephistopheles; and here the actor's genius triumphs over the adapter's blunders. It had been so often said that Mephistopheles was *the* part for Mr. Irving that expectation might well have distanced performance. There is, however, no disappointment. The player has seized the complex nature which Mephistopheles must show to an audience,—the fiend answering Faust's summons in a spirit part obedience, part contempt, and part humorous anticipation; the fiend playing with the young scholar who comes to visit Faust, bored with his own assumption of a character, and repeating to the pupil with innate devilry the words, "*Eritis sicut Deus scientis bonum et malum*," the fiend masquing as a gay, cynical cavalier; and the fiend revealing himself, when stirred to do so, in all his hellish majesty. Mr. Irving's true perception of the last-named phase exalts an extraordinarily inappropriate and bombastic speech of threat devised by Mr. Wills so that while he speaks the lines you forget their silliness in the power of his acting. So again in the scene containing the duel, where Mr. Irving's very artistic delivery of the serenade should not be passed over without high praise, the player's resources carry him capitally through the jerky lines provided for him; and yet again in the Brocken scene, which, picturesque and haunting as it is, is practically dumb show, the scarlet figure towering over the gray spectres and demons has a singular and diabolical dignity. Perhaps nothing in Mr. Irving's performance is better in itself than his giving of the three words "Hither to me,"

which ought to end the play. Unluckily, and very likely in prudent deference to a vitiated taste, these words are followed by a variation upon the operatic apotheosis of Margaret, in which for once the mechanical part of the staging is at fault, inasmuch as the irons that support the angels are blatantly visible. This and other things of a like kind in the Lyceum "Faust" must the true lover of the drama deplore; but he will find very much to console him in Mr. Irving's Mephistopheles.

I HAVE neither inclination nor opportunity to discuss at length the question why Atlanta, Georgia, or Murfreesborough, Tennessee, fills more exactly than New York Mr. W. H. Babcock's ideal of a literary capital; but I can spare time to thank him for his interesting, entertaining, and instructive essay on "Song-Games and Myth-Dramas at Washington" in the March *Lippincott*. The abundant talk about the "Literary Centre of the United States"—I believe the phrase was first used by Mr. Stedman, in the *Galaxy*, nearly a score of years ago—is not a little like the inquiries concerning the coming of the Great American Novel which were very prevalent a quarter of a century ago, and which have ceased to trouble now that we have half a dozen novelists able to hold their own with the best that "the effete monarchies of despotic Europe" have to offer. These arid and interminable discussions are far less profitable and far less significant of our literary maturity than the recent awakening of interest in American folk-lore. "Uncle Remus," Mr. Newell, Dr. Brinton, and the Bureau of Ethnology have revealed to us that here in almost the newest country in the world there was no dearth of the traditional tales brought over in the original packet in the *Mayflower*, perhaps when she made her most famous voyage, and perhaps in some of her later and less-known passages, when she carried a cargo of that most valuable live-freight known as "Black Ivory." It is a curious proof of the tenacity of tradition and of the continuity of learning got by word of mouth that the songs of the little children in the streets of Edinburgh are not unlike those to be heard in the streets of New York, and that little voices are carolling variants of the same rhymes in San Francisco and in Melbourne. Mr. Babcock's contribution to our knowledge of the substantial identity and superficial modification of these children's song-games and primitive music-dramas is most welcome; and it seems to me that it is the duty of any one who can to supplement or amend the information thus placed on record as soon as possible. So I haste me forward with two very slight and unimportant notes,—if indeed any detail, however insignificant it may seem, is really unimportant in a study where so much depends on the collection and verification of an immense mass of trifling variations.

Mr. Babcock quotes,—

I lost my handkerchief Saturday night,
And found it Sunday morning.
Lost! Lost! Lost!

and tells us that in another form the chant is,—

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Katy Gray found it.
Lost! Lost! Lost!

Without a comparison of the tunes to which these words are sung, it is of course impossible to speak with certainty,—if indeed one may ever speak with certainty

about any question of folk-lore,—but I think the *Lucy Locket* lines are not another form of the *Lost Handkerchief* song, however much the two may now have commingled. The *Lost Handkerchief* game, with its refrain, is one thing, and the *Lucy Locket* song is another; and one may perhaps venture a suggestion that it was the recurrence of the word “lost” in the *Lucy Locket* song which led to the addition of the triple refrain

Lost! Lost! Lost!

and the adoption of the rhyme as a variety of the *Handkerchief* game. Mr. Babcock gives yet another variation:

Lady Locket lost her pocket,
Lady Fisher found it,
And every night she went to bed
And dreamt her cows were drowned.
Lost! Lost! Lost!

Here Mr. Babcock gets nearer to the original form of the stanza; for, as it happens, the origin of “*Lucy Locket*” is well known. It is contemporary with the “*Beggar’s Opera*,” which made Gay rich and Rich gay, and it is one quatrain of a song dashed off to record the facts of a quarrel between two young ladies of accommodating morals who took part in that enchanting *Newgate* pastoral. This quatrain is to the effect that

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Kitty Fisher found it.
There was not a penny in it,
But the binding round it.

Oddly enough, while the rest of the song is forgotten, while the fascinating and quarrelsome *Lucy* and *Kitty* have gone the way of all flesh, while the dust lies thick on *Gay’s* opera, seen now only on the shelves of a library and never on the boards of a theatre, this unpretending little quatrain has come down to us here in America. More oddly still, the tune to which it was sung is perhaps the best known of all the airs which the American boy whistles from *Washington’s* Birthday to the Fourth of July; for it is the tune to which we sing the rambling verses of “*Yankee Doodle*.” There is no doubt, I believe, that when the scoffing British were trying to fit the words of the scoffing ballad of “*Yankee Doodle*” to a tune, they ended by taking the air of “*Lucy Locket*.” The original words and music are preserved for the use of the carefully-tended denizens of English nurseries in Mr. *Walter Crane’s* “*Baby’s Opera*.” The American boy whistles the tune by instinct, apparently, but it is the same tune for all that.

The other note that I wish to tag to Mr. Babcock’s valuable paper is only a little counting-out rhyme. It is a variant of his

William T. Trinity
Was a good waterman.
He had hens
And kept them in pens.
Some laid eggs, and some laid none.
Whitefoot, specklefoot, trip and begone;

and it comes from no farther away from *Washington* than *Petersburg*, *Virginia*:

William, a trumpeter,
 He's a good fisherman,
 Catches his hens
 And puts them in pens.
 Some lay eggs
 And some lay none.
 Wire, brier, limber lock,
 Set and single, twelve o'clock.
 O, U, T, out,
 With your rotten dish-clout.

AFTER reading H. E. W.'s proposal for a "new society" in the March number of *Lippincott's*, I feel like responding, in scriptural paraphrase, "Thou dost not reason wisely concerning this."

No man likes in cold blood to write himself down a poet, any more than to declare himself a genius or a man of piety; and for the same reason. Yet, at the risk of seeming to arrogate to myself more than is due, I am moved to disclaim on behalf of some at least of the poetizing fraternity the distressingly helpless character which he puts upon us. Perhaps the loss of several hundred hard-earned dollars on two volumes of verse may entitle me to that amount of vain-glory and peacock-spreading. Probably he will consider this admission of financial loss a point in favor of his argument, and I am quite willing to let him have it so. But the point which I wish to make is that I do not yet feel any distressing need to be "preserved" (or pickled either) by "men of wealth" who take "satisfaction in connecting a poet with their establishment." If I thought myself "erratic, visionary, often irrational, without executive faculties, and too sensitive to endure," my first request would be to be put under a glass case and kept out of harm's way. If I were conscious of being "an unhappy man who conceals deep tortures," I should call in a first-class physician and take the worst prescription he could give me. Of course the ready answer is that I am not a poet. Granted, if you like; but I suppose H. E. W. will admit that Dr. Holmes is a poet, that Messrs. Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Whitman, Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, and Matthew Arnold are or were poets. Does he seriously think that his definition or description will fit any one of them?

The fact is, he must go back to those much-belauded past ages of patronage to find any considerable number of such specimens. Here and there even yet some unhappy accident of physical constitution or some abnormal pressure of circumstances may produce such a picture as James Thompson living and dying in the City of Dreadful Night; but he stands almost alone among men of note in recent years. The Chattertons and Marlowes for the most part lie a long way behind us; and so too do the overdrinking poets, like Burns, and those whose egotistic or humanitarian excitement hurried them into untimely graves. Of late years most poets worthy of much consideration *have* been, at least to a moderate degree, business-men, men of executive abilities, men of horse sense. They live longer than any other class, and have a better time while they do live. They are not in the least danger of playing the dodo with us.

Where shall we locate this poetical golden age to whose hearse our society advocate would play chief mourner? Did begging Homer have any acquaintance with it? or snubbed and barely-tolerated Dante? Did Milton's verses enable him to roll in wealth? or Cowper's success give a silver lining to the cloud of that fancied unpardonable sin? One might run on with a long list, but that sort of

thing is unnecessary and unprofitable. The truth seems to be that there never was a better time than the present for the makers of "meritorious verse," excepting perhaps the early part of this century, when political ferments the world over had stimulated an excessive demand for everything emotional and common schools and newspapers had not yet made the supply vastly greater still. The enormous development of prose fiction and popular science must be credited, too, with drawing public attention powerfully from the poets. But all this is recent, and probably incident to a transitional period. What is best will endure. And I have no doubt at all that even at the present moment any very powerful and original poem would quickly meet with a degree of fame and success which ought to be reward enough, even if, as in the case of the "Leaves of Grass," there were inherent obstacles to its being bought by the general public.

In truth, the fault is more in the poets themselves than in the public. We do not get the powerful work; and why should they expect to win either reputation or money enough to live on out of merely meritorious verse, when so many can produce it? I think it was Goethe that Carlyle had in mind when he said in substance that for the life of him he could not see wherein poetic ability differed from any other kind of ability. My answer would be that it involves a certain nervous susceptibility also. But the susceptibility is not the main ingredient by any means. It never becomes so except in the lowest order of poets or those who are enfeebled by bad habits or disease. The great poets have shown again and again that they could be great in other lines as well. For example, take the monumental German just mentioned,—statesman, philosopher, scientist, novelist, *and* poet; or Milton toiling in the harness of responsible office and patriotically writing himself blind over controversial prose works. Dropping to lower levels, it is likely that Keble did as well in his see as another although he wrote "The Christian Year;" we are told that Emerson "kept one eye on 'Parnassus' and the other on 'Change;'" Thoreau made the best pencils going, could turn his hand to any one of half a dozen trades, and died "with nothing to regret;" and Dr. Weir Mitchell is not accounted a professional failure because of sweet, simple poetry like "The Quaker Burial-Ground." It may be a hard saying, but I am inclined to agree with the brutal individual who announced that "a man who can do nothing but write verses will never write any worth reading."

We are told, "The poet asks only that he may live by the exercise of the high faculties with which he is endowed,"—as poet, I suppose. Well, let him, if he can; and if he cannot, let him do what is much better,—live by the exercise of something else. Would it be well for any man to keep grinding away on verses constantly? I think not. Irritability becomes more irritable by irritation,—if I may put a word through its paces for the sake of emphasis. Nervous susceptibility is the rarest of servants, but a terrible master. It may be that many a man is kept out of a wretched condition by being compelled to grapple with the practical side of life. An excellent partial substitute may be found in Wordsworthian or Tennysonian rambles, for Ben Jonson was quite right when he said that nature was "the poet's matter;" but men need to be brought into contact—even painful contact, if you will—with their fellow-men also.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1886.

*TAKEN BY SIEGE.**

CHAPTER VIII.

YOU may be sure that Rush Hurlstone was not slow to accept the invitation of Helen Knowlton to "drop in some evening." As she had requested, he took his banjo with him ; and to say that he enjoyed his privilege is not doing justice to his sensations. There is no denying that Rush was a very attractive fellow. He was a gentleman by birth and instinct ; he was bright, and could be very amusing. He was so much younger than Helen that Aunt Rebecca regarded him as "perfectly safe," and Helen never thought of him as anything more than an agreeable boy,—enthusiastic, and enough of a musician to be sympathetic. His ear for music was quite remarkable. Of notes he knew little, but he could catch an air and play it on the piano after a few hearings. Helen Knowlton, whose outward life was necessarily more or less artificial and constrained, found this young fellow a pleasant change from the men of fashion and of the stage by whom she was usually surrounded. By the people of the stage she was surrounded only at the opera-house, to be sure, but she saw enough of them to have a pretty poor opinion of their manhood, the tenor's in particular. Indeed, she quite shared the opinion of a big-voiced basso I once knew, who, on being asked if he didn't think a certain tenor was a pretty good fellow, replied, "Yes, as good a fellow as a man can be who sings in that clef." No, the average tenor is not a very noble animal. He is as whimsical as a woman, and a very whimsical woman at that, and vain beyond

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words. I don't say that there are no exceptions to this rule, but, if there are, they have not come under my observation. I am sorry to say that Rush occasionally dropped into song, but he sang very unprofessionally, and his voice was a barytone. He was on such friendly relations with Helen and her aunt that one evening, when he wanted to show them how a certain Creole song went which he had picked up from a young Louisianian at college, he played the strange accompaniment on the piano and sang the song. Helen was delighted with his voice as well as with the song, and she thought his style, uncultivated as it was, very fascinating. She complimented him so judiciously that he was led on to sing often, and she offered to teach him some odd Scandinavian songs she had brought home from Europe with her. So it will be seen that their evenings were passed very pleasantly. Aunt Rebecca did not like her niece to be dragged too deep into the social whirlpool; she thought that her professional life was exciting enough, and, unless Helen had some invitation she could not well refuse, she liked her to pass a quiet evening at home. She looked upon Rush as a godsend, for he was interesting enough to keep Helen from being bored by herself, and as he was so young and without fortune he did not come into line with possible suitors for her niece's hand. Rush was very well satisfied with this arrangement, for it put him upon a very friendly footing. Helen would see him when she would not see men whom she regarded with more favor in a certain way, for she did not feel that she had to put herself out to entertain him. When West Hastings referred to Rush's rather intimate footing in the family, she replied that he was "only a boy," and seemed to be very much amused that this man of the world should regard him with the slightest feeling of jealousy.

"Boys are often more dangerous than they seem to be," he replied, with a slight scowl; for nothing annoyed him more than to be laughed at, no matter how gentle the laugh.

As for Helen, she soon forgot the conversation. She liked Rush as a companion,—“a nice young brother,” was the way she put it. Rush did not regard Helen with so Platonic an affection. He fell more deeply in love with her every time he met her, and he was very much afraid that he would betray himself. Such a thing as that, he knew, would be fatal. So he waited as patiently as he could.

“Constant dropping wears away a stone,” he said to himself. “I shall hang on and keep up my spirits as best I may. In the mean time, I shall work for money and position as no man ever worked before; and my time will come.” Archie Tillinghast, who could not but notice Rush's devotion to Helen, said to him one day, “Rush, old man, I hate to see you playing tame cat to a prima donna.”

Rush replied with a fierceness that must have proved to his friend that if there was anything of the cat in his disposition it certainly was not of the tame species. "If another man had said that to me, I would have made him measure his length on the sidewalk. But I will take a good deal from you, Archie. No more of this, however."

"As you like, dear boy," returned Archie; "but I think you are cut out for something better than to stand around with a hundred other men and burn incense before a public singer."

"Your words are no doubt well meant, Archie, but they are uncalled for. I am content to be one of a hundred now; there is no reason I should not be; but I may outstand the ninety-and-nine, and be swinging my censer all alone some day," he said, laughingly; and, putting his arm through Archie's, they continued their walk in peace and quietness.

Archie made up his mind to say no more upon the subject, no matter what he might think. "As well try to sweep the cobwebs out of the sky with a whisk-broom as to open a man's eyes when he is in this condition," he said to himself.

Rush was not always content with himself or with his position. There were times when he resented being treated as a boy. One night in particular he was in a lamentable state of mind. He had gone to the Academy with Helen and her aunt, and, naturally, expected to take them home; but West Hastings came behind the scenes with Uncle Lightfoot Myers, Mrs. Dick Griswold, and a lot of other people to congratulate the prima donna on a brilliant evening's work, and invited the whole party to supper at Delmonico's. Helen, who thought that Rush had brought her to the theatre to accommodate her rather than for any pleasure to himself, believed that he would be glad of the release, and said, in her politest tones, "I won't trouble you to take me home, Mr. Hurlstone. Mr. Hastings and these good friends have kindly volunteered their services. It was very good of you to bring me. Good-night," she added, putting out her hand. He bowed over it, but said nothing as he turned to go. "Stay, one moment," said Helen, taking up one of the dozen bouquets that had been thrown to her. It was of red roses: they were not so common then as they are to-day. West Hastings had sent it. He always sent the same, for he liked to hear people say, as it fell upon the stage, "That is from West Hastings: he always sends those big red roses."

"Mr. Hurlstone, don't you want a rose?" And, choosing the finest one from the bunch, she fastened it in his button-hole.

"Thank you," he said, rather stiffly, as he bowed himself out. He would have felt better in his mind if he had seen the expression of

annoyance that passed over West Hastings's face and known the cause. But he didn't, and he went out across the dimly-lighted stage in a most unenviable frame of mind.

"Am I a tame cat, after all?" he asked himself, bitterly. "Shall I allow her to kick me out of her way, and then come purring back and be happy again to rub up against her garments? What an idiot I am! This sort of thing will drive all the manhood out of me. I had better take to the wilds and chop wood to the end of my days. That at least would be a manly vocation. I'll never see her again. I'll forget all that has been so pleasant, and buckle down to work. I'll win fame and fortune, and then she will see what she has lost."

And he pictured scenes of future greatness, where he stood conspicuously in the foreground receiving the homage of the crowd (for what, he had not quite made up his mind), while in the background Helen Knowlton looked on and sighed, and said to herself, "Ah me! what might have been!" He found himself gazing (with his mind's eye) more intently at the background, where he pictured Helen, than at the foreground, where he pictured himself. Poor boy! he really suffered tortures. Just at that moment life did not seem worth living. He had been walking aimlessly along as these thoughts had been flying through his brain, and he did not notice where he was until the awning across the sidewalk (it was a cloudy night) reminded him that he was in front of Delmonico's.

He almost recoiled. "If she saw me she would think I was following her," he muttered. The thought hardly passed through his mind when he heard his name called, and, turning, he saw Bessie Archer, her father, and Archie Tillinghast alighting from a carriage drawn up at the curb.

"We are just going into Del's to have a bird: won't you come with us? I'm sure Uncle Archer and Cousin Bessie will be delighted," said Archie, pulling him gently by the arm. Mr. and Miss Archer added that nothing would give them greater pleasure, and they said it with so much sincerity that Rush accepted the invitation. Their cordiality was not his only reason for accepting. He hoped, poor boy, that Helen would see him there, and with another woman! It was quite late, and there were not more than half a dozen people in the restaurant. The birds, however, had barely been served when a feminine rustling was heard in the door-way, and a voice that brought the blood to Rush's cheeks and set his heart to beating like a trip-hammer said, "I feel too tired to climb a flight of stairs; let us have supper in here: it is late, and every one has gone." She didn't see the little party. It was just out of her range from the door. So they came, and were waved to

their seats by the dignified François, whom Rush had mistaken for Delmonico the first time he visited the place.

"Why, there is Bessie Archer," said Helen, bowing and smiling, and bowing and smiling again as she recognized Rush and the others. Rush had hit upon a plan of action. He was going to make Helen see that he could be happy with another woman (she had never for a moment doubted it), and he laid himself out to be agreeable to Bessie. For her part, Bessie was very much predisposed in his favor, and was not at all averse to his attentions. When her health was proposed by Archie, Rush drank to her with his eyes as well as with his lips, and he took a sly glance to see if Helen was looking. She wasn't, as it happened: she was listening very attentively to something that West Hastings was saying. At last Rush felt her eyes turned in his direction, and he played his ace of trumps: he took the rose she had given him from his button-hole and presented it to Bessie in his most impressive manner, and Bessie tucked it in the folds of her hair. Helen saw all this, and she said to herself, "Why, the dear boy is in love with Bessie Archer. He couldn't do better; for she is a great catch and a very lovely girl." But down in her heart she felt a little pang at losing so devoted and pleasant a friend as Rush had been; for if he became engaged to Bessie their little evenings would come to an end. However, she would not be selfish, and he might count on her as a friend to further his suit.

CHAPTER IX.

RUSH was working very hard at the office of *The Dawn*. During his first acquaintance with Helen Knowlton he had written special articles, for which he was paid so much a column, but now he was taken regularly upon the staff of the paper, on a salary of thirty dollars a week. He was in no special department, but acted in the capacity of "general utility man," which gave him just the experience that he most needed. He worked in the city department, edited telegraph "copy," and wrote occasional editorials, so that his nights were pretty well occupied, and he could not have renewed his evenings at Helen's had he been so inclined. He was trying to drive her out of his mind; but he found that simply impossible.

To refrain from calling at her house was much easier; yet he did not accomplish even that sacrifice very successfully. When he left the office of *The Dawn* at half-past one or two o'clock in the morning, he walked up to Twentieth Street and passed with lingering footsteps under her

window; but he had not called upon her since the night his pride had been so wounded by what he took to be her desire to rid herself of his company. He had called at the Archers', however. It came naturally in his way to do so. Sometimes he dropped in of an afternoon with Archie, and sometimes by special invitation of Bessie, who liked to talk over with him the things she was just then interested in. Buddhism was at this time attracting her attention, and, as Rush was much more liberal-minded than Archie, she enjoyed discussing this Oriental religion with him. Rush really cared little more for it than did Archie, but it was something to divert his mind. Had he dreamt for a moment what a hold it was getting upon Bessie, he would have politely but firmly declined to discuss the subject. He supposed that she took it up as he did, as an intellectual amusement; but with her it was a more serious matter. To the intense disgust of Archie, she renewed her acquaintance with Madame Parapoff, and continued to attend her *séances*. She did not ask Archie to accompany her any more, for she knew that he would try to argue her out of going, and, as she had made up her mind to go, the argument could only have ended unpleasantly. She got hold of a young married woman with a taste for the unnatural, and the two visited the very remote and dingy apartments of the High-Priestess of Buddha and listened to her twaddle with credulous ears.

As Archie was really in love with Bessie, I should explain that she was not his cousin, nor any blood relation to him: had she been, I should have taken no interest in his sentiment for her. She was Mrs. Archer's daughter, but she had been adopted, when she was five years old, by Mr. Archer, when he married her widowed mother. Archie had been brought up to regard her as his own cousin, but his feeling towards her had been of a warmer than cousinly nature for a good many years. She liked him more in the cousinly way, and always turned the conversation with a skilful stroke when she thought he was going to express other than the sentiments of a cousin towards her. Since her devotion to Buddha there had been a little coolness between them. He could not tolerate any such nonsense, and the thought of the class of people to whom Bessie was turning for esoteric information almost maddened him. Buddhism was only another name for spiritualism, he argued. The latter was a burned-out volcano from which its devotees were trying to throw out imitation lava to deceive the credulous. That Bessie Archer should be one of the deceived he considered a degrading thing. "Let the vicious and the vulgar run after such absurdities, if they will, but heaven forbid that a refined young lady should find any attractions in this tomfoolery!" was his reflection.

"My dear Bessie," he said to her, "if this Parapoff was what you

say, she would be sitting in a golden temple, dealing out her words of wisdom at a thousand dollars a word. There is nothing that men would better like to know than what the future has in store for them. If they believed that they could be informed with truth, they would pay any amount of money; for it would save them countless sums. People are credulous enough, in all conscience, and if they had the slightest encouragement to believe in these soothsayers they would patronize them to an extent that would make theirs the most profitable profession in the world rather than the most ill-paid. They would be living in palaces instead of in dirty rooms on back streets, and their patrons would be the rich and great rather than poor deluded servant-girls."

"But they are not all 'poor deluded servant-girls' who consult Madame Parapoff. Some very intelligent men and women visit her rooms,—among them your cousin Bessie Archer, who does not put herself in the class you mention."

"With the deluded, dear child, but not with the servant-girls. You can't show me an intelligent man or woman who seriously consults Madame Parapoff. The very fact that one consults her disproves his intelligence."

"You are so prejudiced, Archie Tillinghast, that if Madame Parapoff predicted something to you, and it came true, you would say it was all chance," exclaimed Bessie, indignantly.

"I am quite sure I should, Bessie; and I am equally sure that it would be," replied Archie.

"You are a very unsympathetic and narrow-minded young man," said Bessie, rising to leave the room, "and I shall never again speak to you on this subject. I find Mr. Hurlstone much more liberal."

"I am sorry to hear that: I had thought better of Hurlstone." And Archie opened the door for his cousin to pass out of the room. He was genuinely distressed; and well he might be,—for when a crotchet of this sort takes possession of an idle person's brain it is hard to uproot it. He felt sure that Bessie would become thoroughly disgusted in time, but when? He wondered if it could be possible that Rush was encouraging her in this nonsense. No, he could not believe that; but it began to dawn upon his mind that Rush might have taken his advice about the prima donna (he hadn't seen him with her of late) and been devoting himself to Bessie. He turned pale at the thought, for it was plain that Bessie liked him. Why hadn't he let his friend go on dancing attendance upon the singer? Why should he have interfered? It was just like him,—always standing in his own light.

The drawing-room door opened, and he heard Rush's voice saying to the butler, "Tell Miss Archer that I am here, James: she is expect-

ing me." Then, upon seeing Archie, "Ah, you here, Archie? glad to see you. I've called to take Miss Archer to see some pictures at Goupil's: won't you go along?"

"No, thanks," replied Archie, somewhat coolly; "I've an engagement down-town, and must say good-by;" which he did without loss of time. As Rush stood looking out of the window, he noticed that Archie turned up- instead of down-town, but he thought nothing of it, except that his friend had probably changed his mind. That he should have regarded him as a rival in the affections of Bessie Archer never occurred to him. In the first place, he did not suspect the state of Archie's feelings towards Bessie; and in the second, he supposed that Archie was thoroughly aware of his devotion to Helen Knowlton.

Rush was not altogether happy this afternoon. It was a whole fortnight since he had spoken a word to Helen. He had seen her in the mean time in an old-curiosity-shop in Broadway, accompanied by her aunt and West Hastings, and she seemed to be buying furniture. What did this mean? Were they actually engaged, and making preparations for housekeeping? No, they were not; it was nothing so serious as that. West Hastings was refurnishing the dining-room in his bachelor quarters. The craze for old furniture was just then at its beginning, and he had asked Helen and her aunt to accompany him to this shop to look at an old French sideboard he thought of buying. Helen had excellent taste, and she sealed the fate of the sideboard by pronouncing it a beauty.

This episode, as Rush interpreted it, was depressing enough of itself; but added to this he had received a long and desponding letter from his mother, telling him of the Mutual Dividend Mining Company, of Colonel Mortimer's connection with it, and of the offer he had made to John. "Do see John as often as you can, Rush dear, and keep him under your eye. You know how I dread the influence of Colonel Mortimer. He is a bad, unprincipled man, and dear John is so easy-going that he doesn't believe there is any harm in him."

John must have been in town for a week at least, and he had not yet made himself known to Rush. By chance, however, the brothers met. Rush was sent to report a masked ball at the Academy of Music, —a thing he felt utterly unfit to do. "I was never at a masked ball in my life," he told the city editor.

"So much the better," replied the editor. "You will give us fresh views of a hackneyed subject. I quite envy you your new sensations. Get your copy in as early as possible, and good luck to you."

Rush was about the first person to arrive at the ball, and the Academy looked gloomy enough. He had been told that the festivities did

not begin until late, so he arrived at nine o'clock, thinking that that would be about the fashionable hour. There was not a woman in the place, and the only men on hand were the floor-managers. He had plenty of time for reflection before the ball opened, and for the sake of the associations he wandered about behind the scenes. The stage and parquette were boarded over, but the prima donna's room was undisturbed. He looked in and sighed. A perfume of violets lingered on the air, and he sighed again as he recognized it, and then wandered to the front, where a room had been reserved for the press. A large table stood in the centre, furnished with paper, pens, and ink. There were a great many bottles on the table, but they did not all contain ink, or anything that looked like it.

He sat down and took a pen, and thought to improve the time by writing to his mother; but, as he could say nothing about John, he concluded not to. Instead, he wrote "Helen Knowlton" over three or four sheets of foolscap, in every variety of penmanship, and then tore the paper into fine bits. But, still fearful that the name might be discovered, he made a little pile of the scraps and burned them, watching their destruction with an expression of countenance not at all in keeping with the spirit of a masked ball. He shook his head sadly. "A man's hopes may be as easily destroyed as that paper," he said to himself, as he blew the ashes from the table. Then he sauntered out into the lobby.

There he found a very different scene from the one he had left. Men and women were crowding into the place as fast as the man at the wicket could take their tickets. Most of the men were in evening dress, but all the women wore dominoes and masks. There were a few who appeared in fancy-dress, but they were the German members of the society.

Rush was too young and too enthusiastic not to find excitement in the scene, and when the dancing began he thought he had never witnessed anything so brilliant and intoxicating as the movement of these many-colored dominoes to the music of the band. As time wore on, the place became more crowded, and Rush recognized among the men many faces that had become familiar to him at the opera and elsewhere. There was Uncle Lightfoot Myers renewing his youth, with a pink domino on his arm; and there was West Hastings lounging against one of the pillars of the balcony and chaffing a Columbine. Rush wondered what Helen Knowlton would think if she saw her friend thus engaged. His thoughts were broken in upon by a voice at his elbow.

"My handsome young friend," said a blue domino, taking his arm, "why do you pose in this melancholy attitude on so festive an occasion? This is Romeo's, not Hamlet's, night. Let us walk about among the

giddy revellers. I want to see a more cheerful expression upon your young face."

As they walked out into the lobby, Rush racked his brain to recognize the voice or figure of the mask. His expression showed that he was puzzled.

"Ah, you do not recognize me," she said. "How sad that makes me feel! A little disguise, and one's identity is gone. I should have known you through twenty disguises." And she turned her mask up at him in the most bewitching manner.

"Certainly I have never had the pleasure of hearing that voice before,—no man could forget so sweet a thing," said Rush, entering readily into the spirit of the ball. And so they thrust and parried, until his mask spied a spry old man with gray side-whiskers and a bald head, when she dropped Rush's arm as suddenly as she had taken it, and took the other by the hand.

"Dear general, I am so glad to see you! I have been looking for you all the evening, and feared you were not coming."

The general looked pleased, though puzzled; but this was not his first masked ball, and in a few moments Rush saw him moving off in the direction of the supper-room, the blue domino hanging affectionately upon his arm.

Before the night was over, Rush learned much of the ways of masked balls, and came to the conclusion that the blue domino was an entirely new acquaintance of his and of the general's. As he started for the press-room, he met his city editor with a Swiss peasant-girl on his arm. "Hello, Hurlstone," said he. And, stopping a moment, he whispered, "Get your copy down early, and then have your fun. You can write it out here and send it down." And he, too, passed on in the direction of the supper-room.

Rush hardly recognized the press-room when he returned to it. In the first place, he could hardly see across it for the smoke; and in the second, it was so noisy that he did not see how it would be possible to write there. "Hello, here's Hurlstone!" shouted a reporter of a morning paper whom Rush had seen at different places, but had never had occasion to speak to. "Come, fill up your glass and take a cigar," added the reporter, suiting the action to the word; only he took a handful of cigars; one he lighted, the others he put in his pocket. There were a dozen men sitting around the table, some writing, and all smoking. Rush declined both the proffered cigars and the champagne, though he lighted a cigar of his own in self-defence, and sat down in a corner to write. He used his note-book for copy-paper and his knee for a desk, and in the course of an hour he had a crick in his back and a very good

story written out for *The Dawn*. This he despatched. Then he went out into the ball-room to look around for a few minutes, after which he intended to go home to his lodgings. He had not passed half-way through the lobby when he saw Archie Tillinghast standing at the foot of the staircase, with his mask in his hand, gazing earnestly at the hundreds of dominoes who lounged past him or hurried by on mischief bent.

"Why, Archie, what are you doing here? You look as though you were expecting some one. Who is she? come, old fellow!" said Rush, shaking his hand and smiling knowingly.

"I'm looking for my cousin Bessie," replied Archie.

"What!" exclaimed Rush, starting back; "Miss Archer here?"

"Yes; why not? They all come; though they will deny it tomorrow. She is with her father, however, and Helen Knowlton and her aunt. They didn't come as regular participants in the ball, you know; they never do, only to see what sort of a place it is. To do them justice, they are not enjoying themselves very much. There is a sort of excitement about it, however; but when I saw them awhile ago they were just recovering from a fright. A half-tipsy fellow had addressed some coarse compliments to Miss Knowlton, and she was very much alarmed,—more, I fancy, at the idea of being discovered than anything else, for he said, 'I know you, my beauty.' Of course he didn't know her. That's what they all say. She wanted to go home at once, but Bessie didn't. That girl evidently has some mischief in her mind. I tried to find the man, to slap his face, but they couldn't point him out."

"How did you know them, Archie?" asked Rush. He was dying to meet Helen in her disguise, for he thought he would get a mask and say some things to her from its concealment that he wouldn't like to say in open court.

"How did I know them? In the first place, I brought them here, and in the second, they are dressed alike,—black satin dominoes, with a bunch of violets pinned on the left shoulder."

Rush could hardly talk with Archie, he was so impatient to break away and look for Helen in the crowd. At last, after a few common-places, he started in quest. He had not searched long before he was rewarded. There, sitting on one of the seats in the dress circle, he saw the object of his search. There was no mistaking the poise of that head, even had he not recognized the black satin domino and the bunch of violets on the shoulder. She was sitting alone. That was strange. Where were the rest of the party, and why should its most precious treasure be left unguarded? Hastily adjusting the mask he had bor-

rowed from Archie, Rush sat down in a vacant seat next to the domino.

"The beautiful Cinderella sitting alone at the ball," he whispered in her ear. She turned with a start; the eyes of the mask glared up at him. (Why do all eyes look so wicked behind a mask?) In a disguised voice, with just the least tremor of a laugh behind it, she replied, "Cinderella is waiting for her prince, and—he has come."

The boyish heart in the breast of the young man beat high. Did she recognize him? She called him "her prince." How he wished the pumpkin coach were waiting at the door, that he might drive off with her in triumph! They had a pleasant chat, only he felt that he was being chaffed pretty hard at times, and he thought that some of the expressions used by the lady were hardly such as he would expect to hear from Helen's lips. "However," he argued, "one feels freer behind a mask. If she only suspected me, how differently she would speak!"

In the midst of their lively sallies (she would not allow him to be sentimental), he heard an unmistakable voice behind him say, "Don't you think we have had enough of this, aunty?" And, looking around, he saw the fac-simile of the mask by his side, and near her Mr. Archer and another black domino, which he knew was Bessie.

He felt a sinking feeling: he wanted the floor to open and let him through; but it didn't. The resemblance between Aunt Rebecca and Helen was very strong, and, except that the former was a trifle heavier, their figures were much alike. Rush had often remarked the likeness, but he never expected to be caught in this way. Well, there was nothing for it. She evidently did not recognize him; at least so he thought. When Helen spoke about going, he rose to his feet.

"Nay, beautiful mask, why tear yourself away from this festive scene? Take my arm, and let us walk about among the gay revellers and amuse ourselves."

He offered his arm, but Helen drew back affrighted. Aunt Rebecca gave her a reassuring nod over Rush's shoulder. She took the proffered arm, and they strolled into the lobby. But all his glibness of speech had deserted him. He was going to say so much, and could say nothing.

Helen broke the silence by saying, in disguised tones, "You are not a very entertaining cavalier. Why don't you make yourself more agreeable, Mr.— Who shall I say?"

"I am speechless with happiness, fair mask," he replied. "To have so much loveliness so near me dazzles my eyes and paralyzes my tongue. If you only knew 'one-half' my heart would say,' to quote from an old song, you might think better of me."

"I have no doubt you could be very eloquent on any theme you chose; but I am afraid you are a young man of words. You could be just as eloquent to the next mask that came along."

"On the contrary," answered Rush, somewhat loftily, "I would have nothing at all to say to another: my heart is not large enough for two masks."

"I have heard men protest in this way before, but they have forgotten what they said ere the last word left their lips. There was one young man in whom I believed, but even he turned out like all the rest. He professed the greatest friendship for me, visited me at my house, and we passed many pleasant evenings together; but suddenly his visits ceased. Without a word of warning he stopped coming to see me. Our pleasant evenings came to an end. Do you know why? He had formed a pleasanter friendship with another young lady, and I was forgotten."

"You are cruel: I formed no pleasanter friendship; I have never entertained but the one feeling for you since the first time I saw you," said Rush, before he knew what he was doing.

"What do you mean?" asked Helen, in the most innocent manner, knowing perfectly well all the while. "You formed no pleasanter acquaintance! *you* have entertained feelings for me! This is very mysterious. One expects mysteries at masked balls, but I am more than surprised at being spoken to in this way by an unknown mask."

"Then you don't recognize me," said Rush, taking some comfort to himself in the thought that he had not betrayed his identity, after all. By this time they had reached the end of the south lobby, and were just about to retrace their steps, when Rush felt Helen's hand tighten its grasp on his arm. "There is that awful man," she gasped, as a man walking very unsteadily came out of the directors' room, and, seeing Helen, started forward as if he would raise her mask. "Ah, here's my sweet violet," he said, in a thick, uncertain voice; but, before the words had fairly left his tongue, Rush gave him a quick, sharp blow between the eyes and sent him crashing up against the door of the room he had just quitted.

"Oh, Mr. Hurlstone, what have you done?" exclaimed Helen, in trembling tones; "quick, take me to my aunt."

Rush thought her advice good, and at once acted upon it. He was only sorry that he had not taken her to her aunt in the first place, and then come back alone and knocked the insolent fellow into a cocked hat. Fortunately, there happened to be no one at that end of the lobby just at that moment, but he heard people coming, and was dreadfully worried for fear of the annoyance to Helen if she were discovered under such circumstances.

"Come this way," said she, leading him through the little passageway at the back of the lower tier of boxes: "there is a door here that opens on the stage, and we can go around and get to my aunt and Mr. Archer without being noticed. Oh, why did I come to this dreadful place? Aunt Rebecca didn't want me to. If I had only listened to her!"

Rush felt extremely mortified. "I beg your pardon, Miss Knowlton," said he. He had taken off his mask, and they no longer played at mystery. "I should not have struck that fellow with you on my arm; but I am not used to masked balls. I don't know their etiquette. I only knew that you were insulted, and my indignation got the better of my judgment."

"I forgive you, Mr. Hurlstone," she replied; "but I don't forgive myself for coming to such a place. It is a lesson I shall never forget. Here are my friends," she added. And Rush saw the two ladies and Mr. Archer and Archie Tillinghast.

"Aren't you ready to go home yet?" said Bessie. "I think it pretty dull here."

They all agreed to go, and Rush bade them good-night at the door. Helen said nothing about the little episode of the lobby, and he was grateful to her.

After he had seen their carriage drive off, Rush returned to the lobby to see what had become of the man he had knocked down. On the way he saw many curious scenes,—among them the blue domino who had first spoken to him kissing the bald pate of the general. He was glad enough that Helen had gone. When he got around by the directors' room he heard a loud voice proclaiming, "I'd know the damned rascal if I saw him; he took me right between the eyes, before I had time to defend myself, damn him!"

Rush pressed through the crowd. He saw the man he had knocked down standing with his back against the wall, his hair ruffled and his shirt-front pretty well demoralized. A younger man had him by the arm, and was evidently urging him to go home. The young man's back was turned to Rush, and his figure swayed slightly as he tugged at the arm of his companion. Rush stepped up to him. "Is your friend much hurt?" he inquired.

"The colonel's not as hurt as he is mad," answered the young man, turning around slowly, "though he got a pretty hard blow. Served him right: he was too fresh, making up to another man's mask." And the young man steadied himself by the wall as he turned. Rush thought he detected something familiar in the voice, though it was thick with drink; but when the fellow turned around to the light he saw who it was.

"John?"

"Rush?"

And thus the brothers met for the first time in New York.

CHAPTER X.

RUSH's first meeting with his brother in New York was not his last. John gave him his address. He had a gorgeous suite of rooms up-town, where he lodged and took his breakfast. He and the colonel dined at "The Club;" but it was not the sort of club men boast of belonging to. They called it the "Club" because they did not want to call it by its right name. The cooking was excellent, for its patrons were all judges of good eating, and the proprietor knew that to keep them he must cater to their palates as well as to their love of high play. John Hurlstone was a born epicure, and the kitchen of "The Club" was quite as much of a temptation to him as its gaming-tables, though he was pretty lucky at cards, for he had a cool head and a quick eye. Colonel Mortimer won much more money, however. That he was a card-sharper John did not suspect at this time, but he knew very well that he was a professional gambler, and that the Mutual Dividend Mining Company was one of the biggest games he ever played. The offices of this company were in Pine Street, near Broadway, and they were fitted up as luxuriously as "The Club." In the latter establishment Colonel Mortimer was a silent partner. The mining company's offices were furnished in the heaviest black walnut (that wood was the fashion then), and the furniture and partitions were made of the same material and pattern. The company's monogram was carved in the chairs and over the mantel-piece, it was ground in the glass and worked in the door-mat. There was a whole suite of offices,—one outside for the clerks, a private one for Colonel Mortimer, with "President's Room" engraved on the nickel door-plate, another for the "Secretary," John Hurlstone, and a large room, with a long table down the middle flanked by massive chairs, for the "Directors." A portrait of Colonel Mortimer hung over the fireplace, and a map of Colorado, showing the situation of the mine, took up a third of the opposite wall. In a handsome velvet-lined cabinet screwed to the wall between the front windows reposed specimens of the ore sent East by the company's engineer. What rich specimens they were, too! The silver fairly bulged out of them. One shelf of this cabinet was devoted to bricks of solid silver. When Colonel Mortimer got hold of a doubtful investor, he took him in this room and showed him the cabinet.

"There's the stuff, my good sir, and there"—pointing to the map—"is where it comes from. You see that district picked out in blue,—well, that belongs to the Mutual Dividend Mining Company. I am not going to press you to invest; by Jove, I'm not sure we want to sell. With a mine throwing out tons of such ore every day, it's rank nonsense to sell the stock. But I'm a bit of a philanthropist myself, and when I'm making money I want others to make it too. I don't think, however, I'll offer another dollar's worth of that stock. We won't talk mines any longer, but we'll taste some fine old brandy I keep here for just such judges as you. You'll admit that this is as good a glass of cognac as you ever tasted. There! how's that? And here are some choice cigars. (Don't betray me: they're smuggled. A friend of mine, a sea-captain, brings them to me from Havana.) Let us sit here before this genial fire—what is prettier, now, than a soft-coal fire?—and discuss cognac and cigars. They are much more interesting subjects than mining-shares; don't you think so?"

In this way Colonel Mortimer drew the poor flies into his net. They would discuss the cognac and the cigars, and end by begging the colonel, for the old friendship he bore them, to let them put a few thousands into the Mutual Dividend. This they always succeeded in getting him to do, though with great reluctance. I need not say that the colonel confined himself to the cigars rather than to the brandy. He did not object to drinking out of business-hours, but when he was playing for such high stakes he had to keep his wits about him.

Just how much John Hurlstone knew of what was going on I should not like to say. He knew Colonel Mortimer pretty well, and preferred not to ask too many questions. Mortimer paid him a large salary because he was invaluable to him. John was well educated, and wrote a good letter. Mortimer was badly educated, and it was said could just sign his name and nothing more. Indeed, it was further said that he only learned to sign his name by copying it as written out by John Hurlstone in their army days. Certainly his signature was very much like John's writing, and, when signed to a letter that John had written, was in perfect harmony with the rest of the autograph. Not only did Mortimer pay the company's secretary a handsome salary, but he gave him good lump-sums of money besides, which he said were the dividends on the shares he held in John's name. Mortimer could not have got along without John in this mining-company scheme, and he knew it; and he paid him well both to keep him in his service and to prevent his asking questions.

With all this money at hand, you would have supposed that John would send some home to his mother and sisters. Not he. Had they

asked him at a time when he had a roll of bills in his pocket, he would have handed it out to them ; but they asked for nothing, and they got nothing. John was a spendthrift, and, like most spendthrifts, he spent his money on himself. If he spent it upon other people, it was in the way of his own pleasure. He did send handsome presents to Amy Bayliss,—useless things that represented a lot of money but little taste. A tradesman could always sell him an unsalable article by representing it to be something unique and adding that few men would have the taste to appreciate its beauties and pay the price. The consequence was that Amy Bayliss had a collection of costly odds and ends that she could only praise for their costliness and because “dear John” had taken the trouble to send them to her. There were paper-cutters of frosted silver, and jewel-boxes much too fine for her modest dressing-table, and mother-of-pearl card-cases which had long since gone out of fashion ; and every Saturday regularly came a box of cut flowers. These delighted Amy more than anything else.

“Dear John never forgets to send me flowers every Saturday. No matter how busy he may be, he is not too busy to send these lovely roses to me.”

Poor Amy ! The regularity in the coming of the flowers was due to the florist. John gave him an order with instructions to send them “till forbid.” In his extravagant way he had paid for six months in advance. Paying in advance was not the usual habit of John Hurlstone. He was generally a long way behind with his bills. No matter how much money he had, he spent it quickly, and found himself in debt. He gave as an excuse that he miscalculated,—that he had thought one hundred dollars would do the work of two ; but it would not, and at the end of his first year in New York he was hopelessly in debt. His income was five thousand dollars, and he lived at the rate of twenty.

A day or two after the ball, he dropped in at the office of *The Dawn* on his way up-town to take Rush out to dinner with him. He was dressed in the latest fashion, and he appeared to advantage in his fine clothes. Rush, to whom John was always an object of interest, noticed that he had all the manners of a man-about-town, that he wore curious rings, and dressed in the English style. He seemed very glad to see Rush again, and was interested in his work. He asked to be introduced to two or three men in the room, and it was all Rush could do to keep him from inviting them out to dinner. As they were men Rush scarcely knew, he winked at John not to ask them when he saw that he was preparing to do so ; but he could not prevent his taking them over to the Astor House to have something to drink. After parting affectionately with them on the Astor House steps, John called a cab

that had been waiting for him, and they drove to "The Club," where he had ordered a dinner especially prepared and served in a private room. Rush asked what the place was, and was told that it was "Our Club." As Colonel Mortimer entered the room at this moment, he supposed John meant his and the colonel's, and took it for granted that it was a questionable place or the latter would not have anything to do with it. Rush despised Colonel Mortimer, and was never more pleased than when he found it was he whom he had knocked down at the masked ball. He wanted to confess the deed at once, but John, in whom he confided, begged him not to, saying it would be fatal to his interests. Rush did not tell John who the lady was whom Mortimer had annoyed, and his brother asked no questions.

It was very annoying to Rush that Colonel Mortimer was a guest at this little dinner, but there was nothing for it, and he had to be polite on his brother's account. Mortimer could be very agreeable when he tried, and this was one of the occasions on which he had laid himself out to please. He told amusing anecdotes of the war and of the world, and Rush was entertained in spite of himself. "He's not half a bad fellow," said John, when Mortimer left the room for a moment. "You will like him better when you know him better."

It was nine o'clock when this little dinner came to an end. Fortunately, it was Rush's night off at the office, for he did not feel very much like working for three or four hours over a desk in a stuffy room. John proposed that they should walk around Madison Square, and the three sauntered out. On their way they stopped at a florist's, where John ordered a basket of pink and white roses.

"For the same party, sir?" asked the florist.

"Yes; and send them at once, please," answered John. And, taking a card from his card-case, he enclosed it in a small envelope and addressed it. The three walked on again. When they reached Union Square, John said, as though seized by a sudden inspiration, "Let's go to the opera. It is 'Faust' to-night; and there is a good ballet, you know. I'm more than fond of a good ballet."

Rush was at first ready to embrace his brother for the suggestion; but he could not bear the idea of going to see Helen Knowlton, particularly in such a *rôle* as Marguerite, in company with Colonel Mortimer: so he answered,—

"We're not dressed for the opera, John: if we were, I should be delighted to go."

"Hang dress!" answered John. "We'll buy admission-tickets, and stroll in the lobby till the ballet comes on. Here's Fourteenth Street. Left wheel, march!"

They were soon inside the lobby, and, to John's delight, the *corps de ballet* was just coming down the stage. They stepped inside the glass doors and formed part of the crowd of men who fringed the wall.

Was there ever more delightful waltz-music written than that of "Faust"? Rush thought not; and I think so, too.

The dancing was encored, and Leoni, the *première*, came tripping down to the footlights to bow her acknowledgments of the applause. An usher jostled against Rush as he hurried down the aisle, bearing aloft a basket of pink and white roses. Leoni bowed low over the flowers, kissed them, and backed with the awkward steps of a ballet-dancer to the wings.

"Leoni gets a basket like that every night," whispered a confiding usher in Rush's ear. "Some feller's dead gone on her, no mistake."

"Who is the man?" asked Rush, knowing very well who had sent the flowers.

"I don't know; but they say he's powerful rich, and would marry Leoni if she'd have him. She won't have anything else, he can bet his life on that." And the usher stopped talking to join in the applause as Helen Knowlton came down the stage.

I need hardly say that Rush was interested in the usher's information. He could not help smiling at the idea of John marrying the ballet-dancer with his engagement to Amy Bayliss on his hands. He didn't even believe that he knew her, but merely thought it was one of his fancies to be known as a patron of the ballet to the extent of sending flowers to the *première danseuse*. The dancing was hardly over, when John proposed going, and, as Rush was his guest, he had to go too, though he did so with great reluctance. John suggested that they should return to "The Club;" and to "The Club" they accordingly returned.

"There is some interesting playing here of an evening," said John, as they entered the gilded saloon; "you will be amused to watch it. These fellows play high some nights,—eh, colonel?"

The colonel smiled, and they sauntered up to the table and watched the game in progress. As it grew exciting, John said that he would throw five dollars on the red, "just for the fun of the thing," and the red won. He left his money there, and still won.

"Why don't you take your money while the luck is with you?" said Rush.

"It will do better than that. I'll leave it there and show you." But the luck did not last very long, and before the evening was over John had lost five hundred dollars.

"I'll have my revenge to-morrow night," said he, good-naturedly, "and win it all back and more too."

Rush looked at his watch. It was two o'clock, and he felt ashamed of himself for having come from the presence of Helen Knowlton to spend the evening in such a place. He knew that she detested anything like fastness in a man, and that she would be thoroughly disgusted if she knew that he was spending an evening in the company of gamblers, for he realized now that "The Club" was nothing more nor less than a gaming-house. He noticed with pain John's familiarity with the place, and put it all down to the corrupting influence of Colonel Mortimer, so loath was he to think that John could go unled among such men. Rush had no maudlin sentiment on the subject: it was not from any religious scruples that he disliked gambling, but because of what he knew of its hurtfulness. The victims he looked upon with pity, and the victimizers with disgust. John was in a fair way of being ruined, but Rush knew there was no use in speaking to him on the subject. He would not get angry and fly into a passion, but he would laugh good-naturedly and tell Rush that losing a few dollars at cards was not going to hurt him, and that he didn't propose to follow gambling as a profession, but only as an occasional pastime. It would have been easier to argue with a more violent man, for John only laughed off words of warning and advice.

Seeing Leoni at the Academy reminded Rush that he had not been very attentive to her of late, and, as she had been a friend in the hour of need, he upbraided himself for not having called upon her, and vowed that he would do so at the earliest opportunity. Fearful lest John should go back to the gaming-table, he proposed walking home with him, and the brothers left "The Club" together. John had rooms in Twenty-ninth Street, and when they arrived at the door he insisted upon Rush going in with him, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour. "In for a penny, in for a pound," said John, gayly. Rush was astonished at the splendor of the rooms. Everything that a luxurious taste could suggest for a bachelor's comfort was to be found there, from a well-stocked buffet to a well-trained valet.

"Why, John, you live like a prince," said Rush, looking around in admiration.

"Say rather like a stockholder in the Mutual Dividend Mining Company: that beats the princes, Rush." Then, taking a dainty decanter from the buffet, he poured out a small glass of old brandy. "There, there's something to warm the cockles of your heart! Drink that, and tell me if it isn't good!"

Rush tossed it down, and declared that he had never tasted better.

"And you never will, unless you taste it here. Mortimer has a

corner on that brandy," said he, filling his glass, "and no one else can get it."

Rush's eyes roamed about the apartment, seeing new beauties every moment, until they rested on a large colored photograph of Leoni standing on an easel. "Hello!" said he, "there's a portrait of Leoni! Do you know her, John?"

"Why should I know her?" said John, rather shortly. "Must a man know every ballet-dancer whose picture he happens to have?"

"Of course not; but this portrait is so conspicuous a feature of your room I thought it quite likely you knew the original."

"Your reasoning is childish, Rush," answered John, restored to his usual good humor. "Leoni is the popular dancer of the hour; she is a very pretty woman, and I adore pretty women. What more natural, then, than that I should have her picture, particularly as any one can enjoy the same privilege by paying its price? It's early yet," continued John, as the clock on the mantel chimed the hour of three: "what do you say to a cigar and some more brandy?" He filled both glasses, tossed off his own, and pushed the other towards Rush, who declined.

"No, thank you, John. This won't do for me. I don't want to wake up with a headache to spoil the memory of our pleasant evening. Good-night, old boy; sleep well. Let us see more of each other, John, now that we are together. Good-night."

"Good-night, Rush; you shall see more than you want of me. Pleasant dreams." And they shook hands and parted.

As Rush walked home in the cool morning air he thought over the events of the evening. He was not at all satisfied about the Leoni matter. He felt that John had not told him all he knew of the dancer, and his heart was stirred to pity for the girl, for he knew that John's fascinations for women were irresistible. He never for a moment thought but that Amy Bayliss still held sway over his brother's heart, and his pity was all for Leoni.

(To be continued.)

THE ODALIK.

BESIDE the fountain's marble brim
 With languid steps she comes to stand ;
 The snowy swans before her swim,
 And catch the dainties from her hand.

Her arm rests on a porphyry vase,
 And from the long and heavy plumes
 Of that rich fan which screens her face
 Float faint and delicate perfumes.

On each slim ankle and white wrist
 The bangles chime like tiny bells ;
 About her, like an azure mist,
 Her fluttering mantle sinks and swells.

A dreamy music fills the air,
 The fountain tinkles in the sun,
 The watchful swans, with stately care,
 Glide slowly past her, one by one.

Her brodered garments round her flow,
 And half reveal the charms they veil ;
 Within her jetty tresses glow
 The gems that make the sunlight pale.

Her eyes look far away ; she heeds
 No longer those who seek her alms,—
 Not e'en that bolder one who pleads
 With beak against her velvet palms.

Lo, as she stands, what sudden flame
 Is kindled o'er her brow and cheek ?
 Alas, the memory of her shame !
 She is the favorite odalik.

James B. Kenyon.

PROFESSOR WEISHEIT'S EXPERIMENT.

I.

A BURMESE idol, in a shrine of teak-wood, elaborately carved, stood on Professor Weisheit's table, and seemed placidly to contemplate his labors. It was the sole companion of the wise man's solitude; and he was in the habit of occasionally addressing remarks to it. The idol had never been known to make any audible reply: it was made throughout of ebony and ivory, and was richly gilded. But the Professor may have had supersensuous means of communicating with it: he was in all respects a personage of exceptional attainments and powers.

The darksome wall-hangings of the Professor's room, the deep-toned Oriental rugs that covered the floor, and the gloomy hue of the ancient leather-bound volumes in the mahogany bookcase, united to produce a sombre impression, which the single window scarcely served to illuminate. This window was set in a broad and deep embrasure, panelled with black-oak, and shaped above in a Gothic arch. It was here that the Professor's table was placed, so that a clear light always rested upon it. Sitting at the table, in his roomy and fantastically-carved oaken chair, he had the light upon his left; and when he turned to receive a visitor, his face was in shadow. The visitor's countenance, on the contrary, was exposed to the full effulgence of the rays from the window; and when to this was added the quiet but awful scrutiny of the Professor's eyes, the visitor was apt to fancy himself little better than a transparency. The Burmese idol alone could return Professor Weisheit's gaze without flinching; but it must not be forgotten that its eyes had the advantage of being made of gold enamel, with diamond pupils.

The Professor admitted the outside world to his privacy between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning. How he was occupied during the remainder of the twenty-four hours no one knew. But—inasmuch as these events occurred more than a century ago—I am able to state that he was just then conducting researches into the nature of the connection between the soul and the body. On this particular morning he had been dissecting a brain. It was the brain of his intimate and trusted friend, Dr. Gedechniss. The renowned Doctor had died the day previous, bequeathing to the Professor the contents of his headpiece. The understanding had been that the Doctor, at the moment of decease, was to fix his mind strongly upon a certain problem which he and the Professor had long been investigating. It was hoped that, in the enlightenment which the soul receives at death, the changes thus produced

in the ganglion-cells of the first order would reveal to the Professor the solution of the secret. Possibly, no intellectual operation that the Doctor had ever accomplished was likely to be so fruitful of interesting results as was this post-mortem one.

II.

Since early dawn the Professor had been at work ; and now a door opened in the silver face of the tall clock in the corner ; a little white owl emerged from it and hooted the hour,—three-quarters past nine. The wise man laid down his instruments, leaned back in his chair, fixed his eyes upon the idol, and smiled thoughtfully.

“How simple it is,” he said, in a quiet tone, “and yet what a revelation ! We were not mistaken : this key of memory unlocks every door. By a few passes, and a word or two, I may cause this iron prison of individuality to dissolve, like wax in the furnace. And then, what becomes of man, with his pride of personality and his laborious edifice of character ? The murderer, his hands yet dripping with his brother’s blood, may be invested with the stainless innocence of an infant. The gross swineherd in his hut may, in a moment, enter into all the learning of Aristotle and Bacon. Ay, and the passionate lover, burning but now to lay down his life for his mistress’s smile, may, in a breath, turn from her with indifference or disgust ; the new-made wife and mother deny the infant and the husband that her heart had idolized ; and friends smite each other as enemies, and enemies embrace as friends. And all because I—by a corollary of the principle that my friend Mesmer claims to have discovered—am able to transfer from one brain to another the subtle modifications wrought in this gray substance by the events and experiences of a lifetime ! But can this be the whole mystery of the soul ?”

The Burmese idol answered not. But the crafty grin which was stamped upon its features seemed to widen a little, as if its ivory and ebony sense of humor were tickled by the question.

After a pause the Professor resumed, in a graver tone : “Let us not be hasty. Events are nothing, in themselves, but only in their effects upon the spirit : memory is but the metaphysical analogue of time. Each special act or thought is, indeed, but the logical outcome of all that have preceded it ; and, by obliterating or transferring the consciousness of these, the conditions of the future may be altered. But is there not a force or essence anterior to all experience ? And can this be annulled or changed by alterations of the material on which it acts ? If, then, this psychic essence be immutable and inaccessible, of what avail to vary the outward environment of its action ? The results could

be but temporary,—a matter of an hour or a day,—and then this inevitable soul would begin to build anew on the former foundations and to similar issues. Character is a product of spiritual chemistry,—the soul assimilating its circumstances; and, by the chemical law of affinity, the soul assimilates only what belongs to it. Whatever, therefore, is arbitrarily forced upon it effects but a temporary derangement. If in the brain of a hero I substitute for his own memory the memory of a coward, his next act will still be brave, and not cowardly.

“And yet, once more, I know not! One must not trust overmuch to theory. A few practical experiments would be more edifying. And doubtless, amidst the rabble which daily resorts to me for the help which (did they but know it) lies only in themselves, I might find material enough. We will have nothing tragic; a little comedy will do as well. And, in good time, here they come!”

III.

The white owl hooted thrice three times and once more, and a heavy curtain which concealed the door-way at the farther end of the apartment was thrown back. A servant made his appearance, whose complexion and costume bespoke him a native of India. He crossed his hands upon his breast, and stood with his head bowed.

“What is it, Chunder?” inquired the Professor, in Sanscrit.

“May it please your Excellency,” the other replied, “a young maiden seeks audience with you.”

“Give ear, now, Chunder, to what I shall direct,” resumed the Professor. “You will admit to-day four persons, and no more. Such of them as are women you will conduct, after the audience, to the saloon on the right, and deliver them into the charge of the female attendant who officiates there. Let her divest them of their garments and clothe them with the black robes of meditation, and let her then lead them each into a darkened cell, there to await my pleasure. Such of them as are men you will conduct to the saloon on the left, and cause them to be disposed in like manner. When all is done, let them be brought to the Chamber of Incense, where I will await them. Have you understood me?”

“My lord has spoken,” replied Chunder, bowing low. “His commands are written upon my soul.”

“It is well,” said the Professor. “Let the maiden be admitted.”

IV.

The slender and graceful figure of a beautiful girl, dressed in the picturesque costume of that age and country, now advanced timidly

between the curtains of the door-way, and paused just within the threshold.

"Come forward, my child, and be seated," said the Professor, kindly; and when she had taken her place in the chair opposite the window, he gazed in her modest and blushing face, and added, "Methinks it is from friends, rather than enemies, that you should wish to be delivered. Speak; what is your name and errand?"

"I am called Priscilla," replied the girl, in a sweet, tremulous voice, "and I am very unhappy. There is a man who wants to marry me; and, as he is very rich, my parents desire me to accept him. But I care neither for him nor for his money; and rather than marry him I would die—unless you can help me!"

"Is this man young and handsome?" asked the Professor, gravely.

"No, indeed! He is old and ugly," she exclaimed; "and he grew rich by usury!"

"Nevertheless, wealth is a mighty advantage in this world," said the Professor, "and such men as you describe have, ere now, found women to marry them, and to love them, too."

"But it is not only that I don't love him," rejoined Priscilla, drooping her eyelids and blushing deeply. "I will never marry, unless—unless——"

"Unless you can marry the young and handsome man whom you do love, and who loves you."

"Oh, that is my trouble! He does not love me," cried Priscilla, hiding her face in her hands and beginning to cry.

The Professor shook his head. "I fear you have been imprudent. Have you a rival in his affections?"

"Oh, and such a rival!" sobbed Priscilla. "She's sixty at least, and as homely as she can be, if she *has* got money; and 'tis said she snubs him, too! though I don't see how any one could do that."

Perhaps the Professor smiled; but, if so, Priscilla did not see it, for his face was in shadow, and she was blinded by her tears. Presently he said, "This is all very irregular. I ought to scold you and send you home to your parents. However, I will think it over, and see whether anything can be done. Meanwhile, go whither my servant will conduct you, and act according to the instructions you will receive. You will see me again hereafter."

Priscilla having vanished, Chunder announced a new visitor. This was a man between fifty and sixty years of age, of an aspect which could not be called prepossessing. The unkempt gray hair bristling round his head, his threadbare coat and small-clothes stained with grease and patched here and there, his bony and hairy hands, and the

pair of heavy silver-bowed spectacles that he wore across his coarse and ill-formed features, all combined to give him a very frowzy and unwholesome appearance. As he seated himself in the chair, he pulled from his waistcoat-pocket a huge horn snuff-box, and took a great pinch of its contents.

"Whom have I the pleasure of addressing?" asked the Professor, courteously.

"Jabez Hogganuck," replied the visitor, in a harsh voice. "Born in this town, and always lived here. Raised myself from poverty to affluence; and few in this neighborhood, though I say it, can show a better balance at the banker's than I can."

"If you have already got the best of the world, why do you come to me?"

"What's the good of money without something to spend it on?" was the rich man's reply; "and what more sensible thing can a man buy than a wife? A man must have a son, too, to look after his business when he's gone. So I've taken up with a nice, tidy young creature, with a pretty face of her own; spoke to her parents, who expressed a proper feeling in the matter; but the girl herself (if you'll believe it) pretends she don't fancy me! Absurd, of course; but I take it all girls are absurd, till they get sense put into 'em. So I have come to you for a bit of advice. Forgot to say that there's some young rascalion whom she makes a pretext for refusing me. But that's all humbug. She hasn't the bad taste actually to prefer another man, be he who he may, to Jabez Hogganuck!"

"Is she the only woman who ever touched your heart?" asked the Professor.

"To put it in that way—yes. But I might have others for the asking. Why, there's a certain elderly female would give her eye-teeth (if she'd got any) to call me husband; wealthy, too. But that's how it is: in affairs of this sort a man can't dispense with sentiment. I want the girl, and not the widow; that's the short of it. What say you?"

The Professor seemed to meditate. "Are you in active business?" he asked, at length.

"I shall retire as soon as I've settled a transaction that has bothered me no little. You see, I'm charitably disposed, and 'tis my custom to make loans to folks in straitened circumstances, repayable with a small addition. But some young rake, who has ruined himself and wants to ruin others, came to my office t'other day in my absence, and got a thousand dollars through my clerk. But I draw the line at ruined men; and I should proceed for recovery at once, only, as ill luck would have it, I haven't the rogue's name."

"Did he give no receipt?"

"Ah! there it is. His receipt got substituted for our memorandum, and that, of course, has my name on it only."

"That is unfortunate," remarked the Professor. "But I will see what can be done. Step aside, and follow the directions you will receive, until I come to you.—Chunder," he added, "take charge of this gentleman, and then admit the next visitor."

The figure which now advanced was as distinguished for fastidious elegance as Mr. Hogganuck had been for the want of it. He was a handsome young man, with blond, curling hair, a satin-lined coat, silk stockings, and silver shoe-buckles. He held between his fingers a gold-knobbed ivory cane with a silken tassel, and from his lace-bordered handkerchief a delicate fragrance was dispersed about the room.

"What do you want with me?" demanded the Professor, rather curtly.

"My name is Florence De Luce," said the other, speaking with a slight lisp, indolently tossing back a lock of hair from his forehead; "and, to tell you the truth, my dear Professor, I'm in a deuce of a quandary. Though I've not been more imprudent than a young fellow of spirit ought to be, I've had the bad luck to be done out of my fortune; and, by way of recovering myself, I've been courting a rich widow. But, in order to approach her in a style befitting my rank and station, I negotiated a trifling loan from a usurer hereabouts, who now wishes to recall it, and is at this moment in pursuit of me. Thus, not only am I in peril of my liberty, but I'm cut off from my widow, who, I fear, will interpret my absence to my disadvantage; the rather, since I am informed that I've a rival in her affections, whose name I haven't learned, but who possesses the one advantage I lack,—unlimited cash. Meanwhile, I'm debarred from cashing my draft; and I beg of you, my dear Professor, either to help me foil this Shylock, or, at least, aid me to capture the widow."

"Is the widow your only salvation? Would no other lady accept you, poverty and all?"

Mr. Florence De Luce sighed. "As a man of the world, my dear Professor," he replied, "you know it is often our duty to subordinate impulse to higher considerations. There is such a young lady as you describe, who, I confess, has my tender regard, as I have hers, but who, alas! is scarcely better provided than myself with worldly goods. To marry her would thus be an injustice not less to myself than to her, and my judgment is fain to forbid what my affections enjoin."

"Perhaps," said the Professor, gravely, "you may live to discover that your affections would have been wiser guides than what you are

pleased to call your judgment. However, for reasons of my own, I will intercede with Destiny on your behalf. Meanwhile, put yourself under the guidance of my servant until you hear further from me." Mr. Florence De Luce stared, bowed, and retreated, leaving his fragrance behind him.

The fourth caller was not long in presenting herself,—an angular and aquiline female, of very uncertain age, though of the severity and energy of her aspect there could be no uncertainty whatever. Her bushy eyebrows almost met above a sharp nose, beneath which sallied forth a long bony chin. She wore a high turban and an immense hoop-skirt, and a profusion of rings and other ornaments decorated her person. Without awaiting an invitation, she seated herself in a chair, and, in a strident and voluble tone, began as follows :

"Good-morning, Professor ; perhaps you know me ? My name is Asfixia Crawley. My husband died a rich man ; but where he had one dollar I now have three. Unlike most women,—and men too, for that matter,—I'm not a fool. I'm ambitious, and my ambition isn't satisfied yet. There's a man I mean to marry : he's not young, nor yet a beauty, but his income equals mine, if it doesn't surpass it. Our two fortunes, added together, will go far towards putting me in the position to which my capacity and energy entitle me. But there's no fool like an old fool, and his head has been turned by a doll-faced chit whose whole dowry wouldn't buy the ring off this finger. He would do better to take pattern by me. I've been pestered to death by a young idiot with a lisp and a scented handkerchief, who expects me to pay his debts for the pleasure of hearing him say he loves me ; but the day I marry him will be the day I throw my money into the horse-pond. You're said to be a clever man, and I've come to know whether you can't do anything to make my intended see reason. Time is valuable : he'll have to come to it sooner or later ; and the sooner the better."

"Madam," replied the Professor, with a bow, "you see things in a very sensible light, and I shall be happy to assist you. I have been expecting your visit, and have made the necessary arrangements for your reception. Be pleased to walk into the next room and observe the formalities which will be explained to you, and I will attend you presently."

"This falls out well," continued the Professor to himself, when he and the Burmese idol were again alone. "Fate has shown more than her usual perverse aptness. It only remains for me to play the cards she has put in my hands. Well for all human beings could they be taught the lesson which these four impassioned egotists are now about to learn ! Yet I will be lenient : an hour shall be the limit of their

probation. After that they shall resume their proper identities ; and if by that time they have not blundered into a solution of their difficulties, I wash my hands of them."

The diamond eyes of the Burmese idol glittered mischievously. The white owl hooted the eleventh hour. The Professor arose, cast aside his embroidered mantle, and passed out through a concealed panel in the bookcase.

V.

The Chamber of Incense was dark ; the only light came through the circular window of stained glass in the zenith of the domed roof. The air was warm, and the odors that permeated it were sweet but enervating. On the circular divan in the centre of the apartment four figures were seated. Their outlines were scarcely discernible in the fragrant gloom, and they seemed to be unconscious of one another and of all about them. So far as could be seen, however, they seemed all to be draped in dark cloaks, which fell from their heads to their feet. A profound stillness brooded over everything.

At length, with a noiseless movement, another figure glided out of the obscurity at one end of the chamber, and advanced slowly towards the group. This latter figure seemed tall, and of a stately presence. Approaching the nearest of the seated forms, he appeared to lay his hands lightly on its head, at the same time pronouncing certain words, but in so subdued and monotonous a tone as to be indistinguishable ; they were scarcely more audible than the heavy breathing of the sleepers. As he spoke, however, a phosphorescent light became faintly discernible at a point within the square formed by the four divans, revealing the presence there of a large globe of solid crystal, mounted on a black tripod. As the magician passed to the second sleeper, and repeated his incantations, the light increased, flinging his tall shadow backwards against the wall ; and a confused movement of tiny shapes became visible within the substance of the globe. He moved to the third, and the mysterious lustre was still further augmented, and now the confused shapes became more distinct, and hurried hither and thither, like infinitesimal beings performing inscrutable avocations. But when he reached the fourth figure the light suddenly went out, with a snapping sound, and at the same moment each of the sleepers drew a deeper breath and stirred uneasily. A voice now spoke :

"Is my lord's charm complete?"

The answer came in low but imperative tones :

"All is ready. Now, listen. Return each one to the room from which the other was taken. The transformation must be complete

without as well as within. The maiden must become the woman; the youth, the man. Have you understood me?"

"Perfectly, my lord."

"So be it: and let them be dismissed separately."

Silence again reigned in the Chamber of Incense.

VI.

The first person to emerge from the portals of the Professor's mansion was a lady clad in a dress of figured silk, distended around her by a hoop of vast circumference. Her head-dress consisted of an anomalous agglomeration of satin, lace, and feathers, known in those days as a turban; and her fingers, neck, and wrists sparkled with jewels. The face appertaining to all this finery was young and pretty, but its effect was somewhat marred by a sour and dogmatic expression, and her gait and bearing were arrogant and unconciliating.

"Twelve o'clock, as sure as my name is Asfixia!" exclaimed she, as the hour was sounded from the cathedral turret. "Well, it serves me right for wasting precious time gadding after conjurers,—a pack of humbugs, one and all of 'em! The only wisdom one gets for one's trouble is the wisdom to keep away from 'em in future. I'd a deal better have been minding my own business: husbands aren't to be caught by proxy. I must look after my Jabez myself; and, by the bye, I have an idea that I fancy will settle him. Don't talk to me! 'tis money makes the mare go,—and the old horse too." She paused in her walk, put her finger beside her nose, and appeared to meditate. "I'll do it!" she said, at length, resuming her way. "I'll look in at the notary's: 'tis not far out of my way. And, if I'm not very much mistaken, the next thing I'll have to do will be to order my wedding-gown. Let me think—how shall I have it made?"

Meanwhile, a remarkable personage had followed the lady who called herself Asfixia down the Professor's steps. He was clad in the height of the mode; his gold-braided hat was cocked in the latest fashion, his embroidered coat was satin-lined, and his silver-buckled, high-heeled shoes formed an elegant termination to his white silk legs. A slender ivory cane dangled from his wrist, and a lace embroidered handkerchief protruded from his pocket. Looked at from behind, any one would have taken this individual to be a young dandy of the first water; but had the observer met him face to face he would have been startled, and would perhaps have felt disposed to smile. For the countenance of this dandy was harsh, coarse, and ill-featured to a degree; nor was its lack of refinement remedied by the absurdly affected grimace which it wore. His great rough hands, protruding from the lace wrist-bands,

looked as much out of place as a man's beard on a maiden's lip; nor was his sentimental and would-be youthful air more in keeping with his bristly gray hair and elderly aspect. His small, sinister eyes blinked and screwed themselves up strangely as he went along; and once or twice he raised his hand to his face and made a motion as if to settle a pair of spectacles on his nose, but, finding none there, he hastily withdrew his fingers, with a puzzled expression. He now seemed to fall into a mood of deep preoccupation, in the midst of which he began to grope for something in his pockets. Anon he fished out a small gold box of smelling-salts, which, without looking at it, he opened, and, taking a pinch of the contents, thrust it up his nostrils. The effect was, of course, disastrous; he spluttered, stamped, and shook his ugly head, and the tears ran down his cheeks.

"Deuce take me!" he cried, in a harsh tone, strangely modified by a mincing pronunciation, "I believe I must be insane. What could possess me to use my smelling-salts as snuff? Snuff, indeed! Pray, when did I ever touch the nasty stuff? And yet, it's deuced odd, but I really felt as if I were in need of a pinch. 'Pon my soul, I believe that old conjurer has bewitched me. Florence De Luce take snuff! Abominable! And just when I was dreaming of my Asfixia, too. I really must get that draft cashed, whatever the risk. I think I noticed a notary's office down-town that seemed a likely place. If I can only continue to dodge that old scamp of a money-lender, I may be happy yet."

As he turned the corner, the Professor's door once more opened, and forth came another figure. At a distance, you would surely have taken him for that well-known personage, Jabez Hogganuck,—his shabby clothes, his greasy old hat, his massive, silver-bowed spectacles, and even the trick he had of occasionally giving a shake to his head, as if refusing some impecunious applicant a loan. But, as he drew near, you would have been puzzled to observe that the face beneath the greasy hat was comely and youthful, and that the hands that emerged from the frayed coat-sleeves were white and delicate. Surely Jabez had undergone a marvellous rejuvenation. And yet, again, when you remarked the calculating and impenetrable glance of the handsome blue eyes and heard the uncompromising and ungracious accents of the voice, you would have asked yourself whether the old usurer were not here in spirit, if not in body, after all.

Mr. Hogganuck, then (if it were he), came down the street with a heavy step that seemed inconsistent with the active proportions of his figure, which his awkward garments could not wholly disguise, and thumping the pavement every other moment with his thick walking-

stick. He had not proceeded far before he stopped, removed the spectacles from his nose, and rubbed his eyes vigorously with a dingy pocket-handkerchief.

"What ails me, I'd like to know?" muttered he, gruffly. "Can't see the length of my staff. Is it my eyes have given out, or is something wrong with my spectacles? Worn 'em for twenty years, and they never failed me yet. Wonder, now, if that rascally juggler, with his solemn airs, hasn't been playing some trick on me. Confound him! I'll buy up all his paper, and turn him into the street! Some deviltry at work, that's certain. What would my Priscilla say if her future husband couldn't see to put the ring on her finger? And that puts me in mind—I may as well get the papers drawn up, and settle ten thousand on her right away. Once get her busy buying her wedding-outfit, and she'll soon stop all that nonsense about that young spark of hers. And then, too, I must take my measures to catch the impudent rake who got off with my money. Humph! a notary! That's what I want. Can get it all done there. Where's my smelling-salts,—snuff-box, I mean?" He produced the well-worn horn receptacle from his pocket, hesitated a moment, and then, holding it up to his nose, gave a deep inhalation. The pungent dust flew to its destination, and the semblance of Mr. Hogganuck, with a frightful convulsion of his features, followed by several crashing sneezes, dashed the box violently on the ground, and plunged snorting into a neighboring apothecary's shop.

Meanwhile, the Professor's abode had disgorged still another victim,—a slender and shrinking apparition, holding in one hand the skirts of a high-waisted, lavender-colored gown, and with the other drawing a delicate veil over her features. She looked, at the first glance, like the ideal of blushing maidenhood; and one begrudged the semi-transparent medium of the veil for obscuring even so slightly the radiance of her lovely countenance. A more penetrating glance, however, would have somewhat modified this impatience on the spectator's part. The veil would then have seemed to reveal too much rather than too little; for there was nothing alluring about the long, sharp nose, the grizzly eyebrows overhanging the beady gray eyes, the sunken and withered cheeks, and the peaked and salient chin. In short, this shy, lavender-robed damsel was nothing but an unsightly old crone ridiculously masquerading in girlish attire. Her would-be elastic gait was marred by the ungainly halt of chronic rheumatism; and what should have been her dimpled and rosy-tipped fingers were an array of skinny talons, better fitted to scratch faces or to claw money than to receive and return the gentle pressure of love.

Nevertheless, she herself appeared to be under no misgiving as to

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the harmony of her inward with her outward person. She hobbled along with a languishing air, and avoided the glances of the passers-by as coyly as if she held treasures of bewitching beauty in reserve. And what was this that she was murmuring to herself,—if her croaking whisper may properly be described as a murmur?

“Ah, Priscilla, what an unhappy girl art thou! The good Professor was kind, but how can he have power to change the hearts of human beings! Nay, I must make one more effort, on my own account, to escape the tyranny of fate. I am sure that Florence loves me; and, if I could but be united to him, that dreadful Hogganuck would at least be powerless to undo the knot. Poor Florence does not care for that Asfixia woman; it is only his sense of honor that induces him to marry her, in order that his debts can be paid. But I have a thousand dollars in my own right, which he knows nothing of. Surely, if I sign this over to him, it will solve the difficulty, and then nothing can prevent our happiness. I will not delay a moment. I will go to the nearest notary, and he will assist me. Strange I did not think of this before! Oh, Florence, dearest Florence, forgive the stupidity of thy Priscilla!”

She hastened onward, as fast as her infirmities would allow, and with all the fervor of innocent self-sacrifice palpitating in her heart.

VII.

Precisely as the clock struck twelve, a tall man, muffled up in a cloak, entered the notary's office by a side door. From beneath the folds of the cloak he produced a sort of box or casket, made of some dark wood, curiously carved. This he placed on end upon the shelf of the desk-table, and, touching a spring, the front part of the casket opened, revealing within the figure of a Burmese idol, cunningly wrought of ebony and ivory, and heavily gilt. Then the notary—for such he seemed to be—hung his cloak and hat upon a nail, and, seating himself at the desk, began to write, in a mechanical, business-like manner, in a ponderous ledger. He had not written three lines, when the office door opened and a customer came in, who announced herself as Asfixia Crawley, and whom we are forced to accept as such upon her own testimony.

“My dear madam,” remarked the notary, laying down his pen, “you are too well known to need any introduction. How can I serve you?”

“Something the like of which you're not often called on to transact,” replied the lady, with a snicker. “I want to give away ten thousand dollars.”

"No one can know your own business better than you do, madam," answered the notary, calmly. "In whose favor shall the deed of gift be drawn?"

"Jabez Hogganuck is the name of the individual," said the lady, concisely.

"I am acquainted with the gentleman," the notary observed; "but I was not aware that he was in need of pecuniary assistance."

"Pecuniary encouragement is the phrase," returned the other; "and, to put your mind at rest, I may tell you that he wouldn't be getting it if I didn't intend to become Mrs. Hogganuck."

The notary bowed, took some printed forms from a drawer, and began to fill up one of them. While he was thus engaged, a new customer entered,—no other, indeed, than the gentleman whom we have just heard apostrophize himself as Florence De Luce.

"Mr. Notary, I have dropped in——" he began. Then he caught sight of the lady, and stopped short, involuntarily feeling for a pair of spectacles that were not there. "Why, bless my heart!" he continued; "surely I have the felicity of addressing the charming Mrs. Crawley? or—no—good gracious, what an extraordinary disguise! Have I lost my senses, or is this my poor little Priscilla?"

"Your poor little Priscilla, indeed!" cried the lady thus addressed, bridling up in great indignation. "You ought to know better, Jabez Hogganuck, than to speak that way of a chit not old enough to be your grandchild! Don't 'Priscilla' me, if you please! Though, to be sure, what is one to expect of an old fellow who will go and rig himself out in silks and embroidery like a dancing-master?"

"Pon my soul, my dear girl, I don't understand you," exclaimed the gentleman. "So far from being Jabez Hogganuck, the old villain is after me at this moment to get back his draft,—which, by the bye, Mr. Notary, I wish you'd kindly discount for me.—And as for you, my poor child, you are Priscilla just as sure as I'm Florence De Luce."

"Sakes alive, the man is mad!" cried his interlocutor, recoiling. "The poor dear old duckie's brain has given way at last. I always said he was overtaxing himself with the care of that business; and there's no one could take that care off his shoulders so well as I could.—Jabez, dear," she continued, adopting a soft and soothing tone, "don't act so strange to your Asfixia. Call me what you like,—Priscilla, if nothing else will do you: it makes no difference, so long as I'm going to change my name for yours anyway."

"If any one's mad, it certainly isn't I," muttered Florence, scratching his gray head in great perplexity. "Singular I never heard of any

insanity in her family. Gad, it's very lucky I didn't allow my emotions to get the better of my judgment,—in spite of that old magician."

"There, there, Jabez; don't get excited, dear," the lady went on. "What do you suppose I've just done for you? I've made over ten thousand dollars to you, for a nice little present on our wedding-day."

"You—ten thousand dollars—to me!" cried he; and then he burst into a laugh. "Why, bless the girl! You never saw a tenth part of the money in your life."

"Be calm, love, be calm," returned she; "and if you don't believe it, ask the notary."

"Do you hear what she says?" demanded he, turning to the latter.

"It is no less than the truth, sir," the notary replied, quietly. "Here are the papers: I have just finished making them out."

"In that case," cried the other, "she may be Asfixia, or what she pleases; and I am ready to marry her this very day."

But at this juncture appeared in the door-way the dingy coat and breeches of Jabez Hogganuck, their wearer peering ineffectively through his huge spectacles and pioneering his way with his heavy stick.

"Good-day, Mr. Notary," said he, gruffly; "I suppose you know me,—Jabez Hogganuck. I want you to draw up a paper settling the sum of ten thousand dollars on my intended wife,—Miss Priscilla——"

"What's that you are saying about Miss Priscilla being your intended wife, sir?" demanded the gentleman known as Florence De Luce, strutting up to him. "I'd have you to know, sir, that the young lady is promised to me; and any man——"

"And who the mischief *are* you, sir?" inquired the other, confronting him.

"Florence De Luce, at your service," was the reply.

"Florence De Luce? By the bye, now I hear the name, you're the very man I'm after. I charge you, sir, with illegally defrauding me of the sum of a thousand dollars. If you resist, I'll call a constable."

"Take your lucre," responded the gentleman thus threatened, at the same time snatching from the desk the money which the notary had placed there in exchange for the draft. "Let me inform you, sir, that I am now a man of fortune, and I never let the ink on my I. O. U.'s get dry."

"Jabez, dear," here interposed the voice of the lady, "seems to me I wouldn't do that. A thousand dollars is a sum of money, after all; and the man you're giving it to is no more Jabez Hogganuck than you are Florence De Luce. When you come back to your right senses you'll be sorry."

The wearer of the dingy clothes, however, thrust the money into his pocket with a grunt of satisfaction, and then turned to the last speaker. "You called me by name, ma'am," he said; "but I'm taking the money, not giving it.—How's this?" he ejaculated suddenly; "Asfixia Crawley! that's her hoop, for certain; but the voice——" He pulled off his spectacles. "No," he went on; "as I hope to be saved, it's my Priscilla! What made you go and get into Asfixia's clothes, my dear?"

"Speak for yourself, Master Florence De Luce," retorted she, with a scornful intonation. "If my future husband wasn't off his head, he wouldn't have demeaned himself to exchange wardrobes with a jack-in-the-box like you; nor would he let the man go unpunished who had the impudence to call Asfixia Crawley out of her name."

"Why do you look at me, my pretty one, when you are talking to Florence De Luce?" inquired the shabby-coated lover. "Now that I look at him," he added, "he's a considerable older man than I'd been given to suppose; but there's something about his face that seems familiar."

"I was just about to remark, my love," said the gentleman in the white silk stockings, "that this Jabez Hogganuck, of whom I've heard so much, seems to be a very youthful Shylock, instead of an elderly one; though he's none the less a rascal, I doubt not. But really, my pet, it would save a great deal of confusion if you would give up this nonsense about your being Asfixia: you see he recognized you as soon as I did."

"Listen to me, Priscilla," interposed the other, shouldering his rival aside: "I'll soon make you hear reason. The notary here is at this moment recording my gift to you of ten thousand dollars to buy your wedding-outfit with. Doesn't that soften your heart towards your Jabez?"

"I don't believe a word of it," replied the lady.

"Ask the notary," was the answer.

"There is no doubt about it, madam," said that functionary, composedly. "Here it is, in black and white, just as I have written it down."

"Well, sir," observed she, "I confess I didn't know that you possessed that amount of money. But I suppose you've a right to do what you please with it: so I will accept it, and buy a wedding-outfit with it, and marry Jabez Hogganuck into the bargain. But I won't marry you."

"She will marry me," put in he of the silk stockings; "though I'm not Jabez Hogganuck."

"She will marry Jabez Hogganuck," exclaimed the shabby one,—
"and that's me; but if it pleases her to call me Florence De Luce she's
welcome."

"How comes she to mistake you for me?" demanded the other.

"If she must give you a false name, I wish she'd choose some other
than mine," retorted his rival.

"You're both of you beside yourselves, and the proof of it is your
mistaking a respectable widow-woman for a slip of a girl hardly out of
her pinafores," was the lady's contribution to the dispute. And, just as
the words left her mouth, the damsel in the lavender gown hobbled
into the office.

At first she paid no attention to the group of customers in the far-
ther end of the apartment, but addressed herself to the notary.

"If you please, sir," she said, "I'm a poor, unfortunate girl: my
name is Priscilla. I'm very much attached to a young gentleman
named Florence De Luce, who is in trouble for want of a little money
to pay his debts. I've brought a thousand dollars, which is of no use
to me; and I want you, if you will be so kind, to find him and put it
into his hands. Can you manage it for me?"

"Your directions shall be obeyed, miss," replied the impassive
notary; "but the gentleman you have designated happens to be at this
moment in the office: you might transact the business yourself."

The damsel turned, and advanced timidly towards the two gentle-
men, her veil being still drawn over her face. He in the satin-lined
coat was nearest, and she touched him on the arm and faltered out,
"Florence—dear Florence—is that you?"

He faced about and stared at her. "Halloo! what's this?" he ex-
claimed, dumfounded. "Another Priscilla! If this goes on, 'twill
be the death of me."

"Another Priscilla, sure enough!" cried the threadbare gentleman.
"Stop a moment, though: let's have a look behind that veil."

"Oh, you are Florence!" exclaimed the damsel, turning to the last
speaker. "But why have you and Mr. Hogganuck put on each other's
things?"

"That is not Priscilla's voice," said both gentlemen in a breath.
"Who are you?"

"Why, don't you know me?" she returned, shyly, and lifted her
veil.

"Asfixia Crawley!" cried they both again.

"What's the matter now?" asked the lady in the hoop and turban,
coming forward.

The gentlemen drew back: the two ladies were left face to face.

"What do you mean by looking like me?" at last demanded she of the turban, in an angry tone.

"I don't know what you mean, madam," replied the lavender damsel, shrinkingly; "but indeed, when I look at you, I could believe I was looking in the mirror."

"Why, you frightful old harridan, how dare you libel my lovely Priscilla in that manner?" called out the silk-stockinged gentleman.

"Whom are you calling a frightful old harridan?" cried the turbaned lady, flushing up to the roots of her hair.

"Oh, this is too much!" he gasped out, clapping his hands to his head.

"For that matter, they both seem to be in the same story," observed the other gentleman, in a bewildered tone.

The lavender damsel bowed her head and burst into tears.

There is no telling what might have happened. But at this crisis the notary arose, and rapped loudly on his desk with the office-ruler.

VIII.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the notary, in a serene but authoritative tone, "what is all this disturbance about?"

"These two gentlemen are both of them out of their senses," replied the turbaned lady, excitedly. "They insist that I am Priscilla; and this woman, who calls herself Priscilla, is no such thing, but has got herself up to look like me. It's a conspiracy, and I'll have the law of every one of them."

"For some reason best known to themselves," said the silk-stockinged gentleman, gesticulating with his ivory cane, "these two ladies and this young usurer all pretend that I myself am the usurer; and Priscilla and Asfixia have agreed to exchange names and dresses."

"What he says about the ladies is true enough," said the shabby gentleman, striking the floor emphatically with his staff; "and, so far as I know, he is the person he describes himself to be. But he has no business to call a gentleman as old as himself (and that's sixty at least) a young usurer; and why a pretty girl like Priscilla there should rig herself out in the satins and diamonds of that old witch," pointing to the lavender damsel, "or why *she* should be ogling about in the guise of an unsophisticated maiden, is more than I can understand."

"I don't know what these gentlemen mean by calling me old, when I am hardly seventeen," said the lavender lady through her tears; "and I intend no harm in saying that this lady looks like me, for I'm sure I think her very young and pretty. But of course she can't be Asfixia Crawley, any more than I am."

"'Pon my soul," cried the silk-stockinged gentleman, "if it wasn't that Priscilla supported you in it, I'd have you arrested for defamation for saying you resembled her! It would be nearer the mark to say that yonder young Shylock looks like me. Now that I think of it, and allowing for his lack of a certain distinction that characterizes me, the resemblance is quite remarkable."

But at this both the ladies exclaimed in chorus, "Oh, what a story!" And she in the turban added that he ought to have more self-respect than to liken himself to that smooth-faced young noodle; while she in lavender declared that a hedgehog might as well say he looked like a greyhound.

"Much obliged to you, my good woman," returned the gentleman described as a greyhound; "but my days of vanity are over, and the old fellow there certainly does feature me to some extent, though his silly expression is all his own."

"You seem to be all in some perplexity," observed the notary, a grave smile lurking behind his penetrating eyes; "but, before attempting to settle that, let us attend to business for a moment. I have some papers here that require your signatures. You," nodding to the turbaned lady, "wish to give ten thousand dollars to the gentleman calling himself Florence De Luce?"

"Yes. But I call him Jabez Hogganuck," she replied.

"You," continued the notary, turning to the shabby gentleman, "wish to give the same sum to the lady calling herself Asfixia?"

"I do," he assented; "but everybody knows she's Priscilla."

"You," the notary proceeded, glancing at the lady in lavender, "desire to present Florence De Luce with a thousand dollars?"

"Yes; to the real Florence, that is," was her answer.

"And you," concluded the notary, addressing the two gentlemen, "have already settled the transaction between yourselves. All that is needed is Mr. Hogganuck's name to the receipt."

They both nodded.

"Now, as regards the question of identity," pursued the notary, "the law is bound, as a matter of form, to accept each individual's statement concerning himself or herself; and these papers have been filled out accordingly. But, in order to satisfy all differences, each of you shall sign the paper for the other. Thus, the gentleman calling himself Florence De Luce shall sign the name of Hogganuck to that gentleman's deed; the lady purporting to be Priscilla shall affix Mrs. Crawley's name to the latter person's document; and so with the rest. Are you agreed?"

The four customers looked a little bewildered; but the suggestion

seemed proper, and they ended by doing as the notary directed. The latter examined the signatures, to make sure they were correct, sanded them, and then handed the documents to their several owners.

"And now as to this curious dispute of yours," he said, letting his glance travel slowly from one to another. "May I inquire if any of you have ever visited a certain learned Professor who resides hereabouts?"

"Yes!" cried all four together.

"In that case, I am sorry to inform you that you have all been bewitched," returned the notary, quietly.

The four victims emitted groans and sighs of despair.

"But," he went on, "there is one person in the world who can relieve you from the spell; and that happens to be myself."

"Oh, save us—disenchant us—cure us—we will be indebted to you forever!" they all exclaimed.

"I will do so on one condition,—that you all solemnly engage not to undo anything that you may have done since you left the Professor's house. Were you to attempt to violate this engagement, the spell would at once return upon you, and could not then be removed."

Each of his hearers gave the required promise eagerly.

The notary thereupon stepped to a part of the office where a large curtain hung against the wall. He drew it aside, and disclosed a tall mirror, reaching to the floor.

"Let every one of you examine their reflections in this glass," he said. "It will reveal to each a truth otherwise undiscoverable."

They did as they were directed. There was a moment of silence; then a shout of consternation or astonishment went up from all.

"Is that hideous old gray-head me?" groaned the man in silk stockings.

"Am I that smooth-cheeked calf?" exclaimed the wearer of the threadbare coat.

"I certainly appear well preserved. But what an inane expression!" cried the lady in the turban.

As for the lady in lavender, she hid her face in her hands with a shriek and a shudder, and would have fallen had not the notary supported her to a chair. He then drew the curtain back across the mirror, and clapped his hands. A swarthy attendant appeared, bearing a large globe of the purest crystal, mounted on a tripod of ebony. He then closed the blinds of the window, so that the office was in darkness, save for a phosphorescent gleam proceeding from the crystal sphere.

"Let each of you place the right hand upon it," commanded the voice of the notary. They obeyed; and at the same moment the clock struck one.

"Be yourselves once more ; and may this hour of madness sow in your hearts the seeds of wisdom !" said the voice.

Each of the four started, as from a strong electric shock. The room was light again : the sphere and the swarthy attendant had vanished, and the notary was quietly writing in the big ledger on his desk.

The customers gazed at one another curiously ; but they said nothing. Something strange had certainly happened to them ; but none of them had the confidence to make any comments or inquiries about it. Florence De Luce glanced wistfully at Jabez Hogganuck's satin-lined coat ; the old usurer cast longing eyes at Mr. De Luce's silver-bowed spectacles ; and the two ladies scrutinized each other's attire rather uneasily. But some inward monitor seemed to warn them that they had better hold their tongues. Finally, the two young people took each other by the arm and walked out of the office, followed by the two older ones ; and, as they passed the notary's desk, they all exchanged a silent bow with him.

When he was alone again, he leaned back in his chair, and gazed up at the Burmese idol with a meditative smile. But of what he said to the idol, or of what the idol replied (if anything), no record has come down to us.

Julian Hawthorne.

A WOMAN'S KNOWLEDGE.

A ROSE to smell a moment, then to leave,
 Chance strain of song you smile at as you pass,
 Bubble that breaks before you lip the glass,
 Chain frail as the frail threads that spiders weave :—
 Oh, do not think that I myself deceive :
 Thus, and not otherwise, to you am I,—
 A moment's pleasure as you pass me by,
 Powerless, at best, to make you joy or grieve.

And you, to me, my sun-god and my sun,
 Who warmed my heart to life with careless ray !—
 Forever will that burning memory stay
 And warm me in the grave when life is done.
 What farther grace has any woman won ?
 Since your chance gift you can *not* take away.

Louise Chandler Moulton.

THE POETRY OF THOREAU.

THE reader of "Rasselas" will remember that the happy prince met early in his journey the poet and traveller Imlac, who was a traveller and explorer of nature partly that he might be a poet. He had read "all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca." But, finding that the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, and that no man can be great by imitation, he suddenly became a great observer of men and things. In the broad horizon which his catalogue of the things necessary for a poet to know implied, the prince was confounded, and cried out, before Imlac was half through with the narration, "Enough! thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a poet."

It would, doubtless, decimate the ranks of those who are presumed to be poets if Imlac's requirements should be strictly applied. But he is right to the extent that the poet is the one who sees, and who sees best and farthest. In respect to this one qualification, and the "careful study of all the appearances of nature," on which he also strongly insisted, it must be said that Thoreau's endowment was unique. Few paragraphs in his prose fail to prove the poetic attitude, and everything that he wrote, one may say, seems instinctive and alive with poetic impulse. Unlike Imlac, he stayed at home, or travelled mainly in fancy. Through this he speaks of reaching the "far Azores" and rounding many capes.

That much-abused word "transcendental" well describes him. He dwelt perpetually on the thing beyond and least obvious superficially. The apparition that hovered over or beckoned you away from the material substance was what attracted him, and his power of playing upon and picturing it was the source of his enchantment. He has shown that he can write good verses by the technical rules, but he cared little for them when they restricted or baffled his complete thought. He could not court the listless or holiday auditor. You must wrestle with his thought, as he did, to entertain it properly.

In shooting over the prescribed rhythmical moulds and paying at times little deference to the quality of his rhyme, he must deeply offend the sticklers for smooth polish and impeccable form; yet it is hard to escape the fact that he was, in his way, a poet of striking qualities. If his rhyme or rhythm did not always fit the expectancy of the ear, it did, at least, beat its music through the mind. The wave struck with irresistible force the waiting shore.

Somewhere, then, in that generic group which includes quite different species, I think we have a right to place Henry D. Thoreau. He did not set himself up for a poet; but poets are not made by intention, or else the world would be flooded with them. In the guild of poetry he who seeks a place the most earnestly sometimes does not find it, while to him who seeks it not it often comes.

Thoreau has said himself a variety of pertinent things about the poet and his production. He is, according to Thoreau, "no tender slip of fairy stock, who requires peculiar institutions or edicts for his defence, but the toughest son of earth and of heaven; and by his greater strength and endurance his fainting companions will recognize the God in him." The difference between poets and those who are not, he says, is that "the latter are unable to grasp and confront the thought which visits them." He asserts that "the poet will prevail to be popular in spite of his faults, and in spite of his beauties too. He will hit the nail on the head, and we shall not know the shape of his hammer." In this last sentence we get the very formula by which Thoreau must have always written, whether he essayed prose or verse.

He could not speak only as something spoke to him. He will hit the nail on the head, and make small effort to shape his hammer. "Orpheus," he says, "does not hear the strains which come from his lyre, but only those which are breathed into it." Of that subtle fabric which streams from the poet's instrument he writes as follows: "We are often prompted to speak our thoughts to our neighbors or the single travellers whom we meet on the road; but poetry is a communication from our home and solitude addressed to all Intelligence."

"His poetry might be bad or good," says Emerson, "but he had the source of poetry in his spiritual perception. . . . He was so enamoured of the spiritual beauty that he held all actual written poems in very light esteem in the comparison. . . . His own verses are often rude and defective. The gold does not yet run pure, is drossy and crude. The thyme and marjoram are not yet honey." But we do not seek in him "lyric fineness." He would probably, as Shakespeare says, "rather be a kitten and cry 'Mew!'" than be a "mincing ballad-monger." His whole thought had such a hold on that which was beyond the material investment that it floated habitually in the atmosphere of the poet. If he had not earned a full admittance to the Parnassian choir, and could not comply with their self-imposed limitations, he knew how to evoke, in his own fashion, the warm and cogent influence of their high strains.

Neither Thoreau, nor any of his friends for him, ever tried to bring his verses all together. They are to be found scattered up and down

his other writings, and many of them seem to be merely pendants to his prose discourse, dropped in as forcible epigrams, where they are brief, and, in other instances, made ancillary to the idea just expressed, or to perpetuate a distinct conception that has some vital connection with the point from which it was poured forth. It is, therefore, almost an injustice to them to treat them separately at all.

The largest group of his poems in any one place is the collection of nine only which Mr. Emerson added to his book of "Letters to Various Persons;" but these were culled from his previous volumes, and are given merely as samples of his muse, or were possibly Mr. Emerson's favorites.

Mr. Emerson's opinion had so much authority with Thoreau in the matter of poetry that he at one time, according to a statement which Mr. Sanborn has made in *The Critic*, "destroyed many of his verses" because they did not meet Mr. Emerson's approbation. The pieces thus lost were in manuscript, and had never yet come to the public; and no doubt, as Thoreau afterwards thought, they deserved a better fate.

Mr. Thoreau's expression was always so deep, significant, and sincere that it easily took on the hue and fervor of poetry, no matter how slovenly might be its form. If he seemed often perverse in his way of looking at things or in putting his ideas, "his riddles were worth the reading," as Mr. Emerson has well observed. Perhaps nothing is more common in his writings than the element of unexpectedness. He is a bracing and entertaining companion, because you never know where he is to begin or where his mood will land you. In the poem I copy below he describes

THE POET'S DELAY.

In vain I see the morning rise,
 In vain observe the western blaze,
 Who idly look to other skies,
 Expecting life by other ways.

Amidst such boundless wealth without,
 I only still am poor within:
 The birds have sung their summer out,
 But still my spring does not begin.

Shall I, then, wait the autumn wind,
 Compelled to seek a milder day,
 And leave no curious nest behind,
 No woods still echoing to my lay?

There is a piece of blank verse with which he opens his "Report of the Natural History of Massachusetts" that is memorably good. In blank verse, which he handled passably well, and sometimes with perfection, he relished, I suspect, the freedom which dispensed with the trammels of rhyme. It is doubtful if Massachusetts, or any State, in fact, has ever issued, before or since, a public document containing so much good poetry as Thoreau put in this. It is in this paper that we find his fluent and graphic verses upon the swollen stream, a part of which we give below :

The river swelleth more and more,
Like some sweet influence stealing o'er
The passive town ; and for a while
Each tussock makes a tiny isle,
Where on some friendly Ararat
Resteth the weary water-rat.

* * * * *

Our village shows a rural Venice,
Its broad lagoons where yonder fen is ;
As lovely as the Bay of Naples
Yon placid cove amid the maples ;
And in my neighbor's field of corn
I recognize the Golden Horn.

Here Nature taught from year to year,
When only red men came to hear ;
Methinks 'twas in this school of art
Venice and Naples learned their part ;
But still their mistress, to my mind,
Her young disciples leaves behind.

In his poem of "Sympathy," which is the first in Mr. Emerson's little collection already referred to, there runs all through a subtile argument deliciously characteristic of the writer. It amounts to the fact that he had just lost a companion whom he had loved in the wrong way and did not rightly appreciate until his departure revealed him :

On every side he open was as day,
That you might see no lack of strength within,
For walls and ports do only serve away
For a pretence to feebleness and sin.

Say not that Cæsar was victorious,
With toil and strife who stormed the House of Fame :
In other sense this youth was glorious,
Himself a kingdom wheresoe'er he came.

* * * * *

He forayed like the subtile haze of summer,
 That stilly shows fresh landscapes to our eyes,
 And revolutions worked without a murmur,
 Or rustling of a leaf beneath the skies.

So was I taken unaware by this,
 I quite forgot my homage to confess;
 Yet now am forced to know, though hard it is,
 I might have loved him, had I loved him less.

* * * * *

Is't then too late the damage to repair?
 Distance, forsooth, from my weak grasp has reft
 The empty husk, and clutched the useless tare,
 But in my hands the wheat and kernel left.

If I but love that virtue which he is,
 Though it be scented in the morning air,
 Still shall we be truest acquaintances,
 Nor mortals know a sympathy more rare.

This is hardly a contemporary strain. It is not the voice of a modern, but that of an Elizabethan poet; and so you can equally well say of a great many of the verses that he wrote. They would seem not inappropriate to put to the account of Herbert, Lovelace, or Sidney. You will certainly find few like them in the age of Tennyson. Of this particular poem, of which we have quoted less than half, Mr. Emerson says, it "reveals the tenderness under that triple steel of stoicism and the intellectual subtilty it could animate." He goes further, and remarks that "his classic poem on 'Smoke' suggests Simonides, but is better than any poem of Simonides." But he wrote two poems on Smoke,—though we suspect the briefer one, which follows, is the one intended by this encomium. It reads thus :

SMOKE.

Light-wingéd Smoke! Icarian bird,
 Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight;
 Lark without song, and messenger of dawn,
 Circling above the hamlets as thy nest;
 Or else departing dream, and shadowy form
 Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts,
 By night star-veiling, and by day
 Darkening the light and blotting out the sun:
 Go thou, my incense, upward from this hearth,
 And ask the gods to pardon this clear flame.

Thoreau's poem on "Smoke in Winter," which is his remaining effort on this general topic, would be considered by many the very best

poem he ever wrote ; and it has good claims to that distinction. It would have done Wordsworth no discredit if it had been written by him, and may properly take rank, both for loftiness of thought and carefulness of style, with the best that Wordsworth accomplished in the same field. I think Thoreau has written other poems that may be called evenly good, according to the most orthodox tests ; but in this, certainly, he forgot all perversity, and kept his art in mind at each step. Mark, for instance, such lines as these, not only for their descriptive but also for their poetic quality, and who has written better ?—

The sluggish smoke curls up from some deep dell,
The stiffened air exploring in the dawn,
And making slow acquaintance with the day.

* * * * *
In wreathed loiterings dallying with itself.

* * * * *
It has gone down the glen with the light wind,
And o'er the plain unfurled its venturous wreath,
Draped the tree-tops, loitered upon the hill,
And warmed the pinions of the early bird,
And now, perchance, high in the crispy air,
Has caught sight of the day o'er the earth's edge,
And greets his master's eye at his low door,
As some refulgent cloud in the upper sky.

This subject was, to some extent, a favorite with him ; and he devotes poems also to each of those related topics, "Haze" and "Mist." It may be that these aimless, light, upward bodies, which seem half spirit as well as body, and which stream between the world which is and the one we dream of, in some way pictured to him his own journey of life. He was alive always, and most, to a distant message, and kept an alert eye for the newest oracle and the nimblest messenger. He was enraptured especially by music. "It teaches us again and again," he says, "to trust the remotest and finest as the divinest instinct, and makes a dream our only real experience. . . . There are in it such strains as far surpass any man's faith in the loftiness of his destiny." And by other such telling comments he prefaces his

RUMORS FROM AN ÆOLIAN HARP.

There is a vale which none hath seen,
Where foot of man has never been,
Such as here lives with toil and strife,
An anxious and a sinful life.

There every virtue has its birth
Ere it descends upon the earth,

And thither every deed returns
Which in the generous bosom burns.

There love is warm, and youth is young,
And poetry is yet unsung ;
For Virtue still adventures there,
And freely breathes her native air.

And ever, if you hearken well,
You still may hear the vesper-bell,
And tread of high-souled men go by,
Their thoughts conversing with the sky.

The larger part of Thoreau's poems are to be found in his book of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers," which, on the whole, is his book of widest range. In his other volumes he is more committed and kept to special themes ; but in this he brings together the ends of the earth. It seems as responsive to Greek philosophy and the Vedic scriptures as it is devoted to the natural wonders of his journey. Like the family scrap-bag, it abounds in everything. Plato and Sophocles are as much attended to as are the casual bird and the familiar flower. Whoever is capable of reading it in the author's high spirit will consider it one of the half-dozen most charming books in the world. It is a "Robinson Crusoe" written large, and written for the mature and philosophic mind. You cannot take his poems inserted here from their appropriate setting without serious loss ; but those who remember them in their place know to what thought they became tributary on the first perusal.

In one of his speculations in this book he has a fine poem on the kind of estimation he coveted, which these stanzas will partially represent. He says in it,—

My love must be as free
As is the eagle's wing,
Hovering o'er land and sea
And everything.

I must not dim my eye
In thy saloon ;
I must not leave my sky
And nightly moon.

* * * *

I cannot leave my sky
For thy caprice.
True love would soar as high
As heaven is.

The eagle would not brook
 Her mate thus won,
 Who trained his eye to look
 Beneath the sun.

Thoreau's independence and dislike of merely beaten paths would have driven him naturally from obedience to metrical rules (in spite of his easy ability to master them), when license was required. And so he took a wild liberty often with his lines. They were short and rough and rambling, and startled the reader not more by their caprice of rhythm than by their use of words not usually considered possible to a poet. A good sample of his style where it puts itself on the level of doggerel is the poem on "The Old Marlborough Road" in his essay on "Walking." But he puts his brave thought in it. He considers a road as "the bare possibility of going somewhere," and ends his reflections with this characteristic bit of philosophy :

If with fancy unfurled
 You leave your abode,
 You may go round the world
 By the old Marlborough Road.

In one sense the verses seem like a childish drivell which any one might imitate rapidly and to order ; but, somehow, he made even this manner serve his thought. A feeble writer might well enough parody the structure mechanically : it would be quite another thing to inspire it with a really poetic conception and conclusion.

In his poems everywhere the note of sincerity lends its force and charm. The vigor of his expression is due to this. How strong these lines are in his poem of "Inspiration" !

But if with bended neck I grope,
 Listening behind me for my wit,
 * * * * *
 Making my soul accomplice there
 Unto the flame my heart hath lit,
 Then will the verse forever wear :
 Time cannot bend the line which God hath writ.

This poem, which was originally much longer than it now is, as it stands in the book of his "Letters," contains, farther on, expressions of the most lofty religious fervor, not easily matched by any contemporary muse. The lines in which they occur were often quoted and requoted by himself, and so I append them below :

I hearing get, who had but ears,
 And sight, who had but eyes before ;

I moments live, who lived but years,
And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
And only now my prime of life;
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,
'Tis peace's end, and war's beginning strife.
* * * * *

I will not doubt the love untold
Which not my worth nor want hath bought,
Which wooed me young, and woos me old,
And to this evening hath me brought.

His brief poem on "Prayer" is in much the same vein; and it successfully blends the self-reliance of an ancient Stoic with the trust of the Christian saint. It is the conjunction of Epictetus with Herbert or Fénelon:

Great God! I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself;
That in my conduct I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye;
That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practise more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated thy designs.

Mr. Thoreau's nearest friends are accustomed to say that he had a more genial and sunny side than the casual caller or stranger was apt to discover, or than was sometimes reflected by his utterance. In his religious lines one may see that if he was stoical he was not wholly a stoic, and that he could feel and experience both trust and love.

Poetry was either Thoreau's diversion or his reliance when prose failed. He believed that, in the main, prose was the better medium; but he read the best poets largely, and selected from them with rare felicity. In the "Week" he gives us several pages of his own translations from Anacreon, an author who seemed, singularly enough, to be attractive to him. "Great prose, of equal elevation," he says, "commands our respect more than great verse, since it implies a more permanent and level height, a life more pervaded with the grandeur of the thought. The poet often only makes an irruption, like a Parthian, and is off again, shooting while he retreats; but the prose writer has conquered, like a Roman, and settled colonies." He preferred to live in deeds rather than in words, and said,—

My life has been the poem I would have writ,
But I could not both live and utter it.

Still, as Emerson says, "his biography is in his verses." You find his salient traits all brought together there. That sturdy self-assertion, his love of paradox, his defence of that truth which is anti-proverbial and not apparent, his vision of the all in each, his emphasis on the present tense and the place where he then stood in speaking, his almost Swedenborgian belief in the double meaning of things, the mystic and hidden being the one he held chiefly valuable,—all these are best focussed in his poetry, though easily enough seen in his essays and narratives.

Thoreau's poetry is not of the kind that will lift the reader by any lyric sweep of prodigious exaltation, but it appeals rather to the inner spirit, like the lines of Wordsworth and Emerson. It brings with it no drum and fife; it expresses, instead, the rapture and fervor and ecstasy of the still small voice. It carries with it the unconscious melody of the brook's ripple and the jocund spirit of the bird's song.

One of his poems, untitled when it first appeared, and afterwards called "The Fisher's Boy," gives almost an epitome of his own life. It is, in fact, picture, biography, and poem together :

My life is like a stroll upon the beach
As near the ocean's edge as I can go;
My tardy steps its waves sometimes o'erreach,
Sometimes I stay to let them overflow.

My sole employment 'tis and scrupulous care
To place my gain beyond the reach of tides,
Each smoother pebble and each shell more rare
Which Ocean kindly to my hand confides.

I have but few companions on the shore;
They scorn the strand who sail upon the sea;
Yet oft I think the ocean they've sailed o'er
Is deeper known upon the strand to me.

The middle sea contains no crimson dulse,
Its deeper waves cast up no pearls to view;
Along the shore my hand is on its pulse,
And I converse with many a shipwrecked crew.

Joel Benton.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER XVII.

JACOB AS A HERO.

THE virtues and advantages of early rising have been extolled from time immemorial. The advocates of sitting up late have so little chance of being listened to that they seldom venture to assert themselves, and must take comfort from the thought that their habit is more imitated, if less admired, than the other. However, both practices have one advantage in common,—namely, that of increased elbow-room for him who adopts them, and a sense of self-approbation arising from the knowledge that he has all his wits about him, while so many of his fellow-mortals are horizontal, unconscious, and quite powerless for good or evil. It was probably for this reason that that young misanthrope Jacob Stiles was wont to take his walks abroad at an hour when the blinds at Farndon Court were still down and nobody was stirring, unless, it might be, the grooms taking the horses out to exercise.

Jacob slipped out noiselessly, as usual, on the morning after the return of the master of the house; and a very fine morning it was. An autumn sun, with little enough power in it, but luminosity enough to satisfy the soul of any rising artist, was sending slant rays across the drenched grass of the park; the mists were curling up from the lake, and the woods, in all the glory of varied color, suggested no thought of death or decay at that moment of general awakening. Jacob strolled along one of the gravelled paths which led through clumps of rhododendrons to the shrubbery, filled his lungs with the keen morning air, rejoiced in the fresh, moist smell of the earth, and thought to himself—as he sometimes did before the cares of the day came upon him—that this world, despite all that seems to prove the contrary, must really be a place in which man is meant to be happy.

If his back had not been turned to the house, he would have seen that another early riser had emerged from it and was following in his footsteps. Also, if he had possessed that power of thought-reading which has found so much favor with our half-sceptical, half-credulous generation, and which would be so excessively inconvenient if it were real, he might have discovered that that other person's reflections were pretty nearly identical with his own. Never yet had Hope known any troubles which a bright morning could not dissipate, at least for the time being.

It is probable that she had not retired in the best of spirits after her conversation with her sister-in-law on the previous evening ; but when one is twenty years of age and in perfect health, heaviness is apt to endure but for a night. Hope had now been two months married, and she had spoken nothing but the truth in saying that she had not felt bored during that time. If she and her husband were not precisely the lovers that Miss Herbert had hastily assumed them to be, they were at any rate excellent friends, and, as Hope had never expected more than that, she had every reason to be satisfied. Dick had been kindness itself. Certainly no lover could have been more anxious to surround her with luxuries and to make her journey enjoyable for her ; and now that she had been brought back to her new home, she found it all that she could have wished. When she had walked some little distance she turned and looked back at the house, with its steep roofs glistening in the sun, and had no fault to find with its architecture. It was not so grand a place as Helston Abbey, but it had a more habitable air, and seemed to smile in a friendly manner upon its young mistress. Hope improved the occasion by a few good resolutions. She was not going to be fretful and capricious again, as she knew that she had sometimes been during her engagement ; she was not going to waste any more time in wondering whether her lot was exactly that which she would have chosen if she had been free to choose ; above all things, she was not going to be exacting. What, under the circumstances, could be more absurd than that she should show herself exacting ? Of course Dick must be allowed to go away and stay away as often and as long as he pleased ; when he came home it would be her duty to make his home pleasant for him, that was all. It was true that that duty might be a little more easy to perform if his house had not happened to contain a sister of cynical proclivities ; but Hope was determined not to dwell upon drawbacks that fine, sunshiny morning : so she turned away again and resumed her walk towards the shrubbery.

Thus it was that Jacob, who was standing with folded arms, gazing absently at the view, became conscious of her approach. She did not see him ; and, obeying the impulse which was always his first impulse on catching sight of a fellow-creature, he concealed himself behind a belt of evergreens and waited. She passed quite close to him, walking slowly and swinging the sunshade which she carried in her hand, while he, peering between the branches, scanned her features with eager curiosity. His verdict upon her was that Miss Herbert had made use of a very inadequate expression in describing her as pretty. "I am not at all sure," he mused, "that she is not the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. She has a good face, too : I don't think she will want to

turn me adrift. Though, God knows, it would be no great misfortune to me to be turned out of Farndon !”

Then he became more analytical. Jacob's art-studies had been conducted in harmony with those canons for which Tristram could not find words to express his scorn, and he knew what the ideal human form ought to be. He measured Hope by this standard, and found that her defects were too trifling to deserve mention. After that he proceeded to somewhat subtler but not less confident conclusions. “There is an odd sort of expression in those gray eyes of hers: she seems to be looking for something that she hasn't found yet. She is not unhappy, but she is not happy either; and it would surprise me very much to hear that she was in love with her husband.”

This shows that Jacob's powers of observation were of no mean order, and that, for all his disinclination to look his neighbors in the face, he must have studied them surreptitiously to some purpose. Indeed, if he had not done so he could hardly have been the very promising artist that he was.

Hope, meanwhile, pursued her leisurely way, happily unconscious that behind the bushes on her right hand there lurked a youth capable of drawing such startlingly rapid deductions from a mere glimpse of her face. On reaching the end of the shrubbery, she found herself at an iron gate, beyond which a footpath led across the park; and, as she had still plenty of time before her, she wandered down this until at length she came to the margin of the lake, where she found a punt moored. It is a peculiarity of punts, as distinguished from other boats, that nobody can look at them without instantly wishing to get into them and sit down. Hope experienced this desire, and, although the seats of the punt in question were still wet with the night dews, she gave effect to it. She had not been seated long when another ambition, almost equally natural and harmless, took possession of her. Some fifty yards away from her there was a small island, round the shores of which a bed of water-lilies had spread itself. The silver cups dotted over that expanse of flat green leaves were all the more tempting because they were out of reach, and, after Hope had contemplated them longingly for a few minutes, and had noticed that a long pole was lying at her feet, she could not resist unfastening the painter which attached the punt to its stake.

Now, everybody knows that water-lilies are not easy flowers to pluck; but everybody does not know—because there are comparatively so few people who have tried it—that it is even more difficult for a novice to manipulate a punt-pole. Hope pushed herself off from the bank quite successfully; but she soon discovered that to shape her

course for any given point was another matter. Also, the punt-pole had a disagreeable tendency to get under the bottom of the punt and drag her, head first, into the water after it. Rather than let it succeed in this malignant intention, she allowed it at last to slip out of her fingers altogether,—a thing she never would have done if she had realized what must be the inevitable result of such imprudence. To be drifting about in a flat-bottomed boat close to dry land, yet hopelessly removed from it, and to see the punt-pole which might be the salvation of you floating in a tantalizing manner just beyond your grasp, is a position trying alike to the patience and the dignity. Hope would gladly have paid five pounds to any one who would have rescued her from it; but as nobody to whom five pounds could be offered was in sight, and as she could not bring herself to the humiliating course of shrieking for assistance, there was nothing for her to do but to sit down and make the best of it. “I suppose they will begin to look for me when I don’t turn up at breakfast,” she reflected, “and then there will be a hue and cry. If it were only Dick, I shouldn’t mind so much; but I feel sure that Carry knows how to use a punt-pole, and will be quite unable to understand what I dropped the thing into the water for. Perhaps, if I wait long enough, it will float back to me.”

But it did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it drifted in the opposite direction; and Hope was disconsolately wondering whether she would be drowned if she jumped overboard, when, to her great joy, she caught sight of a slim young man hastening across the slopes of the park with an evident intention of offering help. This was no other than Jacob Stiles, who from the wooded hill above had watched Hope’s proceedings and had seen what had happened to her. When he reached the brink of the lake he paused for a moment in his irresolute way, and then, raising his hat, called out, “You have lost your punt-pole, haven’t you? Shall I come and lend you a hand?”

“Oh, please do!” cried Hope, without stopping to ask herself how her request was to be complied with.

Jacob made no reply, but sat down and began to unlace his boots.

“What are you going to do?” asked Hope, anxiously. “Can’t you go and get a boat?”

“The boat-house is half a mile away, and I don’t know who has the key,” answered Jacob, kicking off his boots. “Don’t be alarmed: I can swim like a fish.”

“Oh, but you mustn’t!—you really mustn’t!” remonstrated Hope. And then, under her breath, “What an extraordinary young man! Surely he can’t be going to take all his clothes off!”

He was not so indiscreet. He only divested himself of his coat,

waistcoat, and hat, waded a short distance into the water, and then struck out. The punt-pole was soon captured and restored. "Now, do you think you can manage to shove yourself back?" he asked, rather breathlessly.

"Oh, yes, if you tell me what to do," answered Hope; "but hadn't I better try to drag you into the boat first?"

"I am all right, thank you," said Jacob: "I can swim back in less time than it would take me to scramble into the punt."

That seemed likely enough, and, not to keep him longer in the water than she could help, Hope said no more, but followed his instructions, and so was enabled in the course of a minute or two to set foot on shore again. Then she began to feel very sorry and very much ashamed, and expressed herself to that effect.

"Why did you not go and get the boat, as I told you?" she asked, reproachfully.

"Because it would have taken such a long time," answered Jacob, who was standing up to his knees in water and making the punt fast. "Was it those water-lilies that you wanted?"

"Yes: it was very stupid of me. I wish I had not happened to see them."

"I can easily get you some, if that is all," remarked Jacob, unfastening the knot which he had just tied.

"Indeed," exclaimed Hope, "you'll do no such thing! What are you thinking of? Your teeth are chattering as it is, and you look quite blue with cold. You must go home at once. I won't keep you even to say thank you; but I shall see you again soon, I hope. I am Mrs. Herbert. Perhaps you live somewhere near this?"

"I live here," Jacob replied, smiling. "My name is Stiles,—Jacob Stiles." He brought out the two last words with something of an effort, for it was always painful to him to pronounce that plebeian name of his. Moreover, he perceived that Mrs. Herbert had mistaken him for an equal, and to correct mistakes of that kind is what nobody ever enjoys. "Have you not heard of me?" he asked, seeing that she looked none the wiser.

Hope shook her head. The fact is that Dick had only once chanced to mention his *protégé* to her, and that was so long ago that the circumstance had escaped her memory. She was a good deal puzzled to account for the presence at Farndon of an inmate who had the appearance and voice of a gentleman, though his existence had apparently been thought too unimportant to be made known to her, and she would gladly have put a few more questions to him. However, even if he had been quite dry she might have hesitated to do that, and to cross-examine him in

his present dripping condition would have been tantamount to manslaughter. So she said, "You really must not stand here talking another minute, Mr. Stiles. Do go back to the house; and run the whole way, please."

"I should find it rather easier to walk, if you don't mind," answered Jacob, emboldened by the friendliness of her manner to adopt a somewhat more familiar tone than was customary with him.

"Well, as it is all up hill, and your clothes are so heavy with the water,—only mind you walk very fast, and pray don't lose any more time. We shall meet later in the day. That is, unless you think you had better go to bed."

"There will be no necessity for that," said Jacob.

He had now resumed his coat and boots, and was without excuse for lingering longer: so he did as he was told, and was soon out of sight.

Hope followed him at a less rapid pace. When she entered the breakfast-room she found Dick and Carry already seated and perusing their respective letters.

"I have made a good start," she remarked, as she took her place: "I have had an adventure already. Why did you never tell me anything about a Mr. Stiles, who says he lives here?"

"Probably because it never occurred to him that Stiles could be the hero of an adventure," observed Carry. "On second thoughts, though, there would be a certain appropriateness in it if he were; for he happens to be an adventurer."

"I don't know why you are always so down on poor Jake, Carry," said Dick. "He is no more an adventurer than I am; he is an artist,—and an uncommonly clever one too, for that matter. I thought I had spoken to you about him, Hope. How has he been distinguishing himself this morning?"

"By plunging into an ice-cold lake with his clothes on," answered Hope. And then she gave a brief account of the episode alluded to, whereat both her husband and Miss Herbert laughed, the former good-humoredly, the latter ironically.

"I condole with you," Carry said. "It was hard luck to have such a compliment paid to you by a romantic-looking youth, and then to discover that he was only a Jacob Stiles after all. If you confine yourself to adventures of that kind, you won't find Farndon very exciting, I am afraid."

"I dare say it will be exciting enough to satisfy me," answered Hope, rather dryly. She could not help thinking that Carry had every inclination to treat her to the excitement of a pitched battle; and that

seemed a little hard, considering how pacific her own dispositions were.

As soon as breakfast was over, Dick asked her whether she would like to go over the house with him,—a proposal to which she readily assented. She expressed herself much pleased with all that she saw; and, indeed, the bedrooms afforded little scope for criticism. On the first floor Dick put his head into a large and comfortably-furnished sitting-room, and, having ascertained that it was empty, threw open the door. "These are Carry's quarters," he explained. "Carry is a young woman of fortune, I ought to tell you. She has her own servants and her own horses, and all the rest of it. I suppose she would have her own house, too, only her uncles and aunts kicked up such a row when she talked about living alone. I hope you won't find her awfully in your way here."

He cast a rather appealing glance at his wife, who smiled back upon him reassuringly.

"Don't be afraid," she answered: "I mean to conduct myself properly."

And, as they perfectly understood one another, there was no need to dwell any longer upon a ticklish subject.

"Now," said Dick, leading the way down-stairs again, "I'll show you my den. I had it locked up while those furniture-people were rampaging about, so you won't find it as spick-and-span as the rest of the house; but, such as it is, it's what I'm accustomed to, and I didn't want it meddled with."

Spick-and-span it certainly was not; but, like every other room in Farndon Court, it was large, airy, and cheerful. An immense oak writing-table, facing the windows, was covered with a mass of newspapers, letters, bills, and other documents, tossed pell-mell upon it by its untidy owner; the walls exhibited every known variety of gun and rifle, besides numerous fishing-rods and a few magnificent heads of wapiti, ibex, antelope, and other big game. But it was not upon these things that Hope's eyes rested; for the moment that she passed through the door-way she caught sight of two easels, supporting two pictures, with every detail of which she had good reason to be familiar. It must be confessed that her first sensation on recognizing these works of art was one of keen disappointment; but the next instant she remembered that there was nothing to be disappointed about. A few months ago it might have been another affair; but now what could it signify?

"So you were my one and only patron?" she said, turning to her husband with a slight laugh. "I might have suspected as much."

"Well, yes," answered Dick, apologetically. "You see, I thought I should like to have something of yours, and——"

"And you thought you would like to give me a little false encouragement at the same time. Thank you: it was kind of you, Dick."

"Intentions were good," murmured Dick, who perhaps knew more of what was passing in his wife's mind than she supposed.

She turned away with a sigh. "All that belongs to the past," she said. "The grapes are sour now, and I don't want to be an artist any more. Tell me about the real artist,—Mr. Stiles. Does he live here always? And how comes he to be here at all?"

"Jake? Oh, there isn't much to tell about him. I took him up—adopted him, you may say—when he was a little chap, and he has made his way by his own exertions. They tell me he will be an R.A. one of these days. Would you like to see his studio? We shall find him at work, most likely."

"Unless he is in bed with symptoms of rheumatic fever coming on," remarked Hope. "The very least I can do is to inquire after him."

Jacob, however, was not in bed, and declared himself to be none the worse for the cold bath that he had taken. Hope noticed a change in his voice and a certain constraint in his manner, which made her fancy that he was not best pleased at being intruded upon; but that did not deter her from lingering awhile in the great bare studio which had been assigned to him at the top of the house. There was not very much to look at; for it was Jacob's system never to undertake more than one work at a time, and the canvas before which he was standing exhibited only a rough outline. Yet, rough though it was, it interested Hope, who recognized in it a dexterity such as she had never been able to attain to.

"I wish I could do that!" she sighed.

Jacob had none of the pride that apes humility. "It takes a long time to learn," he said; "but I think almost anybody who chooses to take the trouble can learn it."

"Ah," said Hope, rather sadly, "that is what I used to think; but I know better now."

And then a conversation began in which Dick felt that he was in no way qualified to take a part, so he said, "I think I'll just go round to the stables. You two can entertain each other for a bit, I dare say."

Jacob seemed to breathe more freely after he was gone. He had a good deal to say about painting, and said it with modesty and knowledge of his subject, and after a time he produced a portfolio of sketches with which Hope was greatly struck. His style was the opposite of

Tristram's, being chiefly remarkable for its exquisite finish ; but there was nothing small in his treatment of a subject, and his arrangement of color, light, and shade had the ease of a master of his craft.

"You ought to be very happy !" exclaimed Hope, rather enviously, when she came to the end of the collection. "Have you sent anything to the Academy yet?"

"Not yet: I thought it best to wait until I was pretty sure of success."

"But of course you will exhibit soon ; and then all of a sudden you will find yourself famous."

"Perhaps," said Jacob.

The listlessness of his tone surprised Hope, who looked up at him with inquiring eyes.

"Are you not ambitious?" she asked.

"I don't think I have much ambition," he answered. "I shall be satisfied if I can make enough to live upon."

"You are quite sure of being able to do that ; and, after all, that is a great deal. At least, I used to think so. Did Mr. Herbert tell you that I once intended to be an artist?"

"He said that you painted very well."

"But not well enough, unfortunately. I was more ambitious than you are: I wanted to excel. Still, like you, I should have been contented if I could have earned my bread by my brush."

Jacob looked a little puzzled. "'Earning your bread' is only a way of speaking with you, Mrs. Herbert ; to me it means more than you can understand, perhaps. I—I am living upon charity now."

He flushed slightly as he uttered the last words, and Hope, to relieve him, said, "That was just my own position. My father lost all his money at the time of his death, and it was quite necessary that I should do something to support myself. It is all over now, and I don't mind talking about it ; but it was a dreadful grief to me when I was told that I should never succeed."

"How could anybody know that?"

"I suppose there are not many people who could have known it, or who would have liked to say so if they had ; but it was a great artist who told me, and I am sure he was not mistaken. He knew how it would hurt me to hear the truth, and that made it all the more kind of him to speak honestly."

Jacob was standing with one foot upon a chair, his elbow resting on his knee and his hand supporting his chin. He looked down with curious, compassionate eyes at Hope, who was seated near him. "Was this long ago?" he asked.

“Oh, no ; only a few months,—although it seems like years.”

She did not know what a quick-witted observer she had to deal with ; but in truth a far duller fellow than Jacob would have divined the history of Mrs. Herbert's engagement and marriage after that. She herself felt that she had been a little too communicative, and changed the subject.

Jacob was very willing to talk about art and pleased to be talked to ; but she did not succeed in breaking down his reticence or in inducing him to give her any information about himself. She went away at last, feeling sorry for the poor young man, although she could have given no definite reason for her pity, and was horrified to find that she had taken up rather more than an hour of his valuable time. “What a nuisance I must have been to him !” she thought.

She would have been very much astonished had she been told that that hour of conversation had earned her a friend whose gratitude and devotion would cease only with his life. Just so a vagrant dog, acquainted with the rough usage of the streets and the kicks of the passers-by, will attach himself to some kind-hearted person who stoops unthinkingly to pat him on the head, and will never leave that kind-hearted person again. And this is one reason why kind-hearted persons and others—especially others—should beware of noticing stray dogs.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOPE RECEIVES VISITORS.

IF Hope did not as yet feel any such attachment for Jacob Stiles as he felt for her, she was nevertheless greatly interested in him and anxious to hear a little more of his antecedents, because he seemed to require interpretation in more ways than one. Dick, when interrogated, was apt to become so hopelessly monosyllabic that she did not think it worth while to pursue him to the stables and attack him with questions ; but, happening to find her sister-in-law in the drawing-room, she was able to glean a part of the information that she desired from that quarter.

“I look upon Jake Stiles,” Miss Herbert said, “as a living example of the folly of heedless benevolence. For reasons best known to himself, my brother picked him up when he was a child, brought him into the house, and gave him what I suppose you might call the education

of a gentleman. The natural consequence is that he is now about as miserable a being as you will meet with anywhere. At all events, he looks so. He is neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring."

"He is an artist," said Hope.

"Is he? I can't pretend to your knowledge of such subjects; but, even if he is, I should imagine that it was not much consolation to him to be an artist when nature evidently meant him to be a groom, or possibly a huntsman. Personally I don't like Stiles; his manners are not engaging, and he always gives me the impression that he would be insolent if he dared; but, to do him justice, he is a fine rider, and, though he doesn't appear to have much pluck at ordinary times, he has plenty of it on horseback. I have a mare in the stables that I wanted to get rid of two years ago because she frightened me by the way she touched timber. Stiles asked to be allowed to take her in hand, and now I wouldn't part with her for any money. His system was to cram her at the biggest fence he could find and give her a rattling fall; and three or four lessons were enough for her. It was a rather more heroic remedy than most people would like to adopt, but it was completely successful."

"And you allowed him to risk his life in that way?" exclaimed Hope.

Carry laughed. "He did it to please himself, I presume: apparently he doesn't set much store by his life. As for me, I really didn't care whether I kept the mare or not, and I can't say that I cared very much whether Stiles broke his neck or not either. You must try not to be shocked by my brutal frankness of speech: it's a family failing."

Hope thought she would let that observation pass without comment. "But I don't yet understand," she said, "why Mr. Stiles should be miserable,—if he is miserable."

"You had better not call him *Mr.* Stiles: he is not accustomed to it. I don't think there can be much doubt about his being miserable; and the reason is what I told you. He won't do for the drawing-room, and he won't do for the servants' hall: so he has to live in a sort of no-man's-land and eat his dinner in his studio, which, when you come to think of it, must be dull work."

"Of course it must be; and it seems very cruel to deprive the poor young man of any kind of company. Why should he not dine with us?"

"I dare say he would like that very much; but, unfortunately, it is not practicable. Humble as I am, I can't say that I should enjoy being taken in to dinner by Jacob Stiles, and we certainly could not ask our friends to sit down beside him. It is all Dick's fault. He ought

to have handed him over to the stud-groom in the first instance, instead of sending him to an expensive school."

"But as he did not do that——" began Hope.

"As he did not do that, the hapless Stiles must get what comfort he can out of painting pictures, and occasionally being rolled upon by refractory mares, or plunging into ponds to rescue ladies who have managed to get adrift. It is bad luck for Stiles; but it can't be helped."

This sounded a little peremptory, considering that Miss Herbert was not the mistress of the house; and, in spite of her wise resolutions, Hope could not refrain from arguing the point. "My father always used to say that talent has the same privileges as birth," she remarked. "Besides, when a man has been brought up as a gentleman and behaves like one, that ought to be sufficient. I will ask Dick what he thinks about it."

Two vertical lines appeared on Miss Herbert's forehead, and it looked very much as if her teeth were set behind her rather thin lips; but she, too, had formed certain resolutions, and when she opened her mouth it was only to say, "I had been wondering what line you would take up with regard to Stiles. I warned him that you would very likely wish to turn him out, neck and crop; but he had the happy inspiration of rushing into the water after you, and now his position is assured. At the same time, I doubt whether Dick will be prepared to receive him as a member of the family."

And, considerably to Hope's surprise and mortification, it turned out that Dick was not so prepared. She took the first opportunity of speaking to him upon the subject, and he answered, without any hesitation, that it wouldn't do. "Jake used to dine with me when he was younger and before Carry came to live here," he said; "but that was another affair altogether. Things are best as they are for the present, and, if he goes on as he has begun, he will have a home of his own before very long."

"I think," said Hope, "that he has been rather unfairly treated."

"Do you? Well, perhaps he has in some ways; and yet I hardly see what else could have been done. Anyhow, it wouldn't be either for his comfort or for ours to make a change at this time of day."

"It might help the conversation out a little," said Hope; for up to now her husband had gratified all her wishes, when he had not anticipated them, and it was grievous to think of Carry's triumph.

Dick rubbed his ear and looked contrite. "This sort of thing must be awfully slow work for you, of course," he said. "We must get some people down here to amuse you. Couldn't you ask a lot of your friends?"

"I could, no doubt, if I possessed a lot of friends," answered Hope; "but, as I have none, I must submit to the slowness." After this disagreeable speech her conscience smote her, and she added, humbly, "I am sorry I spoke so crossly, Dick: I don't really find it slow here at all."

"My dear girl," answered Dick, good-humoredly, "you weren't a bit cross; and as for your finding it slow, you must,—you can't help it. I know that if I were in your place I should perfectly detest being shut up in a country house with—with——"

"With whom?" inquired Hope.

"I was going to say with nothing particular to do. I'll get Francis and one or two other fellows to come down and shoot next week. They will be better than nobody."

Hope turned away, without replying. The matter-of-course and perfectly philosophical way in which Dick took it for granted that his society would not be acceptable to her vexed her and made her angry with him. She and he were not lovers, it was true, but they were friends,—at least, that was what he had averred when he proposed to her,—and friends ought surely to be able to live together without feeling the need of constant excitement. "It is one word for me and two for himself," she thought, rather ungratefully. In truth, to ask a party of men down to shoot seemed rather a roundabout way of providing her with a change of company.

Possibly this aspect of the case may have presented itself also to Dick; for when, before the post went out, he requested Hope to write the necessary invitations, these proved to be for the most part addressed to ladies whose husbands were shooting-men, and who were begged to put up with a few quiet days at Farndon for their husbands' sake. With most of these ladies Hope was already more or less acquainted, and she neither liked nor disliked any of them. Mr. Francis she did rather dislike, yet was prepared to extend to him the welcome due to Dick's most intimate friend.

Everybody accepted, and everybody came. It seemed not unlikely that the alacrity of these good people was stimulated by a desire to see and criticise the bride, and it is certain that, when they assembled, the eyes of all of them were fixed upon her with a curiosity of which she was fully conscious. This she did not object to, thinking it natural enough, if a trifle embarrassing; and it ceased to be perceptible after the first evening. But she could not help resenting the closeness with which Mr. Francis watched her throughout his stay, because she felt sure that he was busily taking notes the whole time of the many particulars in which she failed to come up to his notion of what Dick Herbert's

wife ought to be. Also, she fancied that he communicated his impressions to Carry, with whom he appeared to be upon exceedingly friendly terms.

On the evening before his departure she committed the indiscretion of asking him whether he remembered a certain conversation which she had had with him a few months before in Eaton Square.

He made gestures to simulate the rending of his clothes and the heaping of ashes on his head. "Mrs. Herbert," he said, "the memory of that dreadful conversation will remain with me to my dying day. I would ask you to forgive me, only I know that that would be useless."

"I will forgive you," said Hope, "if you will withdraw what you said on that occasion."

Francis made a grimace. "The condition is a hard one to swallow," he remarked. "I don't think recantations are much good, as a general rule. Galileo recanted, and was sent to prison all the same; Cranmer recanted, and had to recant his recantation at the stake. You see, the worst of it is that I meant what I said. Only you might bear in mind that I didn't mean it to apply to you."

"But you think that it applies to me," persisted Hope.

"My dear Mrs. Herbert, is it quite fair to impute thoughts to me which I have never expressed? But I will continue to be honest and tell you the simple truth, though I shall probably make you hate me worse than ever. I don't know what to think: I am puzzled."

"Is not that, perhaps, because you are so very clever? People who are always trying to find out what lies beneath the surface must often be puzzled, I suppose; for it does occasionally happen that there is nothing to discover."

"Didn't I tell you that I should make you hate me worse than ever? It can do me no harm now, and it may do you some good, if I assure you that every word I said about Dick that night was gospel truth."

"I have no doubt you believe it to be so, and I quite recollect all that you said. Dick's wife was to make herself his shadow, otherwise all sorts of terrible things would happen; wasn't that it? But—do you know?—I fancy that Dick is quite contented with the one shadow which he already possesses. He has never yet asked me to share a single one of his pursuits; but, profiting by your kind advice, I have offered my company once or twice, and his polite resignation has been beautiful to witness. This emboldens me to think that perhaps, after all, I may understand my husband almost as well as you do."

A gleam of sudden and intense amusement swept across Mr. Francis's face. He was thinking to himself, "As I live, the woman's

jealous ! and Herbert is a deep diplomatist, without knowing it !” But he said aloud, with suitable gravity, “ Don’t be weary in well-doing, Mrs. Herbert : in due season you will reap if you faint not.”

And with that he turned on his heel, leaving Hope very angry.

Whatever may have been Mr. Francis’s opinion of his friend’s wife, Hope’s other guests carried away with them the memory of a pleasant and gracious hostess. She exerted herself to make their stay agreeable, she found them easy enough to entertain, and she was heartily glad when they all took themselves off. But what was far more delightful than this was Carry’s announcement that she intended to give herself an indefinite leave of absence. She had a round of visits to pay, she said, and really could not tell how long they might last. She might be back in a week or two, or she might be away for a couple of months. “ I go and return as the fancy takes me,” she explained. To which Hope could only reply that that was the true way to enjoy life, and inwardly trust that her sister-in-law might long remain free from the fancy to return.

Whether Dick’s sentiments were identical with her own she could not tell for certain, because he was so silent and never spoke evil of the absent ; but there were signs that increased freedom was not unwelcome to him. Had that freedom been just a little less absolute, Hope would have been better pleased. She was obliged to admit this to herself, though somewhat ashamed of the admission. She was sure that the servants must think it odd that her husband should be away from morning to night, shooting, attending magistrates’ meetings, and what not. After all, he was her husband, and it would have been natural for him to offer to ride or drive with her occasionally. But he did not seem to think so ; and certainly, when they met, he was as kind and friendly as it was possible to be. Nor did she find her life dull. She was accustomed to being left to her own devices, and she had occupations enough in receiving the neighbors, whose name was legion, in returning their calls, in driving the cobs which Dick had bought for her through the glades of Windsor Park and Forest, and in discussing art with Jacob Stiles, whom she saw every day.

Nevertheless, a vague sense of disappointment was ever present with her. During her engagement she had been nervous and sometimes almost terrified, feeling that she was about to take a plunge in the dark and that lifelong misery or remorse might be awaiting her. But it was nothing of that kind that she experienced. She was not at all miserable ; marriage had brought her all that she had expected in her most sanguine moments, and more,—immunity from care and control, an amiable and most unobtrusive husband, and every luxury procurable by

money. If she wanted something in addition to all this, what in the world could it be that she wanted?

She was putting the above question to herself late one afternoon as she walked across the park towards the house, and she had not succeeded in finding an answer to it, when she caught sight of a horseman proceeding leisurely, with a loose rein, up the avenue. "Another native, I suppose," she thought. "Shall I see him, or shall I not? I think I won't."

But it was too late to make any choice as to that; for the supposed native had seen her already, had turned his horse off the road, and was now cantering across the grass towards her. As he drew nearer, he raised his hat; and then Hope recognized him.

"Captain Cunningham!" she exclaimed. "What can have brought you down into the depths of the country?"

"How do you do, Mrs. Herbert?" said the young man, dismounting, and passing his arm through his horse's bridle. "This isn't the depths of the country at all; it's within an easy ride of Windsor, where I have the misfortune—the good luck, I mean—to be quartered just now."

He looked handsomer than ever in the dark-colored suit and Newmarket boots, which, it is needless to say, fitted him to the utmost degree of perfection, and he appeared to be in the enjoyment of excellent health and spirits. "I thought," continued he, "that, as I was within hail of you, you wouldn't mind my looking you up."

"I should have been deeply offended if you had not," answered Hope.

She was unaffectedly glad to see the young fellow again, and had almost forgotten the constraint which had interfered with the pleasure of their last meeting. That, and the cause of it, were connected with the remote past; in Bertie Cunningham she saw only a friend of former days, whose unexpected vicinity might help to enliven present ones. "Come into the house," she said, "and I will give you a cup of tea."

"Is Miss Herbert here?" Cunningham inquired.

"No: she has gone away to stay with some of her friends."

"Oh! Anybody else staying with you?"

"Not a soul, I regret to say. You will have to put up with me for half an hour, if you will consent to remain so long. Dick is not likely to be in before dinner-time."

"That's all right!" cried the young man, in a tone of hearty satisfaction. "Then we can have a comfortable talk by ourselves, and you can tell me all your news."

"Only I haven't any to tell. You had better favor me with yours."

“I haven't any either ; but never mind, we'll talk about something that isn't news. That will give us a rather longer list of subjects, won't it?”

CHAPTER XIX.

HOPE SPOILS SPORT.

KING DAVID, it will be remembered, put off his sackcloth, washed his face, and began to eat and drink as usual, the moment he heard that his child was dead,—thereby astonishing his friends, who surely might have known better than to be astonished at so simple and human a manner of meeting the inevitable. For what some people call resignation to the Divine will, and others merely recuperative force, is essential to our existence, and it is certain that there would be no getting on without it in this world of loss and disappointment. Bertie Cunningham was as little conscious of being a philosopher as the *Bourgeois Gentleman* was of talking prose ; but this did not prevent him from regulating his life in accordance with strictly philosophical principles, of which the first and foremost was never to fret himself over what could not be helped. As soon, therefore, as Hope Lefroy had become the wife of another man he sought consolation and change of ideas, with so much success that, before the pheasant-shooting began, he was able to report himself to Mrs. Pierpoint by letter as completely cured. Now, if he had not been completely cured it would have been imprudent, not to say wrong, of him to call at Farndon Court ; but, as it was, what harm could there be in his renewing acquaintance with a lady to whom he had never declared his love and who might now at least be his friend ?

He found her a little altered,—whether for the better or not it was too early to determine ; but certainly she was no longer exactly what she had been before her marriage. She was more matronly, more dignified, perhaps a trifle graver ; but there was nothing either in her face or in her speech to indicate that she repented of the step which she had taken. As for her beauty, that seemed rather to have increased than diminished, he thought, as he watched her drinking her tea by the fire-light. In one respect, at any rate, she was unchanged : she had not yet picked up the society slang with which Bertie's ears were familiar ; she knew nothing of the absorbing topics which he was accustomed to hear discussed over the rims of teacups ; and so their conversation was chiefly about local matters. Bertie had been quartered at Windsor before, and knew the neighborhood well. He stated that it was not so bad, if you

didn't expect too much of it. There were the queen's hounds, and there was a fair amount of shooting, and every now and then somebody gave a ball.

"Do you mind driving ever so many miles for a dance, Mrs. Herbert?" he asked. "Shall you go in for these entertainments? I will if you will."

"That is a powerful inducement," answered Hope. "I dare say I shall go to some of them, if Dick will take me. But I am afraid balls are a great bore to him."

"He might be left at home," observed Bertie. "That is, I suppose he might. What do you do with yourself all day here? Write letters, and feed the chickens, and go out for a drive in the afternoon? Or do you still keep up your painting?"

"You have hit off my manner of life exactly," Hope replied. "No; I haven't begun to paint again yet. I am rather discouraged by the presence of an artist in the house. Did you ever hear of a Mr. Jacob Stiles who was adopted and educated by Dick, and who lives here?"

Captain Cunningham couldn't say that he ever had.

"I will introduce you to him some day," said Hope. And then she related the circumstances under which her own introduction to Jacob had been effected.

"The luck that some people have!" ejaculated Bertie. "Why wasn't I on the spot to cast myself into the water, instead of the chap with the aristocratic name?"

"You would have spoiled your clothes, and I know that would have been a grief to you; whereas the chap with the aristocratic name never gave a thought to his."

"What an unkind thing to say!—and so utterly false, too! Do you often favor your husband with speeches of that sort?"

"My husband has a soul far above clothes, and I never say disagreeable things to him, because he never boasts of the wonders that he would have performed if he had only had the opportunity. Used he not to be rather a friend of yours? I wish you would stay and dine, and then you would see him."

But Cunningham shook his head. "I wish I could; but, you see, I shouldn't be able to dress. Now, you needn't laugh; no civilized being enjoys sitting down to dinner in a shooting-coat. I should like to meet Herbert all the same. He might give a fellow a day's shooting."

"I have no doubt that he would, if he knew that a fellow was within reach. I won't fail to let him know."

Thus they went on talking innocent sort of nonsense and finding each other very pleasant company. At that time there was no thought of any such thing as love-making in the mind of either of them; they were both young, and there was between them that freemasonry which, alas! cannot coexist with disparity of years. "Crabbed age and youth cannot live together." It may be that a mutual understanding is somewhat difficult of attainment even between middle age and youth,—between a man in the prime of life, like Dick Herbert, and such a young couple as were now warming themselves beside Dick Herbert's hearth. At any rate, both Hope and Bertie Cunningham stopped talking nonsense when the master of the house strode into the room in gaiters and shooting-boots, having just returned from a long day's sport in the coverts of a neighbor.

Not that there was anything chilling in Dick's reception of his visitor. He shook hands with the young guardsman, said he was glad to see him (which thing he assuredly would not have said unless it had been true), and repeated with so much cordiality the invitation already given by his wife that Bertie allowed his scruples to be overruled and consented to stay to dinner.

Nevertheless, both during that repast and after it was over there was a certain feeling of restraint in the air. Three is proverbially an awkward number; moreover, Dick was not particularly fond of Bertie Cunningham, whom he looked upon as a rather poor specimen of the modern British warrior, and it was altogether beyond his power to conceal his likes and dislikes, although on this occasion he took more trouble to do so than usual. He did not omit to ask the young man to come over and shoot on a specified day, and showed perhaps an even greater consideration for his comfort by leaving the drawing-room almost as soon as they had re-entered it and only showing himself again just in time to say good-night.

Hope was leaning against the mantel-piece and looking down at the fire, with a smile upon her face, when her husband came back after seeing his guest ride away.

"Isn't he nice?" she said.

"He is a very good fellow," answered Dick.

As this was what Dick said about every man in whom he could find nothing special to commend, the compliment was not a very high one; but, such as it was, Hope did not cavil at it.

"I liked him much better to-day than I ever did before," she went on. "He is such a cheery, pleasant boy."

"Well," said Dick, "he isn't exactly a boy, you know. He wasn't born yesterday, in spite of his smooth face."

"Oh, but he is quite young in all his ways and ideas."

Dick, happening to hold a different opinion, did not give utterance to it, but said, "He will help us keep alive, I dare say. I am glad he is within reach, as you like him."

Hope was glad too; but she would have been a little less glad if she could have foreseen one consequence of the removal of Captain Cunningham's battalion from London to Windsor. She did not, however, trace any connection between cause and effect when she heard that Carry Herbert had abandoned the greater part of her intended visits and proposed to return to Farndon forthwith; only she felt a little annoyed that the sole intimation of this change of plans should have reached her through the servants. That Carry should make herself at home was all very well; but surely a few lines might have been addressed to the nominal mistress of the house.

Nothing is more irritating than a flea-bite. You must not complain of such things; you must not even (if you are in polite society) relieve your sufferings in the natural way; and that makes it extremely hard to bear. Hope received her sister-in-law with the utmost amiability; she was determined not to show that she was in the least vexed by the latter's lack of ceremony; but she was unable to forget it, and, what was worse, she strongly suspected that it had not been accidental.

And indeed it was not long before Carry chose to take what anybody must have considered a liberty. Captain Cunningham's second visit to Farndon was paid a few days after her return, and as soon as he was shown into the room where the two ladies were sitting she monopolized him in a manner which Hope did not altogether like, and which he himself evidently did not like at all. She seated herself close to him, she talked in a low voice, she made allusions quite unintelligible to a third person, and, in short, behaved in such a fashion that the third person began to wonder whether she had not better quit the scene. But this, though not in the best taste, was pardonable. What went very near to exhausting Hope's patience was to hear Carry coolly saying to their visitor, "Why don't you come over and stay a few days with us? You can get leave, I suppose. Come next week: the hounds are to meet close to us on Wednesday, and, if you haven't anything to ride, I'll put you up on one of mine."

It was a fortunate thing that Hope could not at the moment think of any method of administering the snub which this speech undoubtedly deserved; for it was not prudence that kept her silent. Bertie Cunningham undertook her revenge.

"Don't you think," he said, mildly, "that it might be as well to wait until I am asked?"

"Am I not asking you?" returned Carry, laughing. But she winced all the same, and Hope recovered her temper.

"Please come, if you can manage it, Captain Cunningham," said she. "You know how glad we shall be to see you."

An invitation given under such obvious pressure of circumstances could not be accepted without a little decent hesitancy; but Bertie did not protest to any wearisome length, because experience had taught him to believe that he was always welcome everywhere. Besides, he thought he would greatly enjoy a few days at Farndon Court,—which was even more to the purpose. To deny himself enjoyment, or the prospect of it, was what he had never done in all his life, and he had no notion of embarking upon a career of self-sacrifice now, although his eyes were sharp enough to discern breakers ahead. He could not devote his attention exclusively to Miss Herbert throughout his stay, or where would the enjoyment be? Yet he knew full well that, if he devoted his attention to anybody else, trouble would only too probably come of it. With as much physical courage as any ordinary person can require, he was sadly deficient in the moral variety of that attribute; and although he no longer (except every now and then, in a moment of despondency) thought of marrying Miss Herbert, he was mortally afraid of angering her. The state of her feelings was hardly a secret to him; of her liability to fits of unreasonable jealousy he had more than once had painful and convincing proof; finally, he perceived that she was not prepossessed in her sister-in-law's favor.

These considerations made him heartily wish that Carry would go away again, but did not deter him from reappearing at Farndon on the following Tuesday in a dog-cart, with his portmanteau between his feet, a bright smile upon his lips, and his heart filled with trust in Providence.

"Are you coming out hunting to-morrow?" he asked Hope in the course of the evening, having craftily entreated Miss Herbert to "play something," and shown his gratitude for her compliance by at once turning his back upon her and escaping to the other end of the room.

"I don't know," answered Hope, hesitating between doubt of her capacity and a natural disinclination to be left behind. "I should be very much in the way, I'm afraid. My father used to take me out in old days; but I can't say that I have ever really hunted. And these hounds go at a terrific pace, don't they?"

"Oh, sometimes; but what does that matter, so long as you are decently mounted? I'll look after you," added Bertie, reassuringly.

"Indeed you'll do nothing of the sort: you must look after Carry."

"Look after Miss Herbert! It's lucky she is making such a row with the piano that she can't hear you. If she hasn't learnt how to take care of herself by this time, she never will learn."

"If I go, I shall take care of myself too," observed Hope. She raised her voice slightly, and said, "Dick, do you think I might hunt with you to-morrow?"

Dick looked up from the evening paper with a rather dubious countenance, but he answered, "Oh, certainly, if you wish. I would have suggested it, only I didn't think you cared about coming. You shall ride the Parson. He won't bring you to grief, if you leave him alone: you'll have nothing to bother yourself about, except sticking on his back."

"I think I can manage that much," said Hope, the least bit nettled by the implied want of confidence in her seat. "Only please let it be understood that I am to be left alone quite as much as the Parson. I don't want to spoil anybody's sport."

"That is of course," answered Dick, smiling: "it is a fundamental maxim with hunting-ladies that they are to be treated for the time being as men. Isn't that so, Carry?"

Miss Herbert, who had hurried through the conclusion of a brilliant fantasia, and was not best pleased with the inattention of her audience, replied, "Women who don't know what they are about have no business in the hunting-field. Are you a novice?" she asked, turning abruptly to Hope.

"I must confess that I am," Hope answered; "but everything must have a beginning. I suppose there was a time when even you did not know a great deal about hunting."

"I suppose so," Miss Herbert responded, dryly; "but, if there was, I don't remember it. I cannot have been much more than six years old when I was in the condition of ignorance that you describe."

"No wonder you have forgotten it, then!" ejaculated Bertie.

He knew he ought not to say this, but he couldn't stop himself; and Miss Herbert's dark eyes, flashing angry notes of interrogation, rested upon a countenance of such childlike simplicity that she persuaded herself—not by any means for the first time in her experience of Bertie Cunningham—that he had wounded her unintentionally.

Now, after the foregoing fragment of dialogue, every one must perceive that it was a matter of pure necessity for Hope to ride straight to hounds on the following morning, even though she should risk her neck in the attempt; and this she was steadfastly resolved to do. When she was shown her mount—a rather small but powerful black horse, with whose shape it would have been difficult to find any fault,

and whose mild brown eyes gave evidence of a tractable disposition—she saw that the best had been done for her that could be done; and before she had ridden him a couple of hundred yards she felt her confidence rising, together with that spirit of emulation without which very few things worth speaking of would have been accomplished in the history of the human race. Dick, mounted on a gigantic flea-bitten gray, who was very fresh and too free with his heels to be a pleasant neighbor, appeared to have the prospect of some fine, healthy exercise before him; Carry's chestnut, though taking to the eye, looked as if he would require a good deal of riding; while to Bertie Cunningham had been awarded another chestnut, equally handsome, which had been acquired by Miss Herbert at a moderate figure, in consideration of the abominable temper which he had often displayed. "I hate a quiet horse," she was wont to say, just as certain yachtsmen will declare that they love rough seas. However, one seldom hears that preference expressed by sailors.

"You have got the pick of the bunch, Mrs. Herbert," remarked Bertie, after the brute that he was riding had nearly bucked him out of the saddle; and Hope was quite of the same opinion.

The meet was so near that it had not been thought worth while to send the horses on; and as our party had been a little late in starting they had but a short time to wait after their appearance upon the scene. The scene itself rather took Hope's breath away. Never in her previous small experience of hunting had she seen anything like so vast a concourse, and while Dick was introducing her to some of his acquaintances she was inwardly wondering how in the world all those horsemen and horsewomen would contrive to get away. "It will be worse than dancing in a London ball-room," she thought.

But somehow or other—Hope could not have said how—they did get away; and, having no notion what line to take, she presently found herself one of a crowd which was galloping down a narrow lane, headed by Dick. To follow Dick seemed to be quite the wisest course. No doubt he knew what he was about, and, as he was not piloting her, it could not be on her account that he had stuck to the road, instead of flying over a hedge and disappearing, as Carry and Bertie, together with a considerable number of others, had done. Dick did not stick to the road long. Suddenly Hope saw him wheel to the right, through what appeared to be an open gate, with the whole division after him, helter-skelter, and then came a stretch of grass and a little more elbow-room. This was very delightful. The Parson was going with long, easy strides; the hounds were visible on a hill-side not so far ahead, and it was only when Hope noticed a slackening in Dick's pace that she saw

what she might have seen a little sooner, in the shape of a fence of truly appalling dimensions between the hounds and her.

"Good gracious!" she muttered, under her breath. "Surely he isn't going to jump that! If he does we must,—that is certain." And she hardly knew whether to be relieved or disappointed when it became evident that he was not going to jump it.

He held up his hand, calling out, "Hold hard! there's a gate," and then she saw the field making tumultuously for a point some little distance to her right. But the gate proved obdurate. There was no unfastening it, and many precious minutes were wasted before it could be lifted off its hinges. Through such a throng of horsemen, each (with one noble exception) bent upon forwarding his own interests at the expense of those of his neighbors, it was no easy matter for a lady to force a passage, and Hope did not attempt it, but allowed the crowd to pass her, trusting to make up for lost time later on. This was too much even for the equable temper of the Parson, who began to fidget and snatch at his bit, while Dick's gray plunged, reared, and ended by becoming very nearly unmanageable.

"Stay where you are," shouted his rider, as he turned and galloped back out of the press: "I'll wait for you on the other side." (He *was* piloting her, then.) And thereupon he charged the fence and cleared it like a bird.

Many a sad catastrophe has been brought about through lack of that unquestioning obedience to instructions which has gone clean out of fashion in these days, when everybody knows as much as everybody else, if not more. With the spirit of the age strong upon her, Hope said to herself that what one horse had done another could do,—an assumption of which the inconsequence had to be, and speedily was, brought home to her. It may be that a more experienced rider would have taken the Parson safely over that fence; and, as a matter of fact, he did get over, or rather through it; but it was only to land on his head and deliver Hope with considerable violence on hers. After a few seconds of bewilderment, she realized that she had had a fall, and, raising her eyes, became aware of Dick, who, from the back of his plunging gray, called out,—rather unsympathizingly as she thought,—"Get up!"

She staggered to her feet, and he said, "Now walk on a bit."

This order also she contrived to obey, all self-assertion having been knocked out of her, and, after she had taken a few steps, Dick remarked, quietly, "You're all right, I see: I thought you might have had a slight concussion of the brain. Drink some of this," he added, tossing his flask to her, "and sit down on that bank till I come back. I must

try and find somebody to hold this brute for me: the Parson won't run away."

Hope, feeling a little faint and dizzy, did as she was told, and a few mouthfuls of sherry revived her. The Parson, who had scrambled on to his legs immediately after his fall and was placidly surveying her from a short distance, with his neck stretched out and his ears cocked, responded to her invitation to draw nearer, and allowed her to stroke his nose. The expression of his countenance seemed to imply that he sincerely regretted the disaster, but could not feel that he had been altogether responsible for it. While Hope was anxiously examining his fore-legs, Dick returned on foot, having left his horse in charge of a laborer, and asked, "How are you now? Better?"

"I am not a bit the worse, thank you," answered Hope; "only dreadfully ashamed. I suppose I behaved like a perfect idiot, didn't I?"

"You behaved very pluckily," answered Dick, smiling; "but it was asking a little too much of the old horse. I ought to have warned you that he isn't quite what he once was."

"Oh, it wasn't his fault," said Hope, despondently; "I feel sure that I was the one to blame: though what I did or left undone I have no idea. Is he hurt, do you think?"

"Not he! he thinks nothing of a little spill like that: do you, old boy? You gave me a rare fright, though, I can tell you. However, all's well that ends well."

"But it hasn't ended well at all!" exclaimed Hope, with tears in her eyes. "I have spoiled your run, though you promised to leave me to myself. Won't you go on now, and let me find my own way home?"

"I don't remember making any promises; and, if I did, it's lucky I broke them, for you couldn't very well have remounted without help. As for the hounds, they are miles away by this time: so, if you feel fit to ride now, we'll jog quietly home together."

"I suppose there is nothing else for it," said Hope, with a sigh. "One thing is certain, that you won't be victimized in this way a second time; for I am never going to hunt again."

"Why? Because you have had a cropper?"

"No; but I agree with Carry: the hunting-field isn't the proper place for a woman who can't take care of herself."

"Shall I let you into a secret?" whispered Dick. "You mustn't tell anybody I said so, because it's a perfectly outrageous opinion to hold; but, strictly between ourselves, I don't think the hunting-field is the proper place for a woman at all."

CHAPTER XX.

BERTIE IS LECTURED.

As Hope rode dejectedly homeward by her husband's side, she felt that she ought to make him some apology for having deprived him of a day's amusement; but then she recollected the callousness that he had displayed while she was lying prone at his feet, and it struck her that if there was to be any apologizing it might as well come from him as from her in the first instance.

So she began: "You said just now that I had given you a fright."

"So you did," answered Dick, struggling to get a cigar lighted, in spite of the curvetings of his gallant gray.

"You did not *look* much frightened," observed Hope, reproachfully.

"It wouldn't have done you any good if I had had a fit of hysterics, would it?"

"No; but it would have been decent to turn pale and gasp, instead of shouting, 'Get up!' at me, as if I had been a horse or a dog."

Dick laughed. "When people come to grief you should always make them stand up, if they can," he said. "Then you find out whether there is anything really amiss with them."

"Well," sighed Hope, "I suppose I ought to be thankful that I have escaped with nothing worse than a crushed hat and a muddy face; but it is very humiliating. I think I shall go to bed as soon as I get home. Never shall I have the courage to sit down to dinner with Carry after this! I can see her face of contempt already."

Dick edged a little nearer to his wife and bent forward, by which means he was able to discern tears upon her eyelashes. "My dearest girl," he said, kindly, "is it worth while to vex yourself about what a spiteful woman may say or do?"

Now, this was a really remarkable speech; for, in the first place, Dick seldom made use of any endearing epithet in addressing his wife, and, in the second, it was altogether unlike him to speak a word against an absent person. At the risk of lowering Hope in the reader's esteem, it must be confessed that the latter half of his sentence pleased her even more than the former.

"You do think her spiteful, then?" she said, glancing eagerly at him.

"Why, of course I do. I don't mind saying so, for once, since we are alone; but, if it's the same to you, we won't say so oftener than we can help in future. It's always a mistake to look on the dark side of things or people; and, after all, poor Carry has her good points."

"I don't doubt it; but what are they? I only ask for the sake of information."

"Well, she is straightforward, I think, and she is a good friend."

"And a bitter enemy. It is no use, Dick; I have tried to like her, but she has evidently made up her mind never to be a friend of mine, and I confidently expect the day to come when she will be straightforward enough to tell me so."

"I trust she won't have such bad manners; but there's no denying that her manners are not always up to the mark. You see, she is my sister: I can't very well turn her out of house and home."

"Of course you can't! How could you suppose that I meant to suggest such a thing?"

"I didn't suppose so: I was only wishing that it could be done. However," continued Dick, more cheerfully, "there's a chance of her going of her own free will, I fancy. Did it ever occur to you that there was anything between her and Cunningham?"

"Never! I can't imagine two people less suited to each other," answered Hope, with a vehemence which rather surprised her questioner.

"I shouldn't have said that," he remarked, musingly. "She is a year or two older than Cunningham, it is true, but they have always seemed to me to pull uncommonly well together. And then, you know, she is very comfortably off."

"Oh, I see: you set Captain Cunningham down as a fortune-hunter."

"We needn't call him names," said Dick. "When a man is hard up, he naturally prefers a rich wife to a penniless one."

"Even if she is years older than himself and spiteful into the bargain?" asked Hope. But as soon as she had said this her conscience rebuked her, and she exclaimed, "How ill-natured I am!—quite as bad as she is! Why do you let me speak like that about your sister?"

"I don't mind," answered Dick, with his quiet, good-humored smile.

"Do you mind anything, I wonder?" cried Hope, half laughing, half provoked. "Would you mind if I set the house on fire?"

"I'd rather you didn't," Dick confessed. He added, after riding on in silence for some minutes, "I know I'm a phlegmatic sort of fellow. The fact is, I am constitutionally lazy; things don't often worry me, and when they do I mostly hold my tongue about them. But I'll tell you what would worry me a great deal, and that would be to think that you were not happy at Farndon. Carry is a painful necessity for the present; there is nothing for it but to bear with her. Candidly speaking, Cunningham isn't exactly the husband I should have chosen for

her ; but if she likes him, and if they choose to marry, I shall be very glad,—principally on your account.”

“Thank you,” said Hope, briefly.

Dick scrutinized her for a moment, and then said, “I wish, though, that you would tell me whether there is anything else that I can do to make life pleasanter for you. For instance, would you like me to go away for a week or two?”

The proposition was made in such evident good faith that Hope burst out laughing. “No,” she answered ; “great as the relief of that would be, I shouldn’t feel justified in asking for it just yet. Carry has already been kind enough to warn me that you would probably absent yourself very often ; but she has not the humble opinion of you that you have of yourself. I believe she actually imagined that I should miss you.”

To this Dick made no rejoinder ; nor did he open his lips again until the ride was at an end.

Hope did not carry out her threat of retiring to bed as soon as she reached home. She reflected that, even if she did so, she would have to get up again some time or other and face whatever trials might be in store for her : so she came down to dinner as usual, and was agreeably surprised to find that her mishap (of which Dick had given his own account) was considered a subject rather for condolence than for sneers.

It is needless to say that Captain Cunningham and Miss Herbert had enjoyed the very best run on record, and equally needless to add that they did not spare their hearers a single incident of it. There are circumstances under which even the most forbearing of mortals cannot help triumphing a little over their less fortunate friends, and, whatever may have been the good points that Dick had discovered in his sister’s character, he would hardly have ventured to name forbearance as one of them. From making disagreeable speeches to Hope she did, however, forbear (for she was in an excellent humor) ; and the latter, not being called upon to undertake her own defence, was able to watch Bertie Cunningham, in whose proceedings the few words that had fallen from Dick caused her to take a new and lively interest.

Certain it was that the young man was very attentive to the heiress that evening ; and if some degree of reluctance was visible in his attentions, that only made them and him the more contemptible. Hope’s opinion of Captain Cunningham, which, after so many fluctuations, had lately been rising rapidly, began once more to sink to a low ebb. Also she felt very angry with him, and did not stop to ask herself why she should be angry with a man who was only behaving like

the majority of his neighbors, and whose conduct, after all, was no particular concern of hers.

A woman is never wise to be angry with a man for paying attention to another member of her sex; but she is still less wise if she lets him see that she is angry. It was this error in judgment which Hope now thought fit to commit. Captain Cunningham remained day after day at Farndon, giving no hint of intended departure; day after day his hostess treated him with marked coolness, keeping out of his way as much as might be; and, although—or perhaps because—he guessed what had brought about this change in her demeanor, he felt it quite essential to his comfort that he should ask her the reason of it. So, one afternoon when Carry had driven over to Windsor to do shopping, Hope encountered him in the park, looking grave and cast down, and was obliged to accede to his request that he might be permitted to walk home with her.

“It is very kind of you to put up with this infliction, Mrs. Herbert,” he said, humbly; “for I know you would rather have my room than my company.”

“Not at all, I assure you,” answered Hope, with perfunctory politeness.

“One understands what that means. I wish you would tell me how I have offended you.”

“Really, Captain Cunningham, you have not offended me in any way. How could you, when we have hardly exchanged a dozen words since you came?”

“That is what I can’t make out; but I am certain of the fact. If I haven’t said anything wrong, I must have done something.”

“Your conscience seems to be uneasy.”

“So my friend Mrs. Pierpoint is always telling me. You are something like her.”

“I suppose that is a great compliment to me, is it not?”

“You don’t know her, or you wouldn’t speak in that sarcastic tone,” the young man answered, warmly. “I am not sure that she is quite in your style; perhaps she isn’t; but there never breathed a kinder woman or a better friend. She has been a sort of mother to me, and I should think I was paying anybody a compliment by comparing her to Mrs. Pierpoint. However, I didn’t mean to say that you resembled her particularly; only that you reminded me of her for a moment. She has a way of looking displeased with me, and when I ask her what is the matter she says, as you did just now, that I have a bad conscience.”

“I dare say she is quite right,” remarked Hope, her countenance

relaxing into a smile; for, after the unkind things that had been said about Mrs. Pierpoint in her hearing, it was satisfactory to find that that lady had been "a sort of mother" to Captain Cunningham. "And what are the offences of which your conscience ought to accuse you, according to her?"

"Oh, it's always the same thing. She has made up her mind that I am to marry somebody with money. There is no doubt at all about my being driven to that sooner or later; only she wants it to be soon, whereas I should like it to be as late as possible. And so we differ."

"Mrs. Pierpoint cannot be a real friend of yours if she urges you to marry for money," said Hope, severely. But the look of mingled astonishment and amusement which her companion turned upon her caused her to color and descend with some abruptness from that high critical level. "Of course," she added, "many people do marry for money; but it is hardly friendly to advise them to do so."

"Well, I don't know," said Bertie, slowly: "one either marries for love or in order to gain something. Does it matter so much whether that something is money, or a home, or a protector, or position?"

Hope did not enjoy being arraigned by implication in this way; but she had her defence ready. "In cases of that kind it is quite impossible to judge for another person," she answered; "but I think there are distinctions. One may marry without love and yet have a very sincere liking and respect and admiration for one's husband—or wife."

"Quite so. And why shouldn't I have all three for the lady whom Mrs. Pierpoint wishes me to lead to the altar?"

"How can I tell, when I do not know who she is?"

"Oh, if you don't know who it is! However, I will confess that I have no special respect or admiration for her: I like her well enough when she doesn't bully me. The fact is, Mrs. Herbert, that a man in my position can't pick and choose. He may, perhaps, have seen just one woman in his life whom he would have married, if she would have had him, and if he had been an elder instead of a younger son, and if etc., etc. But, things being as they are with him, he must put up with what he can get."

"That sounds as if 'what he can get' had a pleasant prospect before her. At any rate, she ought not to be deceived; that much is certain, whatever else may be doubtful. You have no right to try and persuade a woman that you care for her, when it is only her money that you want."

"Now, Mrs. Herbert, you know very well that no woman is ever really deceived in that way, unless she chooses to deceive herself. I am

not more fond of humbug than other people; but it does seem to me that just a little bit of humbug is inevitable. You wouldn't wish me to go to Miss—shall we call her Miss Jones?—and say, 'Upon the whole, you are rather abhorrent to me; but I have an idea that you are willing to become my wife; and, as you are rich enough to keep us both in comfort, I shall be prepared to make you Mrs. Cunningham as soon as you like.'

"Yes, I should," Hope declared. "If those are your real feelings, I think you ought to express them,—or else not propose at all."

"You make my blood run cold!" exclaimed Bertie. "All things considered, perhaps I won't propose at all. I wonder whether you would expect the same dreadful candor from a woman as you do from a man."

The worst of this style of discussion by innuendo is that it is sure eventually to reach a point at which the *argumentum ad hominem* will be employed in such a manner as to be no longer capable of being ignored. Hope felt that this moment was fast approaching, and was therefore very glad when a sudden turn in the path along which she and her companion were walking brought them face to face with Jacob Stiles, who had come out for a stroll in the gloaming, as his owl-like habit was. Jacob started, bowed, and made as though he would have passed on; but Hope intercepted him.

"Good-evening, Mr. Stiles," she said: "I have been wondering when I was to see you again. You have been very busy, I suppose."

"Yes," answered Jacob, in his slow, hesitating way. "At least, not very; but I have always work to do." He added, timidly, "I was sorry to hear that you lost your run the other day. Perhaps Mr. Herbert would allow me to break in a mare for you that he has in the stable. She is hardly up to his weight; but she is very well bred, and would carry a lady beautifully."

"You are very kind," said Hope; "but, after my exhibition the other day, I had made up my mind to forswear hunting. What do you think, Captain Cunningham? Might I give myself one more chance? I don't know whether you have been introduced to Mr. Stiles."

Captain Cunningham had not had that pleasure; but he had been told about Jacob by Miss Herbert, and was so good as to say that if anybody knew how to school a hunter he believed that Mr. Stiles did. He was very polite to the artist during the few minutes of conversation that followed,—too polite, as that over-sensitive young man felt. Hope had treated him as an equal, thereby earning his adoration; Captain Cunningham, with the best intentions, let him see that they did not

belong to the same class. Jacob was forever tormenting himself in this way and detecting slights which nobody meant to inflict upon him. From living so much alone, and so seldom speaking or being spoken to, he had learned to take men's measures by other methods than those which are in common use, and, as he had a natural aptitude for the study of humanity, it often happened to him to ground accurate conclusions upon some trifle which would have escaped the notice of nine people out of ten.

He jumped to a conclusion, and a somewhat startling one, now ; for when Hope and her companion proceeded on their way towards the house, leaving him in the falling darkness, he muttered, "That is the man, then ! I thought there must be somebody ; and her eyes brightened every time that she spoke to him. It is a pity ; although he would not have been good enough for her. But, then, who is good enough for her ? Certainly not her husband, who will never trouble himself to discover whether she is happy or not. That man takes everything as a right. The world has always gone well with him, and he can't understand what other folks find to grumble at in it, or why anybody should ever be tempted to stray off the straight course. I suppose it never occurred to him that Jacob Stiles in his shoes would have been quite as respectable a member of society as he is."

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

TO HIS BOOK.

(Imitated from the Epistles of Horace, l. 20, expressly for "Ballads of Books," to be edited by Brander Matthews.)

FOR mart and street you seem to pine
 With restless glances, book of mine !
 Still craving on some stall to stand,
 Fresh pumiced from the binder's hand.
 You chafe at locks, and burn to quit
 Your modest haunt and audience fit,
 For hearers less discriminate.
 I reared you up for no such fate.

Still, if you *must* be published, go ;
 But, mind, you can't come back, you know !
 "What have I done?" I hear you cry,
 And writhe beneath some critic's eye ;
 "What did I want?"—when, scarce polite,
 They do but yawn, and roll you tight.
 And yet methinks, if I may guess
 (Putting aside your heartlessness
 In leaving me and this your home),
 You should find favor, too, at Rome.
 That is, they'll like you while you're young.
 When you are old, you'll pass among
 The Great Unwashed, then, thumbed and sped,
 Be fretted of slow moths unread,
 Or to Ilerda you'll be sent,
 Or Utica, for banishment !
 And I, whose counsel you disdain,
 At that your lot shall laugh amain,
 Wryly, as he who, like a fool,
 Pushed o'er the cliff his restive mule.
 Stay! there is worse behind. In age
 They e'en may take your babbling page
 In some remotest "slum" to teach
 Mere boys the rudiments of speech !
 But go. When on warm days you see
 A chance of listeners, speak of me.
 Tell them I soared from low estate,
 A freedman's son, to higher fate
 (That is, make up to me in worth
 What you must take in point of birth) ;
 Then tell them that I won renown
 In peace and war, and pleased the town ;
 Paint me as early gray, and one
 Little of stature, fond of sun,
 Quick-tempered, too,—but nothing more.
 Add (if they ask) I'm forty-four,
 Or was, the year that over us
 Both Lollius ruled and Lepidus.

Austin Dobson.

OUR EXPERIENCE MEETINGS.

II.

MY EXPERIENCES AS AN AMATEUR ELOCUTIONIST.

THE editor of *Lippincott's Magazine* has asked me for my experience as an amateur elocutionist, and it is with much diffidence that I undertake the task of attempting to describe the impressions of that hybrid creature *an amateur player who appears in public*. We are all reciters to a greater or less degree in our youth, but it is seldom that an innate attraction for dramatic effects, or a sentimental nature, or whatever else we choose to call it, carries us beyond our crude childish recitations when the stern maternal impulse is removed. Even when such is the case, however, our experience is gained so gradually, and the artistic effort is so associated and intertwined with social questions, that in point of fact an amateur scarcely knows when he did begin or where he stands. An amateur never addresses an ordinary theatre or concert-hall audience, gathered of its own will, presumably at a performance congenial to its tastes; and it is therefore hard to establish that sympathy which must mutually exist between the performer and the listeners before the former can display his best forces. Our audiences are usually extremes, all women, all men, all young, all old, all poor, all rich,—all something,—generally with their minds made up for or against the entertainment, or, at any rate, for or against the player.

It is said that Mr. Labouchere desires never to know an artist personally until he has passed judgment on his work,—recognizing how much merely personal likes or dislikes may warp the justice of his criticism. In an amateur audience there are but few not predisposed one way or another. They have heard of you through a friend or detractor, who has painted you black or white, as the case may be. The word amateur in itself is killing, and to the public means work half done, with some charitable purpose as its excuse. One is always more or less compelled into a charitable act: it is rarely a free gift, and amateur tickets are crammed down the public throat. Is it to be wondered at that they do not digest well, and that our audiences are of a dyspeptic turn by the time we face them?

But my personal experience has been asked for. I scarcely remember the day when I did not recite: as a child I was made to learn a verse of poetry daily, and such is the force of habit that a day never

passes that I do not memorize a few lines. All children are fond of the heroic style ; but as we lived during the war in the lonely mountains of North Carolina, and went through many stirring and exciting experiences, our thoughts took a particularly martial turn. The lays of Aytoun and Macaulay were gospel to us, and I think my *début* was as "Horatius who kept the bridge."

One day I was reciting this poem out of doors, near a little stream, and when I came to that verse in which Horatius, after addressing a prayer to the Tiber, "with his harness on his back plunged headlong in the tide," I became so zealous that I jumped into this home-made Tiber, whose name was "*Mud Creek*," dragging with me my two-year-old sister and brother, and made for the opposite bank. We were seen, and pulled out like three little drowned rats, and I was soundly smacked and sent to bed : shoes and clothes were not to be trifled with in war days.

My *début* was not a success. Still, at all the little family gatherings I was called on to contribute to the general entertainment, and finally began appearing in public. But my first efforts could only have been borne with by reason of their earnestness, as I knew nothing of artistic effects and methods. I usually find my first recitation ineffective, as my audience seems taken up with my personality : this leads me to believe I must have distracting mannerism.

Every audience has to be won over, and an amateur does not always have the time or chance. I find my own frame of mind more or less reflected by the audience, in the shape of coldness, if I am tired or nervous. Constant habit and practice and knowledge of stage-methods doubtless enable a professional to play a part evenly and well, however little he may fancy it ; but I find I must feel the beauty of the lines or the lesson they teach to do good work, and, at any rate, after reciting or acting I feel discouraged and disappointed. The theatrical managers and professionals have always treated me with unvarying courtesy and kindness, and even encouragement. To Mr. David Belasco especially I am indebted for much valuable advice and friendly counsel. The success of a recitation naturally depends much on the choice of the piece, and I rarely decide upon my selection until the last moment, when I am on the spot and have made my estimate of the general character of the audience. Our judgment on a question of this sort is anything but infallible, and at times, when trusting to my own instincts, I have arrived at very unfortunate results. But if a piece touches me and I feel its pathos, it is very natural to suppose it will affect others in the same way if properly interpreted. I am only a beginner, however, and my experiences are almost all experiments.

I find it far easier to interest an audience by a story with a moral than by something abstract, however superior the versification of the latter may be, and I have generally found country audiences more appreciative of serious pieces than those in the city. City people want something gayer and more amusing, that will not make them think. Nor am I ashamed to confess that my most enthusiastic and generous critics have been workingmen and shop-girls and newsboys. For, if they have had fewer advantages in education and refining associations than those in a more fortunate position, their wits have been sharpened by practical trials and adversity, and the absence of affectation in themselves makes them quick to see through false sentiment and appreciate what is true.

An increasing fondness for the art, and the pleasure of contributing through it to some very worthy objects, have stimulated me to continue performing, notwithstanding much misconception and much that is annoying: more than once my inclination has been strong to give it all up; for after a failure or an unsatisfactory performance you have no chance to retrieve yourself for perhaps six months or a year. But in these things our natures are perhaps a little stronger than we are.

However hard and intelligently an amateur may study, it is impossible for him to acquire the stage-ease that the habit of appearing in front of the footlights gives a professional, making him appear to better advantage than an amateur who has possibly better natural gifts. If, along with the emotions we are attempting to describe, we convey to the audience half of the nervous and rickety feeling we really have, then we must make our audiences indeed uncomfortable. But I am speaking for myself only, as there are other amateurs with far more experience, and, I am sure, much greater ability to express it, than I.

Cora Urquhart Potter.

LITERARY CONFESSIONS OF A WESTERN POETESS.

I MUST have been nearly nine years old when I saw for the first time an editor. Wholly unconscious of the important part editors were to play in the drama of my life, I was yet deeply impressed by this first experience with the profession.

As I walked up the dusty road from school one hot afternoon, I saw a "covered carriage" standing at our gate, and a gentleman leaning over the fence in earnest conversation with my father. My pulses quickened with a pleasurable excitement, for "covered carriages" betokened in those days visitors from "town;" and, although I was rural born and bred, I was always lonely in the country,—always longing

for the stimulant of association with my kind, which to-day I find necessary to my work and my happiness.

On entering our humble but always cosy sitting-room, I saw a gentleman sitting in the cool shade of a vine-covered window, listening to the bright flow of conversation with which my mother was ever prepared. She was a woman whose beauty, brilliancy, and originality fitted her to adorn the most courtly circles: had fortune so placed her, she would have been an ornament to the *salons* of Madame de Staël; but instead she was doomed to the most humdrum existence possible to woman.

As I entered the room, my mother presented me to the gentleman, informing me that he was editor of the daily paper published at Madison, Wisconsin. He had driven into the country as far as my home—a distance of ten miles—with his companion, who was, I learned afterwards, endeavoring to persuade my father to invest in some railroad venture, which proved to be an inglorious failure. (This is equally applicable to the attempt and to the venture.)

The editor took me on his knee, and said, "You do not look like a country-girl: you more resemble our little city-girls, you seem so delicate. I fear you study too hard."

What an indescribable thrill of happiness his words gave me! To be told that I resembled a city-girl,—and told so by an editor! What more could life hold for me? In memory of the pleasure I derived from those words, I can afford to forgive a good many uncomplimentary things which have been said of me since then by other members of his profession.

I had already composed one or two high-wrought romances. I have one of them now. It is written on odd slips of waste paper, and carefully sewed between covers of blue wall-paper. It deals with cruel step-mothers, brave lovers, daring maidens, and lost children. Three marriages take place in the last chapter. A little girl is lost while hunting for the cows, and found years afterwards precisely the same age as when she disappeared. Its title and preface read as follows:

"Minnie Tighthand and Mrs. Dunley. An eloquent novel written by Miss Ella Wheeler.

"PREFACE.

"The following novel is a true story. I suppose the reader will doubt it, but it is true. It is a scene that I witnessed while living in England, and after I came to America I published it. The reader may believe it now."

Several of the chapters are prefaced with original verses, of which I give a sample :

Head covered with pretty curls,
Face white as snow,
Her teeth look like handsome pearls,
She's tall and merry too.

I believe this to have been my earliest attempt at rhyme.

After having seen a live editor, I felt stimulated to new efforts, and so much of my time was given to literary labors that I soon won from my teasing brother the sarcastic appellation of "Little Authoress." As it was intended for a term of reproach, and was used only on occasions when I displeased him, it caused me the most bitter chagrin. Many a time I have run wailing into the house from play, and when the origin of my misery was inquired into I could only reply, "*Eddie has called me an authoress.*" To my (and no doubt his) distinct recollection, my brother received several chastisements for calling his sister an authoress. Later on, he was inclined to chastise any one who intimated that she was not. But to this day the word "authoress" has an intensely disagreeable sound to me, owing to its early associations.

At fourteen I began to print crude sketches and essays and stories in the New York *Mercury*. One day my older brother was reading aloud a beautiful poem by Ethel Lynn, and I said, "When I hear a poem like that it makes me suffer so, I feel I shall faint or die."

He looked at me very earnestly, and answered, "If you feel like that, you can *write* poetry."

I had already written a good many verses, but had never submitted them for publication. Encouraged by his words, I composed a poem—it was a very desperate love-song, too, I remember—and sent it to the New York *Mercury*. It was published, ridiculed, and burlesqued through half a column, but, fortunately, my name was withheld. The editor closed by saying that if his cruelty had hindered this new aspirant for fame from ever attempting another line of poetry, he had done her a kindness and the world a favor. I was overwhelmed with confusion and shame; yet I continued to write verses, and in less than two years from that time was basking in the sunlight of local fame and appreciation.

About that period I wrote a great deal of extreme and violent verse on the subject of total abstinence, which attracted considerable attention. These verses were soon afterwards published in a small volume entitled "Drops of Water." I sold the copyright to The National Temperance Publishing House, in New York, for fifty dollars,

and felt myself rich in money and fame. I was the author of a book and the possessor of fifty dollars. The little volume was republished in London, England, and this foreign edition brought me thirty pounds, besides several appreciative letters from clergymen and reformers in England.

At the country school my teachers were inclined to overlook my deficiency in simple fractions because of my faculty for composition. When I went to boarding-school, whither my parents made great sacrifices to send me for a short time, I hailed the advent of "composition-day" with delight. We had recently been examined in mathematics, and in a scale of one hundred my room-mate stood ninety-five, I *twenty*. I hoped to retrieve my reputation by a brilliant success in composition.

We were all requested to write a narrative. I was at that time contributing to the columns of the *Waverley Magazine*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and various other periodicals, and a "narrative" seemed to be exactly in my line. I prepared a tale of love, adventure, jealousy, and woe, which ended happily with the peal of wedding-bells. I believed my literary reputation would be undisputed in the school thereafter. But our trim and austere preceptress handed it back to me, saying, coldly, "You have evidently been reading the *New York Ledger*. It is pernicious literature for young girls. You will do better in the future, no doubt."

I was again humiliated; but in less than a year's time after that I received my first *cheque*, and felt fully launched on the great sea of literature. Poems and stories flowed from my pen like water running down-hill; and when I was barely eighteen years old I was clothing myself with the proceeds of my pen and helping to furnish and brighten up the humble little home. The prices I received were small, but I wrote so voluminously that I managed to earn quite a little income.

When I was about nineteen I wrote eight poems in a single day! and I considered two in a day only a small achievement. Of course I sent out into the world an immense amount of trash, which I would gladly recall now. All my friends told me I was shaming the Muses by my reckless use of their gifts. I was urged to devote more time to study and to the perfecting of my work. But, look you! I was earning money to relieve the absolute necessities of life, and I was lifting many a burden from my mother's shoulders. With the wisdom of the world, our neighbors called me a lazy dreamer, who sat scribbling all day while her "folks" hired help to do the work I ought to do. The truth was, my pen paid a servant to lighten my mother's dreary labors, besides supporting myself.

Those were memorable days to me. I was intoxicated with my success; I radiated with love for all the world; my faith in humanity had received no shocks; I believed in everybody, and was conscious of no dislikes; I idealized men and women, and overestimated my own possibilities of achievement. I remember myself, as I then was, with mingled pity and envy. Letters came to me from many distinguished people, and the editors of Boston, New York, and other periodicals to which I contributed stimulated me with words of praise and encouragement. I lived in a world of dreams. I planned for myself a wonderful future of fame and wealth. Existence was an ecstasy.

I knew nothing of the world as yet, nothing of human nature, nothing of myself even. Yet, with the assurance of youth and the boldness of ignorance, and from the depths of a boundless imagination, I wrote of sorrows, joys, passions, and emotions which I have since experienced. With all the crudity and lack of art by which those poems are marred, they surprise me to-day by their truthfulness to human emotions. Afterwards, in a time of great trouble and suffering, I came upon some of those early verses, and it seemed to me they voiced perfectly the travail through which my soul was passing.

But they gave me a feeling of awe,—not of egotism. It was not I, the crude child-girl, immersed in a solitary farm-house, ignorant of the world as a babe, who wrote those songs: it was a power greater than I, an inspiration from realms beyond me.

People of intellect and wealth and social position began to seek me out. Invitations began to flow in upon me to visit in city homes. These visits increased my ambitions, and my necessities. I saw how other people lived and dressed, and my desire for *money* exceeded my love for art. I was passionately fond of social pleasures, and the desire to appear in a becoming toilet at a party overcame my resolve to write only two poems in a week. I wrote ten instead, and sacrificed art to fashion. And the next day, when I discovered that I had danced through my slippers, I wrote four more extremely faulty poems. But they purchased a new pair of slippers and a new pair of gloves.

These are shocking confessions. But they are absolutely true. And I hope my "brethren and sistren" who listen to these experiences of one who is *partially* reformed will offer up prayers in my behalf. I am afraid you will say I had no high ideals in art,—that I placed a purely commercial value on my gifts: I am afraid it would be almost the truth if you should say it. Yet I loved and gloried in my work. It was an ecstasy to me. And many and many a time I have knelt in

my little room under the sloping eaves and fervently thanked God for the gift that enabled me to be such a help to my parents and that gave me such broadening pleasures and advantages in life.

It seemed to me so grand and wonderful a thing to be able to carpet my mother's room, pay a doctor's bill, and clothe my own person with the proceeds of my pen, that I forgot the duty I owed to art.

I had innumerable discouragements and trials. Sometimes everything I sent out during a whole season would be rejected. Sickness and trouble came into the little home, and the demands upon my purse increased. I was obliged to decline an invitation to the most brilliant reception to which I had ever been invited, because I could not buy a suitable toilet for the occasion. I cried the entire night away, thinking of the music, the lights, the perfumes, the dancing. But the next day I wrote a poem and a story describing it all: so I realized some pecuniary benefit from the invitation at least.

Everything was "material" to me. The singing of a bird outside my window, the compliments paid me by my escort at the play, the sound of the reapers in the harvest-fields, the conversation of callers, my own restless heart, all gave me food for verses and romances.

I used to go to the book-stores and write down a list of addresses of various periodicals in different parts of the country. To these I would send out my manuscripts, often ten or twelve by one mail. At that time Frank Leslie's *Chimney Corner* and *Ladies' Journal* and *Harper's Bazar* and *Weekly* followed the very unjust rule of publishing poems and stories without giving the author's name. Frequently three or four poems of mine appeared in one issue of these periodicals. I considered it a great misfortune that I was denied credit for my work; I think now it was a blessing that so many of these waifs went nameless into the world. It never once occurred to me to seek the assistance of older writers in marketing my brain-wares, and I was too independent and too impatient to ask or allow any one to criticise my work before I sent it out. I was imbued with the foolish idea that it would be no longer my own original composition if I allowed any one to make suggestions. So off went my half-fledged birdlings almost as soon as they were through the shell.

It all seems a great pity to me now. But I enjoyed life, and caused others to enjoy it. After all, what is better than that?

As I gained in friends, they overwhelmed me and confused me with advice. I was urged to study the older poets as models and try to "form my style." I did not know what they meant, and did not try to learn. I was urged to devote my talents to reform; I was urged not to use them *for reform*, but to write on historical themes; and I

was told to give up writing sentimental trash and learn to be Nature's poet. But I could not interpret the voice of Nature; my ear was not attuned to understand her language, and it could not understand and interpret the throbbing of a human heart. And, oddly enough, nothing sold so readily as this same "sentimental trash." There was always a ready market for my *heart-wails*, while my more ambitious efforts went begging. And it was as natural for me to sing of sentiment as for the phoebe-bird to make her own peculiar cry. So I listened to the advice of all my good friends, and followed my own fancies.

My mother wept and worried because I could not use all my income upon myself in travel and means of culture. But I discovered that whenever I allowed a selfish impulse to dominate, all my manuscripts would be rejected. When I planned for the happiness and comfort of others, good luck and unexpected success followed my efforts. Therefore I could not *afford* to be selfish. This has been my unvarying experience throughout my career.

I had barely passed into my twenties when I published a miscellaneous collection of poems called "Shells." The book is now out of print: it brought me no remuneration and much disappointment. I began to understand the world, to study human nature, and to marvel at my own chaotic emotions. Friends and strangers made a confidante of me. I became a sort of human cabinet, wherein were locked the secret sorrows and sins of humanity. The strange drama of life grew upon me. I felt myself capable of great things, and I wrote and published "Maurine," a novel in verse. I believed it would rank with "Lucille," and make my fortune. It has brought me but little over five hundred dollars, and very few people have heard of it. Yet I think it contains some of the best work of my life.

My income steadily increased, and with it my advantages for travel and society. I was at the high tide of life, with a superb vitality, perfect health, a riotous imagination, and an ardent temperament.

I had ceased to expect any sudden success in literature when I published "Poems of Passion." The intense excitement the book caused, the hue and cry raised against its alleged immorality, and the consequently remarkable sales, were all a stunning surprise to me. I had written of human nature as I had found it; I had no idea even that I was saying anything unusual. I meant to describe strong emotions strongly and with truth. Born into this world absolutely without caution, and with a blind faith in the good sense of people, I supposed the critics would say that I had written with force and fire and increased vigor, and with more finish than heretofore.

Instead, I was accused of outraging decency and violating the laws

against immorality. I was an unmarried and still young woman. The abuse my book received was very bitter for me to bear, because I felt it to be unjust. One critic in a small Western paper (not far from my old home) declared that the book would damn me socially and intellectually. I am still a welcome guest in circles where he could not even obtain a position as valet unless I gave him a recommendation, and my book has brought me warm words of praise from the most celebrated people in the land. And the proceeds from its first sales enabled me to build over and enlarge the old home, rendering my aging parents comfortable for life.

The letters I received after the appearance of the book were very amusing. One man wrote me, "I have just seen some namby-pamby verses of yours in the *Independent*. A woman who can write 'Poems of Passion' should not waste her talents on the goody-goody style of poetry, of which we have had too much already. The world wants fire, force, and originality: you can give it: for God's sake do not be cowed down by fools of critics." In the same mail came another letter, saying, "It is a great misfortune for a woman with your talents to use them in producing such immoral verses as I find in 'Poems of Passion.' They should be dedicated to religion, temperance, and reform." Both letters were from entire strangers. Two of my most valued and, as I had believed, most stanch friends cowered before the avalanche of abuse poured on the book, and swelled the chorus with their denunciations. After it had become a great financial success, and many of the leading citizens of Milwaukee had given me a benefit in its honor, these two "friends" wrote me letters of apology, and confessed that they had been too hasty in their condemnation. Truly, "nothing succeeds like success."

It is a curious fact that the loudest denunciations of the book came from people whose lives were the most immoral. They construed the poems from their own stand-point, I suppose.

Since the publication of "Poems of Passion," three years ago, I have had more demands for my work than I could supply. I no longer had to seek editors; they sought me. And for every cruel or severe word the book received it has received ten words of praise. When the newspapers announced that my recent (and only) novel, "Mal Moulée," was finished, six publishing houses wrote me for the first reading of the manuscript. All these things were pleasant offsets to the annoyances I had been subjected to.

As I look back over my life, I cannot remember the time when I did not write. My work has brought me happiness and success; every benefit or pleasure or joy that ever came to me I can trace directly to

my profession. It has been the key that has unlocked the doors to all good things in the world for me. And if it has, too, brought me many painful experiences, I must philosophically accept them as a part of the whole. No woman ever yet attained any degree of success through her own efforts in any public career without sometimes toiling through blinding tears and suffering from the innumerable hurts the rough world knows so well how to give.

That woman is endowed with a more delicate physical organization and more nervous sensibilities than man is an undisputed fact, and centuries of hot-house breeding have rendered her still more susceptible to the cold winds of publicity. In my early youth and ignorance of these things, I used to look upon a woman who had arrived at eminence, and say, "She has been blest by the gods and favored by mankind: how fortunate the star under which she was born!"

In the light of maturer years and experience I say now, "What courage, what patient endurance, what perseverance, what suffering, have been hers!"

One of the most important things for a woman to remember who sets forth upon a self-supporting career is the necessity of transacting all financial matters in a strictly business-like manner. If she borrows money, she must repay it with interest, as a man would do. If she contracts debts, she must pay them. And she must not expect especial consideration or favor in these things "because she is a woman." Not until women fully realize this can they expect to succeed.

We are dependent on the gallantries and affections of men in society and in the domestic relations; they are our courtiers or our kings, by nature and custom bound to give us the comfortable seat in the car or fetch our fan at the ball; but in business transactions we must forget all this and consider them simply our equals,—neither our masters nor our slaves; and if we would win their respect and encouragement, we must merit it by *well-balanced accounts*.

As I read over my own works, and painfully realize their great defects, I am moved to wonder why I have been accorded such unusual success, when many writers who far excel me as poets and artists have failed to win recognition or remuneration. I think it must be due to the fact that I threw into my work a great deal of the extreme vitality with which I was endowed. It touched the public like an electric wave and brought my verses into immediate notice.

Yet I shall be forgotten while more careful and conscientious artists live in the memory of the world. While I realize all my shortcomings, I do not see how I could have done differently in the past. I performed the duty nearest me as well as I knew how to do. Sweeter than fame,

which is, like St. John's little book, only sweet in the mouth, is to me the consciousness that I have been of practical assistance to those dear to me. I heard recently that Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman honored me by the remark that he wished he could have had the literary training of me from my twelfth year; he would have made a better poet of me. I believe this to be true. He would have taught me that the manner of expression is as worthy of consideration as the thought to be expressed,—a fact I was sadly tardy in discovering. He would have caused me to contribute more to art, but, I fear, less to duty, than I have done. I should have been a better poet, but a less useful financier and citizen. I should be remembered longer by critics, but less gratefully by those to whom I owe my existence.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

IN CASTLE DANGEROUS.

“WHAT we suffer from most,” said the Spectre, when I had partly recovered from my fright, “is a kind of *aphasia*.”

The Spectre was sitting on the arm-chair beside my bed in the haunted room of Castle Dangerous.

“I don't know,” said I, as distinctly as the chattering of my teeth would permit, “that I quite follow you. Would you mind—excuse me—handing me that flask which lies on the table near you? . . . Thanks.”

The Spectre, without stirring, so arranged the *a priori* sensuous schemata of time and space* that the silver flask, which had been well out of my reach, was in my hand. I poured half the contents into the cup and offered it to him.

“No spirits,” he said, curtly.

I swallowed eagerly the heady liquor, and felt a little more like myself.

“You were complaining,” I remarked, “of something like *aphasia*?”

“I was,” he replied. “You know what *aphasia* is in the human subject? A paralysis of certain nervous centres, which prevents the patient, though perfectly sane, from getting at the words which he intends to use, and forces others upon him. He may wish to observe

* This article was originally written for *Mind*, but the author changed his. The reference is to Kant's Philosophy.

that it is a fine morning, and may discover that his idea has taken the form of an observation about the Roman Calendar under the Emperor Justinian. That is *aphasia*; and we suffer from what, I presume, is a spiritual modification of that disorder."

"Yet to-night," I responded, "you are speaking like a printed book."

"To-night," said the Spectre, acknowledging the compliment with a bow, "the conditions are peculiarly favorable."

"Not to *me*," I thought, with a sigh.

"And I am able to manifest myself with unusual clearness."

"Then you are not always in such form as I am privileged to find you in?" I inquired.

"By no means," replied the Spectre. "Sometimes I cannot appear worth a cent. Often I am invisible to the naked eye, and even quite indiscernible by any of the senses. Sometimes I can only rap on the table, or send a cold wind over a visitor's face, or at most pull off his bedclothes (like the spirit which appeared to Caligula and is mentioned by Suetonius) and utter hollow groans."

"That's exactly what you *did*," I said, "when you wakened me. I thought I should have died."

"I can't say how distressed I am," answered the Spectre. "It is just an instance of what I was trying to explain. We don't know how we are going to manifest ourselves."

"Don't apologize," I replied, "for a constitutional peculiarity. To what do you attribute your success to-night?"

"Partly to your extremely receptive condition, partly to the whiskey you took in the smoking-room, but chiefly to the magnetic environment."

"Then you do not suffer at all from *aphasia* just now?"

"Not a touch of it at this moment, thank you; but, as a rule, we all *do* suffer horribly. This accounts for everything that you embodied spirits find remarkable and enigmatic in our conduct. We *mean* something, straight enough; but our failure is in expression. Just think how often you go wrong yourselves, though *your* spirits have a brain to play on, like the musician with a piano. Now, *we* have to do as well as we can without any such mechanical advantage as a brain of cellular tissue"—here he suddenly took the form of a white lady with a black sack over her head, and disappeared in the wainscot.

"Excuse me," he said, a moment afterwards, quite in his ordinary voice: "I had a touch of it, I fancy. I lost the thread of my argument, and am dimly conscious of having expressed myself in some unusual and more or less incoherent fashion. I hope it was nothing at all vulgar or distressing?"

"Nothing out of the way in haunted houses, I assure you," I replied,—“merely a white lady with a black sack over her head.”

“Oh! *that* was it,” he answered, with a sigh: “I often am afflicted in that way. Don’t mind me if I turn into a luminous boy, or a very old man in chains, or a lady in a green gown and high-heeled shoes, or a headless horseman, or a Mauth hound, or anything of that sort. They are all quite imperfect expressions of our nature,—symptoms, in short, of the malady I mentioned.”

“Then the appalling manifestations to which you allude are not the apparitions of the essential ghost? It is not in those forms that he appears among his friends?”

“Certainly not,” said the Spectre; “and it would be very promotive of good feeling between men and disembodied spirits if this were more generally known. I myself——”

Here he was interrupted by an attack of spirit-rappings. A brisk series of sharp faint taps, of a kind I never heard before, resounded from all the furniture of the room.* While the disturbance continued, the Spectre drummed nervously with his fingers on his knee. The sounds ended as suddenly as they had begun, and he expressed his regrets. “It is a thing I am subject to,” he remarked,—“nervous, I believe, but, to persons unaccustomed to it, alarming.”

“It *is* rather alarming,” I admitted.

“A mere stammer,” he went on; “but you are now able to judge, from the events of to-night, how extremely hard it is for us, with the best intentions, to communicate coherently with the embodied world. Why, there is the Puddifant ghost—in Lord Puddifant’s family, you know: *he* has been trying for generations to inform his descendants that the drainage of the castle is execrable. Yet he can never come nearer what he means than taking the form of a shadowy hearse-and-four and driving round and round Castle Puddifant at midnight. And old Lady Wadham’s ghost,—what a sufferer that woman is! She merely desires to remark that the family diamonds, lost many years ago, were never really taken abroad by the valet and sold: he only had time to conceal them in a secret drawer behind the dining-room chimney-piece. Now she can get no nearer expressing herself than producing a spirited imitation of the music of the bagpipes, which wails up and down the house and frightens the present Sir Robert Wadham and his people nearly out of such wits as a county family may possess. And that’s the way with almost all of us: there is literally no connection

* A similar phenomenon is mentioned in Mr. Howells’s learned treatise, “An Undiscovered Country.”

(as a rule) between our expressions and the things we intend to express. You know how the Psychical Society make quite a study of rappings, and try to interpret them by the alphabet? Well, these, as I told you, are merely a nervous symptom, annoying, no doubt, but not dangerous. The only spectres, almost, that manage to hint what they really mean are Banshees."

"*They* intend to herald an approaching death?" I asked.

"They do, and abominably bad taste I call it, unless a man has neglected to insure his life, and *then* I doubt if a person of honor could make use of information from—from that quarter. Banshees are chiefly the spectres of attached and anxious old family nurses, women of the lower orders, and completely destitute of tact. I call a Banshee rather a curse than a boon and a blessing to men. Like most old family servants, they are apt to be presuming."

It occurred to me that the complacent Spectre himself was not an unmixed delight to the inhabitants of Castle Dangerous, or at least to their guests, for they never lay in the Green Chamber themselves.

"Can nothing be done," I asked, sympathetically, "to alleviate the disorders which you say are so common and distressing?"

"The old system of spiritual physic," replied the Spectre, "is obsolete, and the holy-water cure, in particular, has almost ceased to number any advocates, except the Rev. Dr. F. G. Lee, whose books," said this candid apparition, "appear to me to indicate superstitious credulity. No, I don't know that any new discoveries have been made in this branch of therapeutics. In the last generation they tried to bolt me with a bishop: like putting a ferret into a rabbit-warren, you know. Nothing came of *that*; and lately the Psychical Society attempted to ascertain my weight by an ingenious mechanism. But they prescribed nothing, and made me feel so nervous that I was rapping at large, and knocking furniture about, for months. The fact is that nobody understands the complaint, nor can detect the cause that makes the ghost of a man who was perfectly rational in life behave like an uneducated buffoon afterwards. The real reason, as I have tried to explain to you, is a solution of continuity between subjective thought and will on the side of the spectre, and objective expression of them—confound it—"

Here the sound of heavy feet was heard promenading the room, and balls of incandescent light floated about irresolutely, accompanied by the appearance of a bearded man in armor. The door (which I had locked and bolted before going to bed) kept opening and shutting rapidly, so as to cause a draught, and my dog fled under the bed with a long low howl.

"I do hope," remarked the Spectre, presently, "that these interruptions (only fresh illustrations of our malady) have not frightened your dog into a fit. I have known very valuable and attached dogs expire of mere unreasoning terror on similar unfortunate occasions."

"I'm sure I don't wonder at it," I replied; "but I believe Bingo is still alive: in fact, I hear him scratching himself."

"Would you like to examine him?" asked the Spectre.

"Oh, thanks, I am sure he is all right," I answered (for nothing in the world would have induced me to get out of bed while he was in the room). "Do you object to a cigarette?"

"Not at all, not at all; but Lady Dangerous, I assure you, is a very old-fashioned châtelaine. However, if *you* choose to risk it——"

I found my cigarette-case in my hand, opened it, and selected one of its contents, which I placed between my lips. As I was looking round for a match-box, the Spectre courteously put his forefinger to the end of the cigarette, which lighted at once.

"Perhaps you wonder," he remarked, "why I remain at Castle Dangerous, the very one of all my places which I never could bear while I was alive—as you call it?"

"I had a delicacy about asking," I answered.

"Well," he continued, "I am the Family Genius."

"I might have guessed *that*," I said.

He bowed and went on: "It is hereditary in our house, and I hold the position of Genius till I am relieved. For example, when the family want to dig up the buried treasure under the old bridge, I thunder and lighten and cause such a storm that they desist."

"Why on earth do you do *that*?" I asked. "It seems hardly worth while to have a Genius at all."

"In the interests of the family morality. The money would soon go on the turf, and on dice, drink, etc., if they excavated it; and then I work the Curse, and bring off the Prophecies, and so forth."

"What prophecies?"

"Oh, the rigmarole the old family seer came out with before they burned him for an unpalatable prediction at the time of the '15. He was very much vexed about it, of course, and he just prophesied any nonsense of a disagreeable nature that came into his head. You know what these crofter fellows are,—ungrateful, vindictive rascals. He had been in receipt of out-door relief for years. Well, he prophesied stuff like this: 'When the owl and the eagle meet on the same blasted rowan-tree, then a lassie in a white hood from the east shall make the burn of Crosseleugh run full red,' and drivel of that insane kind. Well, you can't think what trouble that particular prophecy gave me. It had to

be fulfilled, of course, for the family credit, and I brought it off as near as, I flatter myself, it could be done."

"Lady Dangerous was telling me about it last night," I said, with a shudder. "It was a horrible affair."

"Yes, no doubt, no doubt; a cruel business! But how I am to manage some of them I'm sure *I* don't know. There's one of them in rhyme. Let me see,—how does it go?"

When Mackenzie lies in the perilous ha',
The wild Red Cock on the roof shall crawl,
And the lady shall flee ere the day shall daw,
And the laird shall girn in the deed man's thraw.

"The 'crowing of the wild Red Cock' means that the castle shall be burned down, of course (I'm beginning to know his style by this time), and the lady is to elope, and the laird—that's Lord Dangerous—is to expire in the 'deed man's thraw:' that is the name the old people give the Secret Room. And all this is to happen when a Mackenzie, a member of a clan with which we are at feud, sleeps in the Haunted Chamber,—where we are just now. By the way, what is *your* name?"

I don't know what made me reply, "Allan Mackenzie." It was true, but it was not politic.

"By Jove!" said the Spectre, eagerly. "Here's a chance! I don't suppose a Mackenzie has slept here for those hundred years. And, now, how is it to be done? Setting fire to the castle is simple,"—and I remembered how he had lighted my cigarette,—“but who on earth is to elope with Lady Dangerous? She's fifty, if she's a day, and evangelical *à tout casser!* Oh, no; the thing is out of the question. It really must be put off to another generation or two. There is no hurry."

I felt a good deal relieved. He was clearly a being of extraordinary powers, and might, for anything I knew, have made *me* run away with Lady Dangerous. And then, when the pangs of remorse began to tell on her ladyship,—never a very lively woman at the best of times—However, the Spectre seemed to have thought better of it.

"Don't you think it is rather hard on a family," I asked, "to have a Family Genius, and Prophecies, and a Curse, and——"

"And everything handsome about them!" he interrupted me by exclaiming. "And you call yourself a Mackenzie of Megasky! What has become of family pride? Why, you yourselves have Gruagach of the Red Hand in the hall, and he, I can tell you, is a very different sort of spectre from *me*. Pre-Christian, you know,—one of the oldest ghosts in Ross-shire. But as to 'hard on a family,'—why, *noblesse oblige.*"

"Considering that you are the Family Genius, you don't seem to have brought them much luck," I put in; for the house of Dangerous is neither rich in gold nor very well preserved in reputation.

"Yes, but just think what they would have been *without* a Family Genius, if they are *what* they are *with one!* Besides, the Prophecies are really responsible," he added, with the air of one who says, "I have a partner,—Mr. Jorkins."

"Do you mind telling me one thing?" I asked, eagerly. "What is the mystery of the Secret Chamber?—I mean the room whither the heir is taken when he comes of age, and he never smiles again, nor touches a card except at baccarat?"

"Never smiles *again!*" said the Spectre. "Doesn't he? Are you quite certain that he ever smiled *before!*"

This was a new way of looking at the question, and rather disconcerted me.

"I did not know the Master of Dangerous before he came of age," said I, "but I have been here for a week, and watched him and Lord Dangerous, and I never observed a smile wander over their lips. And yet little Tompkins" (he was the chief social buffoon of the hour) "has been in great force, and I may say that I myself have occasionally provoked a grin from the good-natured."

"That's just it," said the Spectre. "The Dangerouses have no sense of humor,—never had. I am entirely destitute of it myself. Even in Scotland, even *here*, this family failing has been remarked,—been the subject, I may say, of unfavorable comment. The Dangerous of the period lost his head because he did not see the point of a conundrum of Macbeth's. We felt, some time in the fifteenth century, that this peculiarity needed to be honorably accounted for, and the family developed that story of the Secret Chamber, and the Horror in the house. There is nothing in the chamber whatever,—neither a family idiot aged three hundred years, nor a skeleton, nor the devil, nor a wizard, nor missing title-deeds. The affair is a mere formality to account creditably for the fact that we never see anything to laugh at,—never see the joke. Some people can't see ghosts, you know" (lucky people! thought I), "and some can't see jokes."

"This is very disappointing," I said.

"I can't help it," replied the Spectre: "the truth often is. Did you ever hear the explanation of the haunted house in Berkeley Square?"

"Yes," said I. "The bell was heard to ring thrice with terrific vehemence, and on rushing to the fatal scene they found him beautiful in death."

"Fudge!" replied the Spectre. "The lease and furniture were left to an old lady, who was not to underlet the house nor sell the things. She had a house of her own in Albemarle Street which she preferred, and so the house in Berkeley Square was never let till the lease expired. That's the whole affair. The house was empty, and political economists could conceive no reason for the waste of rent except that it was haunted. The rest was all Jimmy——"

"Oh, Jimmy was in it, was he?" I interrupted.

"I mean, all Miss Broughton's imagination, in 'Tales for Christmas Eve.'"

He had evidently got on his hobby, and was beginning to be rather tedious. The contempt which a genuine old family ghost has for mere *parvenus* and impostors is not to be expressed in words, apparently, for Mauth hounds, of prodigious size and blackness, with white birds, and other disastrous omens, now began to display themselves profusely in the Haunted Chamber. Accustomed as I had become to regard all these appearances as mere automatic symptoms, I confess that I heard with pleasure the crow of a distant cock.

"You have enabled me to pass a most instructive evening,—most agreeable, too, I am sure," I remarked to the Spectre,—“but you will pardon me for observing that the First Cock has gone. Don't let me make you too late for any appointment you may have about this time—anywhere.”

"Oh, you still believe in that old superstition about cock-crow, do you?" he sneered: "I thought you had been too well educated. 'It faded on the crowing of the cock,' did it, indeed, and that in Denmark, too,—almost within the Arctic Circle! Why, in those high latitudes, and in summer, a ghost would not have an hour to himself, on these principles. Don't you remember the cock Lord Dufferin took north with him, which crowed at sunrise, and ended by crowing without intermission and going mad, when the sun did not set at all? You must observe that any rule of that sort about cock-crow would lead to shocking irregularities, and to an early-closing movement for spectres in summer, which would be ruinous to business,—simply ruinous,—and, in these days of competition, intolerable."

This was awful, for I could see no way of getting rid of him. He might stay to breakfast, or anything.

"By the way," he asked, "who does the Cock at the Lyceum just now? it is a small but very exacting part,—'Act I. scene 1. Cock crows.'"

"I believe Mr. Irving has engaged a real fowl, to crow at the right moment behind the scenes," I said. "He is always very particular

about these details. Quite right, too. 'The Cock, by kind permission of the Aylesbury Dairy Company,' is on the bills."

I knew nothing about it; but if this detestable Spectre was going to launch out about art and the drama there would be no sleep for me.

"Then the glow-worm," he said: "have they a real glow-worm for the Ghost's 'business' (Act I. scene 5), when he says,—

Fare thee well at once:
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire.

Did it ever strike you how inconsistent that is? Clearly, the ghost appeared in winter: don't you remember how they keep complaining of the weather?

For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold,
and

The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold;

and then they go on about the glow-worms in the neighborhood! Most incongruous! How does Furnival take it? An interpolation by Middleton?"

I don't like to be rude, but I admit that I hate being bothered about Shakespeare, and I yawned.

"Good-night," he said, snappishly, and was gone.

Presently I heard him again, just as I was dropping into a doze.

"You won't think, in the morning, that this was all a dream, will you? Can I do anything to impress it on your memory? Suppose I shrivel your left wrist with a touch of my hand? Or shall I leave 'a sable score of fingers four' burned on the table? Something of that sort is usually done."

"Oh, *pray* don't take the trouble," I said. "I'm sure Lady Dangerous would not like to have the table injured, and she might not altogether believe my explanation. As for myself, I'll be content with your word for it that you were really here. Can I bury your bones for you, or anything? Very well: as you *must* be off, good-night!"

"No, thanks," he replied. "By the way, I've had an idea about my apparitions in disguise. Perhaps it is my 'Unconscious Self' that does them. You have read about the 'Unconscious Self' in the *Spectator*?"

Then he really went.

A nun, in gray, who moaned and wrung her hands, remained in the room for a short time, but was obviously quite automatic. I slept till the hot water was brought in the morning.

Andrew Lang.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

To speak after the manner of Mr. Henry James's distressingly conscientious characters, I am not sure that it is quite *right* for anybody to read "The Bostonians" through, so long as anything useful or entertaining remains to be done on earth; nevertheless, I have hardened my heart and resolutely offended to that extent, or nearly. Tennyson must have had prevision of such a reader when he wrote of

one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling through immeasurable sand
And over a weary, sultry land.

Rather more than two hundred thousand words without one interesting incident, one picture that is worth remembering, or one member of the *dramatis personæ* who deserves or repays the attention of either author or reader! It is the very Sahara of novels.

Length alone is not a fair objection. "Lorna Doone" is doubtless longer still, but "Lorna Doone" is a story, and a marvellously picturesque and powerful one; whereas "The Bostonians" is not a story any more than it is a treatise, having just enough of the qualities of the one to spoil the other, and being hopelessly without topic.

An anomalous young Southerner gradually falls in love with a young girl of uncanny, sibylline eloquence and charlatanic parentage. He has for his chief rival an unwholesome Boston spinster of disordered nerves, who turns tragical over the fear that her friend of friends may make common cause with the tyrant man. A featureless collector of bric-à-brac would rather like to marry the heroine himself. The inevitable Europeanized young widow—that is, Europeanized in the James sense—makes rather more ardent love to the hero. He fails in a very uninteresting way as a lawyer, a magazinist, and a child's tutor. He *proses*, she *proses*, all *prose*. At last there is an altogether superfluous elopement, with hints that the happy couple will probably starve before long, unless they can live on her inspiration and his political recalcitrancy. That is about all, except elaborate pictures of corner-groceries, cheap lodging-houses, and other things of like interest.

The hero, if we may call him so, is the character, who most nearly approaches to a real living interest; but it is impossible to believe in him. We hear much of his gracious, rather old-fashioned breeding; yet it is announced that "most of the people he had hitherto known had no tastes. They had a few habits." Reversing the common pronunciation of his section, he "prolonged his consonants and swallowed his vowels;" and this last procedure was the less remarkable, since, though a "lean, pale, sallow, shabby, striking young man," he was "conscious at bottom of a bigger stomach than all the culture of Charles Street could fill." This last sentence is not clipped from "Leaves of Grass," unless Mr. James has done the clipping. Furthermore, he is represented as prefacing his remarks to the ladies with "Murder!" and rejoicing in a "discourse pervaded by something almost African."

There is one good thing, though, to be said of this alarming native of the wilds: he is not a Bostonian. On our author's showing, that is a very dreadful epithet. Even the heroine, whose good behavior is carefully warranted, descends from an ex-member of the "Cayuga fraternity" and an arrant humbug, who "looked like the priest of a religion that was passing through the stage of miracles;" she had been "nursed in darkened rooms and suckled in the midst of manifestations;" had "grown up among people who disapproved of the marriage tie;" and is made to announce, "Well, I must say I prefer free unions." Poor Mississippian!

Then we have the philanthropic old lady of the dissolved featureless face and idiotic ways, who "belonged to any and every league which had ever been founded," and put out a "delicate, *dirty*, democratic hand" in greeting to gentlemen visitors. "No one had an idea how she lived." And Mrs. Luna, the travelled Bostonian, who was "very fond of attentions from men, with whom indeed she was reputed bold," and, moreover, was very liberal in revealing "her spasmodic disposition to marry again." Even her sister, Miss Chancellor, "a typical Bostonian," behaved in a very rude, churlish, and hardly sane style to her invited guest, and had settled that "almost everything that was usual was iniquitous." She is very properly referred to as "morbid" and a "ticklish spinster," with little in her favor except wildly good intentions and a knowledge of "her place in the Boston hierarchy." It seems she was not "a representative of the aristocracy. The Chancellors belonged to the *bourgeoisie*, the oldest and best." Unhappily, if one may judge by her conduct, she was neither a well-bred lady nor capable of becoming one. Passing lightly by the heroine's mother, with her snobbish ways, "distended and demoralized conscience," and reminiscences of old legerdemain which passed as spiritual manifestations, the busy doctress, who "looked like a boy, and not even like a good boy," and the statuesque agitator with "something public in her eye," all the rest of the feminine Bostonians of the story are very properly lumped together as "vicious old maids and fanatics and frumps, . . . common people and red-haired hoydens." The men fare no better; but, as they are made to take subordinate places, we need not linger over them here. It is rather hard to pick out one of either sex from the whole batch who would be considered respectable, or at least reliable in respectability, in any well-ordered community.

What does Mr. James mean by his title? Are these half-sane, half-decent, yet wholly prosaic and uninteresting creatures of his fancy "*the Bostonians*" of to-day? If so, assuredly there is much to be said in favor of his Mississippian's views. "He, too, had a private vision of reform, but the first principle of it was to reform the reformers." If they are not content to be judged elsewhere by such curiously-selected types, they should find some way to enlighten Mr. James as to the iniquity of his misrepresentations.

So far as the book is anything, it impresses one as a deteriorated cross or faint blended echo of "Esther Pennefeather" and "The Undiscovered Country," lacking the distorted vigor of the former and the airy and haunting charm of the latter. Olive's state of mind is not much nicer or pleasanter to contemplate than Esther's; and what a fall from the poetry of Egeria—so similarly situated—to the garish prose of Miss Tarrant! "An air of being on exhibition, of belonging to the troupe, of living in the gaslight."

The unwelcome reflection is forced on one that some men have a message which is easily exhausted, and lack willingness to put themselves in the way of

another. Mr. James has done good work in his day. It is a pity that he cannot or will not give us something more nearly approaching the merit of "Roderick Hudson," "The American," "The Europeans," or "A Passionate Pilgrim." Any one of the above I, for one, can read again and again with pleasure and profit; but I cannot imagine any one reading "The Bostonians" through even once, unless from a sense of duty or in the absolute dearth of anything better. Drayton's "Polyolbion" or "Byles on Bills" would have the preference every time.

W. H. Babcock.

MR. BABCOCK'S article on "Song-Games and Myth-Dramas at Washington" (in the March number of this magazine) carries me back to the days and the plays of long ago. As a little child my playmates were few, being restricted to the little sisters and brothers of our populous nursery and the half-dozen children who shared with us the instructions of our home-school. The variety of our games was therefore not great, although the number was swelled almost indefinitely by our habit of dramatizing everything that came in our way,—stories from our reader, scraps of books that we heard our elders reading aloud (those were the days when Scott and Dickens were being read with the thrilling interest of novelty), our history-lessons,—even the multiplication-table. Both our plays and our playmates, however, being so closely restricted, the rare occasions when the number of either was augmented were red-letter days, and left a profound impression not easily to be effaced from our little minds.

Never shall I forget the thrill of weird and awful delight with which I once, and once only in my life, joined in playing the "Three Knights out of Spain." I was visiting somewhere with my mother, in a house where there were half-grown children several years older than myself. Who they were or where they lived I have forgotten, but often and often, by day or by night, the haunting memory of that play has arisen within me; I have felt again the thrill of heart at the approach of the three knights, the nameless horror of the assertion, "For her worth she must be sold," the awful mystery lurking behind the satirical "Fare thee well, my lady gay; I will return another day," the sudden throb and stillness of my heart at the entreaty, "Turn back, turn back, you Spanish knight." What if he should turn back! poor, hapless Lady Jane!

All this, and more, was often vaguely present with me, a dimly-receding memory, never to be clearly recalled until I came upon the version of the game in Mr. Newell's "Songs and Games of American Children." He has it "lords," not "knights;" but I am sure it was knights in my version, for I remember that the word at once recalled delicious stories told by Bride, our little Irish nurse-maid, over our dying nursery fire, and of these the heroes were very commonly knights on horseback, one, two, or three. And Mr. Newell has it,—

So fare you well, my lady gay;
We must turn another way.

But that is tame indeed to the vague awfulness of "I will return another day;" and I incline to think that ours was the true rendering.

Prominent in my nursery reminiscences is the figure of a dear little old great-aunt who brought us many a pleasant game out of the last century and the stately old Beacon-Street mansion where she was brought up. She was a great stickler for old-fashioned manners, and for conduct and language which were "genteel,"—a word which she held in great respect, though we children thought

it of somewhat dubious "gentility." It was she who taught us "Here comes the duke a-riding," given in several versions in Mr. Newell's book, and in still another form by Mr. Babcock. Our rendering was decidedly different from any of these, while combining elements of all; and, as these differences are always interesting, I give it here entire. I well remember the trim little figure, who always personated the duke, tripping back and forth in her pretty, old-fashioned dance-steps, holding out her skirts with her finger-tips as she sang,—

Here comes the duke a-riding,
With a ransom tansom tiddy-moselle;
Here comes the duke a-riding,
With a ransom tansom tee!

and how particular she was that we, too, should take nice steps, and by no means romp, as we danced up in a line to meet her, singing,—

What will you please to have, sir,
With a ransom tansom tiddy-moselle?
What will you please to have, sir,
With a ransom tansom tee?

And then the game went on,—

The fairest of your daughters, ma'am,
With a ransom tansom tiddy-moselle;
The fairest of your daughters, ma'am,
With a ransom tansom tee!

Take which you choose to have, sir,
With a ransom tansom tiddy-moselle;
Take which you choose to have, sir,
With a ransom tansom tee!

This is the fairest I can see;
So come, sweet maid, along with me.
This is the fairest I can see;
So come along with me!

And then the one chosen—usually the golden-haired "baby" of the time—became transformed into a second duke, and the game went on.

It was the same dear old nursery-guardian—we never were quite sure that she was not a fairy godmother, and not a simple great-aunt—who taught us the game given by Mr. Newell as "I come, I come," but which we always called, in more natural nursery-parlance, "Comety-come." I think that our form is the more authentic, being a very evident child-corruption of "Come as I come," to which the regulation response, "What do you come by?" is in perfect keeping.

To recur again to Mr. Newell's book, it seems to me obvious that in the game of "Pillows and *Keys*" the word was originally *kiss*. The whole game consists in kneeling upon a pillow or cushion and soliciting a kiss. Among the Dutch people of Rockland County, New York, a bunch of keys used to be held in the hand and shaken, as if to attract attention. The keys, however, are probably a late interpolation by some player of an inquiring turn of mind, who, like Mr. Newell, asked, "Why *keys*?"

The little myth-drama which has for its refrain the much-debated "Chicany,

chicany, crany crow" was especially dear to our hearts, and out of it and our personal experience grew another, highly amusing to us, but interesting now only as an illustration of how irresistibly the child-mind seizes upon everything as the *motif* of dramatic action.

In process of time, as the boys grew older and needed a little Latin, our home-school came to be presided over by a very irascible though kindly old gentleman, whose peculiarities and the mutual discomforts which we all unwittingly inflicted upon each other would fill a volume. It so happened that the scene of many of our plays was a delicious little boiling spring not far from the house, the source of infinite delights to us all from our very baby-days. To it we always rushed at the beginning of every recess, for a "drink," and it gradually grew to be a custom with us to fly thither as the bell began to ring, for a final draught before returning to our tasks. One day it happened that we all dawdled there, loath to leave the pleasant spot, and, as we entered the school-room long after time, each child was challenged by the peremptory forefinger of the master and made to give a reason for the displeasing tardiness. The excuse that we had gone to wash our hands being offered, the irate pedagogue sputtered out, "Well, when your hands get dirty, just run to the puddle *quick*, and wash, and don't let me catch you coming in again after the bell stops."

To every one of us there was something so irresistibly funny in the idea of calling our pellucid, babbling fountain of delights a "puddle" that we immediately seized upon it as the basis of a drama, and at the next recess began to play the following version of our old stock-piece:

Chicany, chicany, crany crow!
 I went to the puddle to wash my toe;
 When I came back the bell had rung.
 What did you ring it so quick for, old fox?
 To catch a scholar.
 What a-doing?
 Coming late to school.

Whereupon we would all scatter, screaming, "Catch me if you can! catch me if you can!" But, as the "old fox" in this case was purely imaginary, the game was always a short one.

L. S. H.

THE story of the "Old Man and his Pipe," in Mr. Babcock's very interesting article in the March number of this magazine, is remarkably suggestive to one who has puzzled over the group of similar stories to be met with in the legends of almost all primitive races. In essential elements it is identical with the German story of the "Seven Little Kids." Doubtless this is very familiar to my readers, but the substance may be briefly stated as follows. The mother goat goes away, leaving her seven little kids with the strict injunction not to open the door until her return. A wolf, in her absence, gets into the house by means of a trick and eats up six of the kids, the *youngest* only escaping by hiding in the *clock-case*. The mother comes home, finds out the mischief, and with the remaining kid goes in search of the wolf, whom she finds fast asleep. She rips open the wolf's stomach, and the little kids come frisking out, none the worse for their temporary imprisonment. So far the stories are almost exactly the same. The German story, however, adds an ethical motive, and closes with an exhibition of strict poetical justice. Instead of quietly opening a jugular while the wolf slept, they put paving-stones in the wolf's stomach and sewed it up again. The wolf

wakes, very thirsty after his somewhat heavy meal, and, going to the brook to drink, the weight of the stones topples him over into the water, and he perishes, as it were, by his own act.

Sir George W. Cox ("Aryan Mythology") explains the story as follows: "The wolf is here the night or the darkness, which tries to swallow up the seven days of the week, and actually swallows six. The seventh, the youngest, escapes by hiding herself in the clock-case. In other words, the week is not quite run out, and, before it comes to an end, the mother of the goats unrips the wolf's stomach, and places stones in it in place of the little goats, who come trooping out as the days of the week begin again to run their course."

I must not here enter upon any discussion. The explanation has seemed to me entirely inadequate, inasmuch as the *clock-case* is made to figure as an essential element, whereas the story existed for thousands of years before clocks came into existence. The story of Red Riding Hood, one cannot doubt, is simply another version of it. In this the number seven is wanting, and manifestly it cannot refer to the days of the week. M. Husson, indeed, whose general principle of interpretation is the same as that of Sir G. W. Cox, says that here the wolf is the *sun*. Even Mr. E. B. Tylor, who utterly repudiates the too easy analogical interpretation of myths, says of the story of the seven kids, "We can hardly doubt there is a quaint touch of sun-myth in a tale which took its present shape since the invention of clocks."

The story of the "Old Man and his Pipe" clearly enough refers to time and the arbitrary division of it into the days of the week. It may be taken as a sort of commentary or explanation of the tale. The kindred story of Cronos was by the Greeks considered as referring to time; and such we may believe to have been the significance *at some time* of the whole group of swallowing myths. But it does not follow, and it is not at all probable, that the originals of the stories had any such idea in them. As the various races reached a certain intellectual development they saw the appositeness of these stories, existing since the beginning of the race and growing out of the conditions of savage life and thoughts, as allegories of Time, the devourer of things. The story-teller of every age has used the old idea, but has adapted it to the conditions of the time and country in which he lived. It is the wolf, the bear, the lion, the jackal, the snake, the fish, that does the swallowing; and the range of things swallowed is equally wide. When civilization has advanced to such a point that men begin to inquire into the nature and origin of things, they have these stories, no longer believed in literally, to account for, and they begin to figure out various symbolical and more or less metaphysical meanings, which the primitive man who originated them was utterly incapable of understanding.

To Mr. Babcock's list of games let me add two which seem to me to have had an unmistakable mythological origin. The one is a common ring-play, or was common when I was a boy, called "Poison," or more often "*Pisen*." A handkerchief or other article is laid on the ground, and the children, joining hands, dance around it, singing and swaying their bodies, as savages still do in their sacred dances, the object being to make some one step on the harmless object, when he is "pisened," and can transfer the virus to his mates by a touch. Is this not a survival of the taboo?

The other is a boys' game, played at night. One boy, running through dark alleys and out-of-the-way places, from time to time calls, "Yaller horn!" Sometimes, if they are educated to the point, they say, "Yellow horn!" which I used

to suppose was correct. The other boys run after the first, and try to find him from the occasional blasts of his horn blown in the darkness. The play is sometimes called "Gray-Wolf." Now, let us remember that the Fenris wolf and the Midgard serpent were the great adversaries of Thor and Odin at Ragnarok, and it does not need much imagination to believe that the first boy is Heimdall blowing the Gjallar horn to assemble gods and men on the plain Vigvid for the last great conflict.

H. E. W.

THERE was a call lately for a new trade, adapted to the complexities of the modern city house,—that of the universal tinker. Now, with an extension of the same idea into the woman's kingdom, a correspondent sighs for a neighborhood darning. Most of us would agree as to the convenience; but the correspondent was not perhaps aware that the system recommended is in practical operation in Paris. In the family where our home was when there, punctually one day in the week came *la raccommodeuse*, and, having been established in a back room and given a cup of coffee, set to work on the ruin three children and an impatient man had wrought. She had for her pains her meals and twenty cents a day; and she had a *clientèle* of nearly a dozen families, from whom she drew occasionally something beyond the daily franc. To some she gave but half a day; but matters were so systematized that she was rarely without work. Very convenient the American boarder found her for the ripping and cleaning of old gowns and the darning of hose, which, in her devotion to the monuments of Paris, she had no time to touch. And, watching the cheery old woman over her task, she often thought what a relief a similar system would be to many an overtaxed American housekeeper. For that is the point: it is a system and a recognized trade. This one belonged to the lowest class; but others, handy at lace and finer work, with a patronage of wealth, often make much more. And even a franc a day, with a good living thrown in, was not to be despised.

Since the reign of bric-à-brac set in, we have professional dusters in the cities. It should be comparatively simple to introduce also professional menders. Perhaps a difficulty would arise as to amount of payment, since the women who mend for their families do not roll in wealth, and even fifty cents a day might seem to them an extravagance. And the sewing-woman who drags her life out on the same sum, boarding herself, would probably scorn less. But, once given her patrons, she might find her life both easier and more healthful; and the tired house-mothers, seeing the economy and the relief, would wonder why they did not do it before. Under the present system the thrifty women fret and tire themselves over the endless task; the sentimentally philanthropic and the unthrifty give away, to the increase of poverty often; and the old clo's men profit by the improvidence of the bachelors and husbands.

A little more co-operation everywhere would lighten women's work. Here, for instance, in a town of two thousand inhabitants, one woman for years made her pin-money by weekly brewing of yeast for her neighbors. She has gone out of the business now, her husband objecting; and the women are left lamenting the lost convenience. Yeast in plenty at the grocery,—patent yeast; but they all prefer the home-made, when they can get it. So, could they once get it, they would prefer the neighborhood mender.

E. F. W.

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1886.

*TAKEN BY SIEGE.**

CHAPTER XI.

RUSH'S meeting with Helen Knowlton at the masked ball had upset all his resolutions. It acted upon him like a glass of wine upon a man who has stopped drinking: it went to his head and intoxicated him, and gave him an irresistible craving for more. He had felt her eyes upon his; the touch of her hand had fallen upon his arm. He could no more resist going to see her again than he could have resisted her first invitation to call at her house. The pride that had been stung to the quick was "bottled up," as he expressed it, and he confessed to himself that he might as well surrender first as last.

"I must not expect her to care for me yet. It would be very strange if she did. What am I to her?—only one of hundreds; and she may be engaged to that West Hastings now, for all I know. People say so; and people always know more about your friends than you do yourself."

Such thoughts as these flew through the young man's brain as he bent over his desk at night and plied the pen, or—blue pencil in hand—boiled columns of copy down to half- or quarter-columns. Again he argued with himself, "I owe her an apology for flooring that rascal in her presence. It was very ill bred of me, and I must ask her pardon."

So on his next "night off" he put on his dress-suit and walked up to Twentieth Street. The very thought that he was going to see Helen excited him so that he could scarcely do justice to the capital Italian

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dinner set before him at his old restaurant. He had dressed himself with the utmost care. "I never want to appear in her presence except as a well-dressed man," he said to himself; and this not because he was a dandy, but because he had heard her say that she liked men to dress well and give their personal appearance a sufficient amount of thought.

"I cannot bear a dowdy man," said Helen one day in Rush's hearing, speaking of a clever fellow of their acquaintance who was very untidy in his appearance. "I prefer a man to care less for Greek and more for soap and water. I shudder whenever he shakes hands with me. Such nails! there is no excuse for it. There is nothing I like more than a well-kept hand, and nothing I dislike more than one that is let to run wild."

Rush looked stealthily at his strong, shapely hands, and wondered what head they came under. On his way home that night he stopped at a drug-store and bought a box containing all the paraphernalia of the *toilette des ongles*. From that time forth he took care of his hands; and he had his reward; for one day, in shaking hands with him, Helen said, "What nice hands you have, Mr. Hurlstone! they are so well kept. I like to see it." She didn't know that it was her own doing. Helen's friends used to say among themselves that she was too particular and spoke her mind too freely on these subjects; but the effect on her admirers was instantaneous. The moment a man came to know her, he began taking care of his hands and looking after himself generally. Uncle Lightfoot Myers used to say that "the colts who trotted around Helen Knowlton were the best-groomed youngsters in the city;" and so they were.

When Rush inquired at her door if Miss Knowlton was in, he was in such a state of nervous excitement that his voice sounded unnatural to him. She was in, and he was ushered into the drawing-room, where she sat with Aunt Rebecca and Uncle Lightfoot Myers. They all seemed pleased to see him, and for a while he felt supremely happy. Uncle Lightfoot and Aunt Rebecca fell to chatting about a proposed trip to Europe, while Helen devoted herself to Rush. He made his apologies for the episode of the masked ball, and she readily forgave him. Then she asked him why he had not been to see her, and she was evidently so perfectly unconscious of having given him cause for offence that he began to think that perhaps he had been unreasonable. As they talked about one thing and another, Rush said, "By the way, this is an anniversary."

"Of what?" inquired Helen.

"Strange that you should not guess," answered Rush. "Twenty-

one years ago to-night I was born." And he drew himself up to the full dignity of his years.

"What?" said Helen, laughing; "are you only twenty-one? Why, you are a mere boy!" And she seemed so much amused that Rush felt rather annoyed. He was a boy as beards go; but he was much older than his years; and yet again he was very boyish. "I am every bit as old as she is, in my feelings," said Rush to himself; but, then, Helen was very young for her years.

"Your aunt and Mr. Myers seem to be discussing a very weighty subject," said Rush, anxious to change the conversation.

"Yes, they are," Helen replied: "they are talking over my London engagement."

"Are you going to London?" asked Rush, with undisguised surprise.

"Yes; it is all settled except a few preliminaries. I am to sing at Drury Lane the coming season; and Mr. Myers, who gives us so much good advice in business matters, is arranging the details with Aunt Rebecca. I don't want to have anything to do with the business. If I have any of that on my mind I can't sing; and I dislike it anyway. Fortunately, Aunt Rebecca likes it."

This gave Rush time to recover, for he had been quite stunned by the blow. London seemed to him to be at the end of the world. How he wished that he was a Monte Cristo, that he might say, "What do you expect to make by your trip?" and if she should reply, "A hundred thousand dollars," he would say, "Stay at home, and here is two hundred thousand." But, alas! two hundred dollars would be almost more than he could command. Oh, why was she so kind, and why did she look so beautiful, on the night when she announced her departure? He was afraid he would betray himself; but he must know before she put the sea between them whether she was engaged to West Hastings. If she was, he would retire from the field and wait. He wouldn't give up even then. If she was not, he would stay in the field and bide his time. Should he ask her? No; that would be too bold a step; and it might make her angry. While he was debating in his mind, the bell rang, and the servant announced Mr. Hastings. Rush knitted his brows and cursed his luck, and Helen looked smilingly towards the door as West Hastings entered. If there was one thing above another that West Hastings could do well, it was to enter a drawing-room; and Rush could not but envy his elegant ease. His bow was courtliness itself, and this he bestowed on the inmates of the room collectively. With Helen he shook hands, and seated himself beside her on the sofa. Rush thought his manner with her insufferable,

but that was his prejudice. West Hastings was exceedingly deferential to ladies, and particularly so to Helen,—so much so, in fact, that she felt it to be an outside polish rather than anything that came from the heart.

“Confound his familiarity!” said Rush to himself. “What right, I should like to know, has he to sit there and talk to her in an undertone, as if he owned her? Can it be possible that they are engaged?” He looked carefully at her hands, to see if there was a tell-tale ring there; but her fingers were without ornament. This was something to be thankful for. Although West Hastings spoke in low tones, Helen did not. She tried to draw Rush into the conversation, but he was too busy with thoughts of her departure to notice that any of the conversation was addressed to himself. She was going away, and that was all that he could think about.

“You will be in London the last of May,” said Hastings. “Well, I am a lucky fellow,—I shall be there just at that time; and you must depend on me to show you the sights. London is an old story to me; but to visit the old scenes in such delightful company will make them fresh again.”

“What’s that, you young rascal?” asked Uncle Lightfoot from the other side of the room; “going to be in London with Helen? Going to witness a new American victory over the British? Well, you *are* a lucky dog. When do you sail?”

“On the 3d; in the Germanic,” was the reply.

“Well, upon my word! Is this a prearranged affair?” exclaimed Uncle Lightfoot, winking at Aunt Rebecca.

“That is our day and steamer,” said Helen. “How fortunate we are!”

“I am the fortunate one,” replied Hastings. “I begin to think that I must have been born under a lucky star.”

Rush ground his teeth so fiercely that it is a wonder the company did not hear him. Going to cross in the steamer with her! If he wasn’t engaged to her now he would be by the time they reached Liverpool; for the man who cannot make an ocean voyage the turning-point in his courtship does not know how to use his opportunities. What was the use of working against fate? The way was made clear for West Hastings; while he had nothing on his side but a love which he believed was the fondest man ever had for woman, but which he knew it would be fatal to betray. He felt desperate, and it is no wonder that he looked so.

“You haven’t spoken a word in the last five minutes, Mr. Hurlstone. Why are you so silent?” said Helen, in a half-bantering tone.

"I was just thinking of a lot of unfinished work, and that I must tear myself from this delightful company and hurry to my desk. Such a thought was enough to make me silent and sad," he replied, in the same tone, at the same time rising to leave the room. He bade them all good-night, and left the house with a heavy heart.

"I am really very fond of that boy," said Helen, as she heard the front door close. "He is so honest and enthusiastic,—quite different from the usual society-men one is constantly meeting."

"Yes," said Hastings, in a patronizing tone; "he seems quite an amiable young man. A reporter, or something of that sort, isn't he?"

"Well, yes, something of that sort," said Helen, taking up the cudgels rather against Hastings's tone than his words. "All journalists, no matter how great they may become, begin at the bottom of the ladder, and learn all the branches of their work. Mr. Hurlstone is devoted to his profession. He will be editor of *The Dawn* some day, you mark my words."

"Indeed he will, if industry and ability go for anything," chimed in Aunt Rebecca.

"Mr. Hurlstone's success would not surprise me," said Hastings, with a slight sneer in his voice. "A man who can make such devoted friends of the ladies is bound to succeed. Women rule the world, say what you will."

"The truth well spoken," said Uncle Lightfoot. "This young Hurlstone, however, strikes me as a go-ahead, sensible young fellow, and I hope that Helen's predictions will prove true."

"I echo your sentiments, Uncle Lightfoot, and should be pleased to see virtue rewarded," replied Hastings.

Helen felt like saying something sharp in reply, but, as Hastings was her guest, she refrained. Besides, she thought it was perhaps a tinge of jealousy that affected his speech, and she was too much of a woman not to forgive sarcasm that arose from such a source. She therefore led the conversation around to the European trip, and Rush Hurlstone and his aspirations were forgotten in the discussion of pleasant plans for the summer.

Poor Rush! he could not so soon turn the current of his thoughts. He began by wishing that he had never been born; but, he thought,—

'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

He felt that he had lost, and he walked from Twentieth Street to Printing-House Square thinking over his desperate case. The sight of

The Dawn office recalled him to himself, and, having no occasion to enter the building that night, he turned around and walked back to his lodgings. His case was certainly a hard one. He, a penniless boy, loved with all the impetuosity of youth the most popular singer of the day,—a woman any man would be proud to call his wife, whom all men loved, but to whose hand few aspired, owing to her position and the careful manner in which she was guarded. The wealthiest young bachelor in New York was acknowledged to be her slave. She could marry him if she would, so every one said, but she would probably marry a Russian prince or an English duke. It was already said that two such eligible suitors visiting this country had expressed their willingness to share the prima donna's ducats; and yet he, Rush Hurlstone, a young country-boy with his fame and fortune still to make, dared to love her! As he stood at his window that night, looking out at the moon, which seemed to be shining with especial brilliancy over the spot where her house stood, he registered a vow that he would not give himself up to repining, but would bide his time.

"I cannot believe that I was put in the world merely to be the shuttlecock of fate. I'll be my own battledoor, and knock myself into a position by her side."

CHAPTER XII.

"WHY don't you learn Italian?" Helen asked Rush, one day. "It would be a good thing for you in your profession, I should think, and you know French so well it would not be hard to learn. I might often want to say something to you, too, that I didn't want every one else to understand," she added, smilingly.

Rush thought the idea a good one, and the last part of the argument carried conviction with it. He determined to learn at once, and, in thinking about a teacher, he remembered Leoni and her family. There was the ex-cannon-ball-tosser,—not an unintelligent man,—with time hanging heavy on his hands. He would make a capital teacher. At any rate, he could go over to the little apartment and make the suggestion. He owed the Cellas a visit. They had been very kind to him when he was alone in New York, and now that he had found other friends he had quite neglected them. So on his way up-town at about five o'clock one afternoon he stopped at the Cella apartment. All the family were at home and in the best of spirits. Leoni never looked prettier. She was dressed in gala-day attire, and so was the little room

in which she lived. The curtains were tied back with gay ribbons, and flowers stood in all sorts of receptacles about the apartment. The table was set for dinner, and looked very attractive. The cloth was snow-white, and the best china was on it, with two or three bits of silver that had been brought from Italy and were polished till they shone like mirrors in the light of the lamp. The bottle of Chianti had a ribbon tied around its neck, and there was altogether an appearance of festivity about the place which the savory odor of a choice minestra wafted from the little kitchen did nothing to dispel. Rush noticed that the table was laid for four, and he pictured in his mind the raven locks and large black eyes of the favored son of Italy who was probably soon to make his appearance as the guest of the evening. "Leoni's color and the unusual brightness of her eyes tell tales that need no words," said Rush to himself. "Well, some silver-voiced tenor is going to win a prize. Leoni is an exceptionally nice girl, and she is very beautiful."

Leoni seemed a little embarrassed, and the parents a little mysterious: so between the two Rush thought it best to state his business and get away before the arrival of the lover. He made known his errand to the ex-cannon-ball-tosser, who was delighted with the idea of so pleasant a pupil, and time and terms were agreed upon at once. Rush arose to go; but before he had made his adieus the door-bell rang, and Leoni disappeared in the hall. It seemed as though she would never come back. Rush did not want to go out and disturb her, nor did he want to stand in the middle of the floor and twirl his hat until she returned.

"Ah, these young people!" said Signora Cella, with an amused shake of the head.

Some whispering was heard in the hall, and Leoni entered, followed by a man. She was just about to introduce the gentlemen, when they both stepped forward and stared at each other in amazement.

"Why, John, you here!"

"Hello, Rush, old man! glad to see you." And John shook his brother affectionately by the hand. Rush was so astonished that he had nothing to say, but John was perfectly at his ease. Rush remembered the vehemence with which John had denied any acquaintance with Leoni, and his heart misgave him,—not for John's sake, but for Leoni's, and for Amy Bayliss's.

"So you know Mr. Stone?" said Leoni. "How very nice! I am so glad you are friends."

Rush saw that there was a mystery about this acquaintanceship, but this was not the time or the place to unravel it: so he bade them good-evening, and took his leave. What did it mean? John was evidently

on terms of intimacy in the Cella household, but they couldn't have known his full name, or they would have associated it with Rush's. Rush was very fond of his brother, but he did not have the greatest confidence in him where women were concerned. What to do, however, was more than he could decide on yet. John, with all his amiability, was not a man to suffer interference with his affairs, and Rush did not know enough about the case to take any decided action. He remembered what the talkative usher had said at the Academy of Music that night, and he remembered the eagerness with which John's eyes followed every movement of the ballet-dancer. John was an attractive fellow, and Leoni was, to say the least, very much interested in him. There would be no harm in this if John were not engaged to Amy Bayliss. Poor little Amy! Rush thought of her big blue eyes and baby mouth. He would like to thrash John, if he was going to throw the confiding little thing over after winning her affections so thoroughly. And Leoni,—what would she say if she knew of John's engagement? But perhaps, after all, Rush was magnifying the affair. John might have met Leoni as men do meet ballet-dancers, and he might be taking dinner with her just as innocently as Rush had taken dinner with her several weeks before.

Perhaps if Rush had seen Amy Bayliss she might have told him that there was no falling off in John's attentions. His letters were frequent, but short, and his flowers came regularly. Amy felt quite happy, for John had named their wedding-day in one of his early letters. To be sure, he had made no allusion to it lately; but, the thing once settled, why harp upon it?

John had not faltered in his affection for Amy, but a new affection had sprung up in his heart, and he was madly in love with Leoni Cella. He was one of those men who are so constituted that they can love two women at the same time, but not alike. John was more in love, perhaps I should say more wildly in love, with Leoni than he was with Amy. Her dark Italian eyes fascinated him, and there was something in his nature that enjoyed loving a woman who was before the public. He liked to sit in the theatre and say to himself, as she came tripping down the stage, "That is the girl I love: you may clap your hands and shout yourselves hoarse, gentlemen, but she doesn't care a button for one of you. I am the man of her choice!" Now, Rush, on the contrary, was not at all attracted by the professional life of the woman he loved. He couldn't bear the idea of her being a "public character,"—one whom every one felt at liberty to speak of with perfect freedom, and whose photograph any man could buy. If he could have afforded it, he would have bought every photograph of Helen that had been taken, and have hidden it away where no one but he could see it. He could

hardly keep his hands off a man he met in a Nassau Street shop one day. The man was making a collection of stage-favorites, and he had a lot of Helen's photographs spread out on the counter before him. These he picked up and criticised in turn. He didn't mean to say anything out of the way, but Rush wondered, when he thought it over, why he had not strangled him on the spot. Instead of that, he hurried out of the shop, after shooting glances at the man that must have left him with the impression that his *vis-à-vis* was a lunatic. But John enjoyed seeing Leoni's photographs in the shop-windows. She was the favorite dancer of New York : why shouldn't her picture be for sale ? The oftener he saw it the better he was pleased. He was affectionate, but there was nothing sentimental about him.

Rush tried to see his brother the day after the meeting at the Cellas', but he couldn't find him. It must have been a fortnight before he met him, and in the mean time he had taken his first Italian lesson from the ex-cannon-ball-tosser. Leoni was not at home. She was attending a rehearsal at the Academy of Music, and Signora Cella was out in Third Avenue, marketing. Rush tried to find out, without prying too deeply into his brother's affairs, just what John's position in the household was. He did not tell Signor Cella that Mr. Stone, as he called him, was his brother, but he said that he knew him, and he soon found that he was answering Cella's questions rather than Cella his. The old man seemed very anxious to learn all he could about "Mr. Stone." He had been introduced to Signor Cella and Leoni by a Colonel Mortimer, whom the ballet-master at the Academy vouched for as being a "perfect gentleman." No sooner had Mr. Stone met Leoni than he fell in love with her. Leoni was used to love at first sight, and she knew that it usually passed away as suddenly as it came. But in the case of John Hurlstone (or Mr. Stone, as she believed him to be) it was different. He had not the familiar, assured-of-success manner of the men she had been in the habit of meeting behind the scenes. He was gentle and deferential, and he showed her as much respect as he would have shown any lady in her drawing-room. His manner to her mother completely captivated that excellent woman ; and one rainy night, when he took her and her daughter home in his carriage, she invited him in to get warm, and he accepted the invitation with alacrity. A few days later he called to see if they had suffered any inconvenience from the rain, and from that time on he had been a regular visitor at the Cellas', where he won all hearts by his amiability and gentleness.

He was more desperately in love with Leoni than he had ever been with any other woman ; but I will not say that he could not have changed his affections with a change of scene. He saw before he had

talked with her many times that she was as good a girl as had ever lived, and that if he wanted to be her friend he must treat her with proper respect. She was a ballet-dancer, to be sure, but she had been well brought up. Although she was deeply in love with him, she gave him to understand, as Juliet assured Romeo, that he need pay no court to her unless the bent of his love was honorable and his purpose marriage. John accepted the position of lover on these terms, forgetting for the time being Amy Bayliss and the wedding-day that was not far off. He had fixed it for the 1st of June; but after a while he wrote her the tenderest letter a man ever wrote to a woman, postponing it till the fall. Amy was perfectly satisfied with the reasons, and loved him more than ever for them. She did wish that he could get back to Farmsted, if only for a day; but dear John was working so hard,—and all for her! In the fall they would be married, and then she would go with him to New York. They would live at his rooms the first winter, and take their meals anywhere they chose. That was the way many young married couples did. It was very bohemian and very jolly, and Amy, who had spent all her days in a country rectory, looked forward to it with the keenest anticipations.

“Poor little Amy!” John said to himself, as he sat in his private room at the Mutual Dividend Mining Company’s offices, smoking its best cigars and sipping its special brand of cognac. “Poor little girl! She loves me so, and I love her; but I love Leoni more.” And he shut his eyes and gave himself up to dreams of Leoni. Such beauty, such grace, and a depth of love for him that Amy could not know. “I believe she would kill any one who came between us. I can see her soft eyes grow hard and flash fire if she heard of a rival. Women are strange creatures: they never blame the man; but heaven help the woman if they get hold of her! ‘She led him off,’ they say. Ah, if they only knew how willing he was to be led!”

John’s reveries were brought to an end by the entrance of Colonel Mortimer, who came in with some certificates of stock for him to sign as secretary of the company. He had just got hold of a guileless merchant from a distant New-England town, and was going to give him ten beautifully-engraved certificates of stock in the Mutual Dividend Mining Company for ten one-thousand-dollar bills. John felt a slight twinge of conscience as he signed the certificates; but a man must have money to live!

“You will get twenty per cent. on this investment in six months, Mr. Gorham, and twenty in six months more,” John could hear Colonel Mortimer tell his victim as he bowed him to the front door. “Forty per cent. is better than letting your money lie idle. You may consider

yourself fortunate in having got any of this stock. I don't like to see it going out of my own hands; but I have a very friendly feeling towards you, and am glad, after all, that you have those certificates." "And I these greenbacks," he might have added, as the door swung to on its well-oiled hinges.

Colonel Mortimer returned to his desk, and, taking nine of the bills, rolled them up and placed them side by side in his capacious wallet. The tenth he took in and handed to John.

"There, you lucky dog, that is your share of the day's receipts. I take as much myself; the rest goes for office-expenses." John was fool enough to believe him; for, with all his worldly-mindedness, he was very credulous. He thanked Mortimer, folded the bill neatly, and put it in his waistcoat-pocket. There it began burning a hole at once.

"How long before you're going up-town, colonel?" he asked.

"Not for some time yet. I have some matters of importance to look over before I go."

"Then I won't wait for you. I have an errand or two on my way up. I'll see you at the club this evening."

Closing his desk, and throwing a light spring top-coat over his arm, he put his hat rakishly on his head, and stepped lightly out of the office and down the stairs into the street. There he hailed a passing cab, and, springing in, gave the order "To Tiffany's," and settled himself back on the seat to think what he should buy. He would get something for Leoni for love's sake, and something for Amy for the sake of pity. Poor Amy! he would get her something very nice. The cab drew up at the famous jeweller's, and John entered the place with the air of a bank-president. He went direct to the diamond-counter, and asked the obliging salesman to let him see some solitaire rings. After looking over dozens of them, of all sizes and all prices, he selected a small white stone, for which he paid three hundred dollars, throwing his thousand-dollar bill carelessly on the counter. This was for Leoni; but she must not tell who gave it to her yet awhile. How they would enjoy the secret together!

"Can I show you anything else?" asked the salesman.

"Yes, if you will be so kind. I want to send a present to a lady in the country,—some little trifle. I don't know ladies' tastes very well. What would you suggest?"

"Really, sir, I can hardly say: you have shown such excellent taste in the selection of that ring that I think the lady will fare very well at your hands. But, as you ask me, what do you say to a fan?—a handsome hand-painted fan? We have some beauties selling at a great sacrifice."

"Capital!" said John. "The summer is coming on, and a lady is never without a fan."

So they walked over to the fan-counter, and John bought a pearl-handled, feather-trimmed, hand-painted absurdity for two hundred dollars (it was one of the "great sacrifices"), and sent it off with the most affectionate little note to Amy.

It was her wedding-present, every one in Farmsted said; for they knew that a wedding-day had been named, and John certainly could not send her anything handsomer. Amy knew better; but she was delighted with the gift, and, kissing the feather-tips, she put it back in its satin box and laid it away in her bureau-drawer with the tortoise-shell boxes and other expensive knick-knacks that John had sent her.

After John had sent the fan to Amy, he sat down at his writing-desk and wrote a most impassioned letter to Leoni, telling her how he loved her, and that he sent the ring in proof of his intentions; "but, my darling," he wrote, "wear this where it won't be seen for the present. Cruel circumstances prevent my coming out boldly and claiming you as my love before all the world; but have faith in me, darling, as I have in you. Don't even tell your good father and mother too much; though you may assure them of my honorable intentions. Oh, Leoni, you do not know what it is to be a creature of fate! I must wait quietly for a while, but I can go on loving you and trusting in your love for me, unworthy as I am; and you may believe that, come what may, I am and always will be your own John." This and the ring he despatched by his trusty valet. The letter puzzled Leoni a little, but the symbol of the ring delighted her, and, as she was an Italian, and mystery in love-affairs is not altogether unknown in Italy, she quietly sewed the ring on the inside of a bit of velvet she wore around her neck. There it lay concealed; but her heart beat high with joy whenever the sharp stone scratched her delicate throat.

John dined as usual at the club that night with Mortimer and two or three other gamblers. After dinner they went to the gaming-table, where John lost his remaining five hundred dollars. When he went to bed that night he cursed the expense of living in New York, and determined to make the colonel raise his salary.

CHAPTER XIII.

RUSH did not know all this, but he had his suspicions, and one evening he found John at his rooms, and asked him what he had been

doing at the Cellas'. Before he answered, John asked Rush what *he* was doing there.

"I have known them for some time, and was arranging to take Italian lessons," answered Rush.

"I too have known them for some time, and was arranging to take Italian lessons. There is nothing like a pretty woman to teach a fellow a language. I can learn more Italian from Leoni's eyes than from a dozen text-books," John replied, lightly.

Rush tried to press the matter, but his brother answered him with chaff.

"When are you to marry Amy Bayliss, John?" asked Rush.

An expression of annoyance passed over John's face, but he replied, amiably enough,—

"Some time in the fall, I believe."

"I thought it was to have been in June," said Rush.

"Something was said about June; but Amy thought that we had better wait," replied John, carelessly, beginning to dress for dinner.

"Delays are dangerous, John."

"And haste is often fatal."

After a pause Rush resumed: "I thought you told me you did not know Leoni, John?"

"Did I? Then I suppose I didn't when I told you. One makes acquaintances on short notice in the city. Nice little thing, isn't she? The mother is a dear old body. I quite like the athlete, too. It is he I go to see, you know: he is very fond of me."

There was no use in trying to talk seriously with John. He never for a moment allowed himself to be cornered, and, as Rush was going to dine at the Archers' with Helen and Archie Tillinghast, he had to leave without accomplishing his object, which was to take John to task for forgetfulness of his vow to Amy.

The dinner at the Archers' was delightful. Mr. Archer was famous for his cook, and there was no better housekeeper in New York than Mrs. Archer. Rush took Helen out to dinner, Archie took Mrs. Pryor,—the woman with whom Bessie visited the mediums and the Buddhists, and whom he detested,—and Bessie went out on the arm of Dionysius O'Hara, an Irish artist, with some talent but more pretensions, who sat at the feet of the Parapoff and smoked bad cigars. O'Hara seemed a clever fellow at first sight, and it took you some time to find out that he was telling you how clever he was, rather than proving it. He affected some eccentricity in dress, combed his black hair straight forward from the middle of his head to his eyebrows, brushed the ends of his moustache out straight from his upper lip, and, parting his beard from

the middle, brushed that up too, from either side of the part. His eyes were a pale blue, and the pupil expanded and contracted like a cat's as he talked. Altogether, he was an odd-looking fellow, and if he had not been so absurdly conceited would have been rather interesting. His pictures were of the impressionist type, and, although his portraits could hardly be called likenesses, they were fashionable, and O'Hara was quite sought after in society,—that is, by the women. The men could not stand his affectations and conceit, but the women said, "Mr. O'Hara is so clever! You know he is a Buddhist,—eats nothing but vegetables. You could not induce him to touch meat: it is against his religious principles." Mrs. Pryor was intimate with O'Hara. He was very fond of painting her portrait, and she was very fond of sitting to him. "Such an intellectual man, my dear!" she said to Bessie. "You should hear him read poetry! And he writes poetry, too. Pure inspiration. He says he never made a rhyme in his life by trying; but he can take up a pen and in a sort of trance write verses that are simply wonderful. I only hope that you may see him in a trance some day, when controlled by the spirit of Poetry."

It was Mrs. Pryor who introduced O'Hara into the Archer household. He knew enough not to have any of his trances before Mr. Archer, but he watched his opportunity to have one before Bessie. Mr. Archer thought he was a rather clever man. He had heard a good deal about his pictures, but had never seen them, and he took their merit for granted. Archie did not like the Irishman any better than he liked his pictures, and he owed Mrs. Pryor a grudge for bringing him to the Archers'.

Rush was so delighted at having Helen by his side that every one at the table seemed pleasant to him. Bessie noticed the unusual brightness of his manner, and so did Archie; but he attributed it all to Bessie. Rush was in fine spirits, and kept the table on a roar by the sharpness of his wit and his fund of good short stories. "The man who confines himself to short stories is the man for a dinner-party; but heaven defend us from the long-winded diners-out!" Such were Mr. Archer's sentiments; and he determined to invite young Hurlstone again, and before long.

Notwithstanding poor Archie's depression, the dinner was a pleasant one. From the dinner-table they strolled through the conservatory, and Helen, who had Rush's arm, stopped in front of a box of forget-me-nots, over whose delicate blossoms the moon was spreading its silver light. "Let me give you one of these flowers," she said, picking a bunch and fastening it in his button-hole. "You know I am going away, and we are so soon forgotten when we are gone." It was all that Rush

could do to keep from seizing the hands that were so near his face and kissing them with protestations of the love that was burning so hotly in his heart. Instead of that, he clasped his hands behind him, and answered, with mock seriousness,—

“I need no flower to remind me of you, Miss Knowlton. Your absence will be felt in the very air we breathe. The birds will chirp, ‘She is gone!’ from the tree-tops, and the stars will write it in the sky at night.”

“Mr. Hurlstone, you are chaffing me; and I don’t like to be chaffed. I thought that you would be a little sorry that I was going away,” replied Helen.

“A little sorry! If you only knew what your absence means to me, you would——” His voice shook perceptibly, and Helen looked quickly at him. Fearing that he had gone too far, he added, “I shall never leave the foreign editor’s room, but will haunt his desk night and day, seeking for early news from Drury Lane.”

“Now you are joking again; but I believe you will miss me. We have had some pleasant times together, Mr. Hurlstone, and, although I have only known you a few short months, you are like an old friend, or perhaps I should say an old young friend. You seem to like me for myself, and not for my profession. With most people I feel that it is Helen Knowlton the prima donna, rather than Helen Knowlton the woman, whom they care for. Am I not right? If I had nothing to do with the stage I really think that you would like me better.”

“That would be impossible, Miss Knowlton,” responded Rush.

“Still chaffing! I thought better of you. Give me your arm; let us go to the drawing-room. I see they have all left the conservatory. I want you to be my guardian angel this evening and keep me out of the clutches of that Mr. O’Hara. I cannot endure him. He looks like a Russian Nihilist and smells like an Irish stew. He wants to paint my portrait for the spring exhibition. Shall I let him?”

“Let him? I should say not. Does he think the young ladies of New York have nothing to do but to sit to him? The minute he sees a pretty face he asks its owner to let him paint her portrait. I like his conceit, indeed!”

“Thank you for the implied compliment; but you need not get so excited: I haven’t the slightest idea of allowing Mr. O’Hara any such privilege.”

“I am glad to have your assurance in the matter; otherwise I should have my fears, for O’Hara seems to have irresistible attractions. The fact that he was able to get three of the belles of New York society to pose to him as the three Graces shows his power.”

"You are not a woman, Mr. Hurlstone, or you would understand how hard it is to resist a request put in so complimentary a form. Could you refuse if Mr. O'Hara asked you to sit to him for Apollo? I'm sure you couldn't."

"That might be a temptation," said Rush, smiling, "but if it came from O'Hara I should be able to withstand it."

"There he comes now, with Bessie on his arm. Let us get over to that far corner before they see us," said Helen. But she was too late: O'Hara and Bessie bore down upon them, and there was no escape.

"Helen, dear," said Bessie, "Mr. O'Hara is so anxious to paint you in your Helen of Troy costume. He has asked me to intercede for him. Won't you sit to him? He would make a delightful picture."

"He could not help it, with such a sitter," said O'Hara, slowly distending his eyes at her.

"Mr. O'Hara is very kind, and more than complimentary," answered Helen, "but I am too busy a woman to sit for my portrait."

"Were you not quite as busy when you allowed Fessenden the privilege?" said O'Hara, with a smile, but in an unmistakable tone.

"Yes," answered Helen, with an equally unmistakable manner, "I fancy I was; but one can always find time to give to one's friends, and Mr. Fessenden is an old and valued friend." Then, to Bessie, "Mr. Hurlstone and I were just going over to that pretty corner of your drawing-room, to examine that new bit of Japanese bronze." And she moved off in the opposite direction with Rush.

"I don't think O'Hara will ask you again to sit to him. The cad! I wanted to choke him," said Rush.

"Don't you believe it: he is not so easily crushed. But he will never accomplish his object."

"Charming person Miss Knowlton is," said O'Hara to Bessie; but to himself he said, "The prig! I owe her one for that snub."

"Indeed she is charming," answered Bessie; "but she is very set in her ways, and she will make up her mind to a thing without any apparent reason and stick to it."

The Japanese bronze furnished Helen and Rush with a subject of interesting conversation. She admired the patience and the devotion the Japanese display in accomplishing an end, even if that end be only the adjusting of the scales of a bronze serpent.

"I am glad that you admire patience and devotion," said Rush.

"And why, pray?"

"On general principles,—they are such admirable qualities; but they are not always appreciated." While Helen was wondering just how to parry this remark, the servant at the door announced Miss Sandford, and

in a moment Aunt Rebecca was with them. She had come to take Helen home: so the pleasant evening was done. Rush had to go down to *The Dawn* office, and Archie walked as far as Canal Street with him and aired his opinion of O'Hara.

"You needn't tell me that that banged-haired Buddhist has any right in decent society," said Archie.

"I don't believe in him at all," answered Rush; "and I shall take pains to inform myself on the subject. As a friend of Miss Archer's, I believe it to be my duty. I don't like to see a man whom I suspect on such terms with a young lady whom I admire and who I believe is as unsuspecting as she is pure and good."

Archie listened to these words of his friend with varied emotions. He shared his sentiments towards O'Hara, but he thought that he detected something more than ordinary friendship in his solicitude for Bessie; and his manner was a little cool when he said good-night to him in front of the Brandreth House. Rush quickened his pace and made good time to *The Dawn* office. The night-door man told him that Mr. Musgrave had asked for him: so Rush went direct to the city editor's room.

"Ah, here you are, Mr. Hurlstone," said the city editor, looking up from his schedule. "In one moment, please. I have a matter of importance I want to speak with you about." After he had checked off a few names on his schedule, and called a few orders up to the compositors' room through the speaking-tube, he invited Rush to come inside the iron railing, and then he told him what he wanted. It was a very nice bit of detective work. A popular actress, Rose Effington, had died some two years before, and there was a great deal of mystery surrounding her death. She had fallen from her high position on the stage, and, it was said, all through the fascinations of a man about whom very few knew anything, and about whom those who did had nothing good to say. At the time of her death he disappeared, and had not been heard of since. "Now it seems," said Musgrave, "that there is 'a party by the name of Johnson,' a prosperous wine-merchant, who entertained a tender passion for Rose, and would have married her if the other man had not cut him out. This Johnson believes that Rose was murdered, and he has spent the last two years in trying to discover her murderer. He has procured strong evidence against a man who, he suspects, was the favored lover, and he has brought his clues to me, and wants *The Dawn* to work them up. Now, I propose to have you do the work,—you and Martin the detective. You are the only man on the paper who is not known to the police and to other reporters. We want to do this thing quietly, and we want it well done. Here is an opportunity to distinguish

yourself. If you make a good story it may be the turning-point in your journalistic career. I will send your salary to your lodgings every week, as this may take some time; and any money you want for the search draw upon me for, and when you have anything of importance to communicate, drop me a line and mark the envelope personal. Martin will call at your lodgings to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock, and you can arrange a plan of action together. Keep a sharp eye and a stiff upper lip, and good luck to you. Good-night, Mr. Hurlstone. —Well, what is it, Grady?" to a reporter standing outside the railing. "Have you any more facts about the sinking of the Jaybird?"

Rush was rather pleased with the idea of a still-hunt after a murderer. He remembered having seen Rose Effington in Boston when he was a student at Harvard, and that added interest to the search. If he had only known then what he knew later, his interest would have been still keener.

(To be continued.)

THE REEDS.

A LONG the marsh in the morning glow
The reeds were swaying to and fro ;

And whenever the wind came sweeping by,
They would bend their heads, and sigh—and sigh.

A shepherd passed, and he plucked a reed,
And slit the stalk, and made it bleed,

And fashioned a pipe whereon to play,
And piped, ah ! many a happy lay.

All day he piped, and lawn and hill
Were wild with echoes sweet and shrill.

But still in the sullen marsh below
The reeds were swaying to and fro ;

And whenever the wind came sweeping by,
They would bend their heads, and sigh—and sigh.

Robertson Trowbridge.

THE INDUSTRIAL REPUBLIC.

THE world has always been a good place for the powerful ; all political progress is the result of efforts to make it tolerable for the weak. It is not in human nature to possess great power without abusing it. Hence the necessity for republican, or at least constitutional, forms of government. They are not perfect ; they are not ideal. It is possible to conceive of, though it might be impossible to realize, a despotism far superior to the actual republic. An absolute monarch, humane, strong, enlightened, would govern more intelligently, more steadily, and would give better protection to life and property, than any congress or parliament, whose acts must be partisan, and which always compromises between conflicting opinions and interests. That everybody knows more than anybody is a catching phrase in a republic, but it is nonsense. The very wise men, the very far-sighted men, the very conscientious men, the men qualified by nature and training to lead, to command, to administer government, are but a small portion even of the best communities. Popular government is better than an autocracy, not because the majority always or usually know more or are better than any one man, or any one hundred men, in the community, but because if unrestricted power be given to the one man or the one hundred men, he or they will tyrannize over the multitude. A considerable portion of the human race has already fought the battle against tyranny, and conquered. It has been many centuries doing it. Millions have died for liberty who did not know what liberty was. Millions have died fighting against autocracy who, had they had the power, would have replaced it with a worse anarchy, or even a more blind and selfish autocracy. The end could not be seen from the beginning. The cause of liberty has been disfigured by blunders, excesses, cruelties,—yet it was the cause of right.

The uprisings, the wars, which have substituted some form of popular for royal right are called political revolutions. They appear in history as struggles for political and civil rights. But the great mass of the people, even in a republic, have little to do with the government, and care to have little to do with it. The great majority of people are too busy fighting the battle of life, struggling for food and shelter, for finer food and a handsomer shelter, for the necessities, or the comforts, or the luxuries of life, for dinner to-day or for a fortune ten years hence, to care a great deal about politics and forms of government. What every man does care about is a chance to make a living and the

power of retaining what he has worked for. At the root of the matter these political revolutions are not so much struggles to change the form of government, or to transfer it from one set of hands to another, as struggles against intermeddling with the means of livelihood and exorbitant demands by the powerful few for the money earned by the weak many. You may preach political reforms with all the persuasiveness of an archangel, you will have poor success making revolutionists or rebels out of laborers who are pretty steadily employed at wages that protect them from physical inconvenience, or out of farmers and merchants whose capital increases a little from year to year, and from whose profits the powerful few who control the government do not exact a very large share in the shape of taxes. If a man be protected in life and property, can get justice when he needs it, be not subject to cruelty and maltreatment, and be left in undisturbed possession of nearly all his earnings, he will not be distressed at the fact that he is ruled by an autocrat. If the government afford him no protection, occasionally abuse him, and regularly tax him till he can scarcely live, it will not content him to reflect that he is a citizen of a republic, that everybody knows more than anybody, and that he is allowed from time to time to designate on a piece of paper which he drops into a box the names of those of his fellow-citizens whom he is least unwilling to intrust with the duty of neglecting his protection and absorbing his earnings.

This so-called political progress has been a constant fight on the part of the weak many to protect their earnings from the powerful few. These revolutions have been more fiscal than political. Practically all the political power in England has been absorbed by the House of Commons, but for centuries almost the only function of that body was to protect the pockets of the people from royal rapacity. The people knew nothing and cared nothing about popular rights. They had no dream of popular government. They bowed submissively to the divine right of kings,—except in financial matters. They had no programme of legislation. They cared nothing about foreign policies. But the money they earned they wanted to keep. If they gave up any of it to the king, they wanted to have some voice in fixing the amount and the disposition. The rank and file of French revolutionists were hungry men and women who rose in fury against a king and court that absorbed the earnings of a nation and wasted money with almost inconceivable prodigality, while the poor millions of toilers from whom it was wrung went cold and famished. The American colonists were generally attached to England and the English monarchy. Had their earnings been left alone they would have remained loyal. Parliament touched their pockets, and they rebelled. In the constitutional convention of

1787 Gouverneur Morris said, "Not liberty,—property is the main object of society. The savage state is more favorable to liberty than the civilized, and was only renounced for the sake of property."

But the political element in all these struggles for freedom has attracted the most attention. It is that element that it is the easiest to grow eloquent over. The political result has been more conspicuous, and often it has been considerably more important, than any other result. It has become customary, therefore, to speak of liberty as though it were the sole object of all these struggles and sacrifices, and the other ameliorations that have followed as the results of liberty. Champions of liberty have generally represented her as the mother of good wages, profitable investments, active demand for laborers, and even the fertility of the soil. There are Americans in politics, and therefore described as statesmen, who believe that wages are higher in the United States than in Europe, returns to capital more abundant, and the scale of living more liberal, because for a century we have been electing Presidents every four years and representatives every two years, and call our distinguished men "colonel" instead of "count," and "judge" instead of "baron."

We have been brought up to think that about all the economic benefits man can expect in this imperfect world will evolve themselves if he will only govern himself after the fashion of a republic. There is some excuse for the idea. When we speak of a republic, we are always thinking of our own, which has been a brilliant financial success. The unrestricted monarchs of former centuries were wont to tax men heavily. Of course it was natural to assume that if the people who paid the taxes controlled the government they would tax themselves little. Taxation in our own country has generally been a good deal lighter than in the Old World, and whether taxes are light or heavy makes a vast difference to the industries of a country. Then, too, the kings used to try to manage the business of their subjects, and they did not do it well. They forbade the exportation of gold and silver; they compelled corpses to be laid out in woollen shrouds in order to make business for wool-raisers and manufacturers. An idea of this latter variety would readily take root in Ohio; but for the most part this idea of the duty of the government to take care of the business of its people has been outgrown. At a time when the whole industrial community was suffering from governmental intermeddling, our ancestors naturally came to the conclusion that if government and law would only let the whole commercial and industrial world alone, and allow every man to take care of himself, there would be no longer any trouble. That belief, inherited by all of us, most of us still hold.

The commercial and industrial world, therefore, has been thrown open to individual enterprise with the scantiest possible restrictions. Society has declared that a man shall not acquire wealth by virtue of superior strength, if he use that strength in knocking down and robbing some lawful possessor. It has thrown a few restrictions around the acquisition of wealth by virtue—or vice—of intellectual superiority. But these are very few. They exclude forgery and some of the grosser kinds of swindling, but a sharp man may get a stupid man's wealth away from him with impunity in almost any way short of physical violence. Of course this is a fair fight, and the best man—that is, the best man for fighting—wins. We have come to accept this as a law of nature and also as a law of God. Can we not find it said in the Bible that to them that have shall be given? Religion is reinforced by science, for the latter teaches the survival of the fittest. In business the fittest survive. The men who are best qualified to wield power in accordance with their own interests get power and keep it. What could be in more perfect harmony than that with the science of the day?

In government we have abolished the free fight in which the best man wins, the struggle which only a few of the best armed survive. The result of that sort of thing was tyranny, and the many, who were individually weak, combined, and decided that, as it made a good deal of difference to them who held the reins of power, they would determine to whose hands those reins should be from time to time committed. The persons marked out by nature for rulers, the men who were born leaders and commanders, were the men who controlled governments under the old plan of a fair fight and the winnings to the hardest fighter. The hardest fighter—that is, the one who was fittest to survive—did win, but he promptly became a tyrant. We have found it more comfortable to be governed by a President, a Cabinet, and a Congress of mediocrities than by one colossal political genius, not because they govern better, but because on the whole we can make more money and have a better time under them. We have borrowed from armies and courts names to give to our successful and powerful men of business. We call them "merchant princes," "captains of industry," and "rail-road kings." These are good terms. It may be worth while for us to think what they mean. We commonly think of these men as very rich men; but that is a private and inconsequential matter. It is because they are very powerful that they are worth some attention.

All the conditions of the present economic world are favorable to the creation of men of immense monetary power. Owing to inventive genius and the utilization of steam, all manufacturing, all transportation, nearly all mining, much general business, and some agriculture,

can only be carried on by very rich men, or by a number of tolerably rich men in association. Capital is power, and the economic world is so organized at present as to afford men endowed with wealth-creating faculties unusual opportunities for acquiring this kind of power, so organized also as to make a considerable amount of this power an essential precedent condition to success in many lines of production and commerce. Of course this necessity for capital in large quantities reduces the number of those who can engage in the free commercial fight from which only the fittest—to fight—are to emerge. This restriction of numbers affords a great advantage to the contestants. The powerful, being comparatively few, can do a great deal towards dulling the edge of competition among themselves, and so save their strength for the conflict with the many. The law encourages this by making the organization of stock companies as simple as possible. A joint-stock company is a device for enlarging opportunities for making profits and at the same time lessening liabilities. Undoubtedly it is a valuable thing. By it men have accomplished feats that would have remained undone. Three men wish to go into the business of making shoes. Each of them has capital enough to employ five hundred workmen. If they went into business separately, they would compete with each other in their efforts to get laborers and customers. The result would be a tendency towards high wages, low prices, and small or no profits. Perhaps they would not dare to go into partnership with each other, but they organize a stock company. There is then no competition for laborers or market. They fix wages as low as necessity will compel the workmen to take, and they fix prices as high as necessity will compel customers to pay. Of course their chances for making money are much greater than they would be if they had gone into business severally. If the competition with other makers even more favorably situated drives them into bankruptcy, they lose only what they have put into the business. It should be said, however, that the application of large masses of capital to manufacturing reduces the cost of production, and in most lines of manufacturing there is sharp competition among the capitalists,—so that, however the working-people fare, the customer generally finds himself able to buy at reduced rates.

A recent writer in *Macmillan's Magazine* says, "Industrial concentration, above all, is the rule of the age. Steam has extinguished handicrafts, and, as steam-power is most economically applied on the largest possible scale, its every development aggravates the general tendency to aggregation, to the concentration of business in larger and larger establishments, the extinction one after another of the smaller. Trade after trade is monopolized, not necessarily by great capitalists, but by great

capitals. In every trade the standard of necessary size, the minimum establishment that can hold its own in competition, is constantly and rapidly raised. The little men are ground out, and the littleness that dooms men to destruction waxes year by year."

It is unnecessary to particularize: the illustrations of this aggregation of pecuniary power are all around us. Each manufacturing establishment represents a great aggregation, managed absolutely by one man, or by a majority vote in a small board of directors. All the factories of the same kind in the same region, sometimes in the United States, are united in a pool, or some variety of trade association, to prevent competition among themselves and to increase their power over their employees and their customers. Three or four trunk lines between the grain-fields of the West and the seaports of the East are supposed to be competing lines; their managers, who are absolute monarchs of the stockholders' property, make an agreement as to the rates they shall charge, and divide the business in accordance with a fixed scale. One man decides whether a thousand men shall have employment or not. Half a dozen men vote whether ten thousand men shall have a dollar a day or only ninety cents. A railroad company has competition at certain points on its line; at others it has none. At the points of competition it hauls freight at less than cost, and makes up the average by charging exorbitant rates at the non-competing points, with the result of building up one city and destroying another. It charges more for hauling goods over a part of its line than for hauling them over the whole line. It pays a steamship company a million a year not to compete with it; it enters into a bargain with a manufacturer to charge an unreasonable price for bringing goods that compete with his products, thereby applying the "protective" system between one portion of the country and the rest; it charges a man who sometimes patronizes a public canal one rate and the man who binds himself never to use the canal another rate, thereby attacking the value of public property, in which every citizen is a stockholder. Whether the farmers of the Northwest shall get two or three millions more or less for their crops is decided by three or four railroad majesties at a private meeting in a remote city.

It is possible that all these decisions are right, are for the best interest of the public. But what the public knows is that these monetary kings and princes have ample power to decide adversely to the public interest, and have no motive to decide adversely to their own interest. All nations of the Western world have shown a profound distrust of political kings and princes, even when the kings and princes declared to their subjects that they were actuated only by a regard for the public weal. Human nature is the same, high and low, ancient and

modern : it is selfish. The multitude has refused to trust itself implicitly to the political kings, and it will by and by refuse to trust itself to the monetary kings ; not because they are worse than other men, but because they are no better. Of course we have learned that the public welfare is best cared for when every man acts for himself ; but the public has learned better than that in political affairs, and it is learning better than that in industrial affairs. Self-interest is a good regulator for the powerful ; but how about the weak, who have no chance to consult their self-interest ? or the ignorant, who do not know what it is ? The revolution which should give these latter some voice in the control of industrial affairs would be no greater than the revolutions which have already given them a voice in the control of political affairs.

The growth of labor organizations is one of the most noteworthy signs of the times. The powerful have succeeded in largely reducing the severity of competition among themselves, but they are very confident that the weak ought not to do anything to reduce the bitterness of their mutual competition.* They deeply deplore the spectacle of laboring-men working, or not working, not according to their own judgment, but according to the orders of some chief. Well, possibly it is very sad ; but how much more influence has an individual stockholder in the Western Union Telegraph Company or the Pennsylvania Railroad Company on the policy of that company than a single mechanic or operative has on the action of his trade-union ? We are told that labor organizations meet in secret and the members are oath-bound. This is often true ; but who ever heard of a board of directors who met in public, or who talked freely with the reporters about the business transacted or the schemes proposed ? The capacity for organization, the willingness to sink some measure of individualism for the common good, is the foundation of all civilization and all political advancement and the condition of all combinations of capital. But when something of the same kind is tried by laborers, they are learnedly and sadly informed that they are reverting to a backward and primitive condition, are resuming the tribal status, and that unrestricted individualism is the spirit of the age, and every man for himself is its motto.

Of course every person who has been prosperous under the present organization of business and industry is perfectly satisfied ; and if he has been very prosperous, he cannot conceive of any reason why fault should be found with the present industrial world. To him every per-

* Professor Hadley well says, in the November *Andover Review*, "If the law regards the "pool" with disfavor, it regards most of the manifestations of trades-unionism with absolute hostility."

son who has not succeeded has deserved to fail because he was not smart, and only the smart have any rights; every person who finds fault with the present condition of things is an idiotic or criminal communist, who wants to get plenty of whiskey and tobacco without work, and who has wild dreams about the equal division of wealth and the abolition of private property, government, morals, and everything else except appetite. Equally abhorrent would advocates of democratic government have seemed to the kings and courtiers of the sixteenth century. Those who have fared well under the present industrial, like those who fared well under the old political, régime are unable to understand why any rational person should want a change. Are not the persons who attain success in this present world those who are best qualified to succeed? Undoubtedly. If you abolished all government and threw the political world open to free competition, success would be attained by those best fitted for it,—that is, by the natural-born kings and generals. Oh, well, it is said, that is very different. In politics the weak many have combined to protect themselves against the strong few; but in business everything is different. It is different; but possibly it will not always remain so extremely different.

A political republic is a state in which all citizens have not equal influence, nor equal power, nor equal capacity, but in which the great body of citizens have a certain measure of control over the government, to such an extent that there is no absolute power, and the wishes and convictions of the majority cannot long be defied. That will help us a little to guess what an industrial republic might be like. We have never seen an industrial republic: therefore we do not know how one would look. Popular governments were established in great measure by men who could not have told how a republic would look, or what would happen in republics. The authors of our own Constitution were afraid to trust the election of the President to the common people, and imagined that they had prevented it. All the same the people got that power so easily that it has never been deemed worth while to amend the Constitution in accordance with the facts, and they have selected a pretty fair set of Presidents. There is nothing in the most revolutionary social programmes that can seem to us much wilder than our own political axioms seemed to the subjects of kings who ruled by the divine right. The Czar of Russia does not see any reason why the government of Russia should be changed and his own powers reduced. What could have seemed more preposterous in Europe a century and a half ago than the idea that every man, rich or poor, wise or ignorant, good or bad, should sustain or overthrow governments by giving votes of exactly equal weight? Thomas Carlyle, living in the last half of the nineteenth

century, never got reconciled to the idea. Antecedently, there is nothing more wild and absurd in the idea of an equal division of property. The revenues of France under Louis XIV. and Louis XV. were the revenues of the king. He spent what he pleased for his army and navy, and what he pleased for his table. It was the business of no one but himself. Taine tells us that the idea of treating this revenue as a public revenue, out of which the king was to have an allowance, while the rest was to be used only for the purposes of the state, would have seemed as wild and revolutionary as the idea that a portion of a millionaire's income should be assigned to him and the rest turned into the public treasury would seem to us. We talk about vested rights. There are none. Institutions are for man, and not man for institutions. No vested rights, according to our notions, are more sacred than the rights of land-ownership. The most conservative body of men in the world when property rights are touched is the British Parliament; and yet that body has twice in the last half of a generation passed laws restricting Irish landlords in fixing their rents, restrictions that have reduced the value of the property affected several millions of pounds.

But the political republic is not anarchy, and the industrial republic will not be chaos. There are differences of political power in the former; there will be differences of pecuniary power in the latter. In the former the political powers are in the main exercised for the good of the whole community, instead of for the good of a king, a court, and an army. Economic power will be exercised in the industrial republic for the general good, and not exclusively for the comfort of captains of industry, merchant princes, and railroad kings. That will mark the difference between an industrial republic and an industrial despotism.

Many enterprises now carried on by individuals for their own benefit may have to be carried on by the community for its benefit. But, it is said, the state cannot carry on these things as advantageously as private individuals and corporations. Perhaps that is true; but it doesn't settle the matter. If the liberality or extravagance of state management is less than the profits of private management, then the state management may be the more economical for the public. A stock company may make gas more cheaply than a municipality, but the municipality may supply the gas at lower rates than the corporation. Very few of our cities would submit to have their water-supply in the hands of a private corporation. Among English cities it is not uncommon for the municipality to furnish the gas and a stock company the water. There is no "sphere" of government. What the community wants and

can supply most economically is a proper subject for the control of the community. Probably it will always be advantageous for railroads to be operated by private companies, but it may be found desirable for the state to own the tracks, as it owns other highways, and lease the use of them. There is always and essentially the element of monopoly in railroads, because with them location is an element. A cotton-mill in Georgia may compete perfectly with a cotton-mill in Massachusetts, but no two railroads can compete perfectly with each other unless they run side by side, touching exactly the same points. Even then the bankruptcy of one line would not drive it out of business.

It may be necessary for the state to resume its original functions as the exclusive landlord ; but this is not certain, or necessarily an end in view of those who seek to bring about the industrial republic. Ownership is not essential to induce men to expend their labor on land. Even in our own country men expend labor and money freely on leased land, both agricultural and urban : all that is needed is security of tenure. Land is constantly increasing in value, not on account of what the owner does, but on account of what the occupier does, and on account of what the people around do. If a landlord does anything to promote the industries of a community, he only does what a tenant does ; as a landlord he does nothing except to tax the producers. He may be, and often is, a non-resident, or, if he lives in the community he taxes, he may not invest one cent in the employment of labor or the development of production. State ownership on a small scale is already in operation in this country. There are cities that hold real estate for the benefit of the school fund. The increasing value of the real estate is due to the industry of the entire community, and in these cases the entire community gets the benefit thereof, because by whatever amount the rentals contribute to the support of the schools the taxes are reduced. If these cities owned all the land they occupy, the rentals might be largely reduced and yet yield enough to supersede taxation entirely and afford a liberal sum for municipal improvements. There are various ways in which the change could be brought about without seriously molesting what we call vested rights. If such legislation as the last Irish land act can be secured in a political monarchy, loaded down with traditions and governed by wealth, what may be done in a political republic, for the most part devoid of traditions, resting on universal suffrage and the maxim of the greatest good to the greatest number ? "The profit of the earth is for all," said Solomon, among whose subjects no landless class and no great landlord class could exist, for land was inalienable.

These are only suggestions. The industrial republic may not touch

land-titles, or do more than to regulate in a very general way railroad management. Political liberty has been secured by men who fought for it first and learned what to do with it afterwards. The laboring multitude, weak individually, but strong when united, has greater hardships to rebel against than the hardships which have caused some revolutions. There will be no insurrection, for the acquisition of political rights has removed the necessity for appealing to arms. Year by year the armies of laborers and mechanics are perfecting their organizations and developing their strength. Gradually the working-men, and the anti-monopolists, and the socialists, and like bodies, are showing more and more political strength. They are doing a good many foolish things and saying some wild ones; but we inherit our political liberties from men of whom the same might be said. There is no occasion for being greatly alarmed. No economic revolution can be more radical than the political revolutions that have occurred within a century and a half. Again and again we hear the alarmists shrieking that the foundations of society are to be shaken; but the foundations stand it, and the superstructure, instead of falling into a shapeless ruin, merely undergoes repairs which we of to-day have no trouble in recognizing as vast improvements. The most serious objection for years to any increase in the field of governmental operations, to any combination of economic with political powers, has been the thoroughly partisan character of the nation's service. Within twenty-five years this service will entirely cease to be partisan. The nation's employees will be the servants of the nation, and not of a party, and it will then be found practicable for the people of the United States and of the several States to do many things for themselves which they now leave to a few individuals with the result of building up vast private fortunes out of which the community gets little or no good. The bounties of nature and the smallness of our population in comparison with the continental area of our territory have protected us in a considerable degree from the economic troubles that have afflicted European countries. We have attributed this protection to our form of government, instead of to our public resources. As our country grows older it approaches the economic condition of the Old World, and the troubles there experienced begin to appear among us. We thought our ballot-boxes were amulets to keep them away. We thought the words "manhood suffrage" would exorcise them. We were mistaken. When economic ills press us more closely, we shall recognize the fact that we must seek not political but economic remedies. Then we shall gradually alter our industrial organization, till in the course of years we shall find we are living in an industrial republic, having in the period of transition got rid of a great

deal of economic rubbish, just as our ancestors got rid of a great deal of political rubbish,—having done, like our ancestors, a good many unwise and some wrong things, and having destroyed a good many so-called corner-stones of human society, which were found to be only additions to the weight and not at all to the strength of the social structure ; and as the result of all this we shall be vastly better and more comfortable. But nobody will then have such immense power in the commercial and industrial world as a good many men have now, and for them and their heirs the change will be inconvenient, just as the popular uprisings in Europe during the last fifty years have thrown a good many kings out of employment and doomed a good many heirs-apparent to pass their lives in the ranks of ordinary humanity.

Fred. Perry Powers.

RETROSPECT.

THE sallow sun lay on the fading hills,
 T Fanning his hot brow with the evening breeze.
 A few more circuits, and the year is run.
 How shall I know if love is lost or won,—
 How know what day may bring till day is done ?

There is a road as still as buried life,
 Which I have trodden to its outmost rim ;
 No sound clangs silence round me as I pass,
 No crickets chirping in the short, dry grass,—
 Naught but a wailing wind which shrills—alas !

There are two silences which hush their way :
 One springs of deathless thought grown tired of love,
 One lies with thoughtless death, gaunt, haggard, lean.
 How shall I know which silence lies between
 The trackless roads of the unseen and seen ?

I look until my eyes are strained and dim ;
 I listen till the silence rings with pain.
 I may not find a rose grown in the deep,
 But I can gather poppies while you reap,
 And winds which wailed alas ! may whisper—sleep !

Marion Manville.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER XXI.

JACOB DECLINES TO STRUT.

IT is difficult for one who is perpetually smarting under a sense of injustice to be just in his judgments upon his fellows, and Jacob had undoubtedly been too severe in assuming that Dick Herbert neither knew nor cared whether his wife were happy or not. This, as it happened, was a question to which Dick had devoted a good deal of thought ; and truly concerned was he at being compelled to answer it in the negative. For Hope had lately reverted in some measure to that irritable and capricious humor which he had borne with so much equanimity during the time of their betrothal. She turned upon him, every now and then, with some sharp little sarcastic speech which he had done nothing to provoke, and her subsequent repentance for such behavior was no security against a speedy repetition of it. This puzzled Dick, who had all his life been able to deal satisfactorily with every variety of male character that he had come across, but had small experience of the other sex. When a man was snappish and out of sorts he simply left him alone, which was, of course, the only rational thing to do, and by dinner-time, or at latest by the following morning, it was all right again. But, somehow or other, this mode of treatment did not seem to answer with Hope, and he could only suppose that the dose was not strong enough to be effectual. Of men he knew as much as most people, and of horses, dogs, and other animals a great deal more ; but his estimate of women was based chiefly upon hearsay ; and, having always been given to understand that in the hour of ease they are uncertain, coy, and hard to please, he bore Hope no ill will for being subject to a natural law, and was ready to believe that she would display all the qualities of a ministering angel, should an occasion with which he was not eager to provide her arise to call for them.

However, he thought he had better remove himself out of her sight for the time being : so he made arrangements to spend a week or two, shooting, at the houses of different friends, and said nothing about them until they were completed. November was then drawing towards a close ; a few frosty nights had brought the leaves down in thousands from the trees, and, since Dick had not yet shot his best coverts, it seemed unnecessary that he should go farther afield in search of sport.

This was what Hope pointed out to him when he announced his projected departure ; but he answered that the Farndon coverts would doubtless be done justice to by Cunningham, who was still in the house, and by the brother officers whom he would, of course, ask over from Windsor.

"But surely they will think it rather odd that you should not be here," objected Hope.

"I expect they won't grumble much, so long as there are plenty of pheasants," said Dick, cheerfully ; "and you and Carry can do the honors."

"Don't you think," suggested Hope, after remaining silent awhile, "that Captain Cunningham has been rather a long time here? I wonder it does not strike him that he ought to give some one else a treat."

Dick raised his eyebrows. "Why, I thought you and Cunningham hit it off so well," he remarked.

"Why should you be so anxious to go away?" Hope asked, suddenly changing her ground.

Dick was very near answering, "Because I am sure that you will be glad to get rid of me ;" but he thought better of it, and only observed, "One can't always stick in the same place."

"Do you *want* to go?" Hope persisted.

To this her husband made no reply, because, as a matter of fact, he did not want to go ; and she, drawing a little nearer to him, laid her hand timidly on his arm, and said, "I wish you would stay, Dick !"

Dick remained silent, frowning and smiling at the same moment, and wondering whether it was the part of a wise man to yield to feminine caprices ; but he ended by saying, "I may as well keep to my plan, I think. I don't like throwing people over, after accepting their invitations, and you can all get on pretty well without me, I fancy."

If he expected to be further entreated, he met with the disappointment that he deserved ; for Hope at once turned away, remarking, coldly, "Very likely you are right. You will be back before Christmas, I suppose?"

To which he replied, "Oh, certainly ; before then." And nothing more was said about the matter.

To make a hesitating request and meet with an unhesitating rebuff is always a disagreeable experience, and what rendered it the more so in the present instance was that, upon further reflection, Hope really did not know why she should have pressed her husband to remain at home against his will. She had not seen so much of him since their arrival at Farndon as to feel lonely without him ; and, indeed, the only trial

that his absence was likely to bring upon her was that Carry would be certain to say, "I told you so!"

Carry, however, was too magnanimous, or too indifferent, or too busy with her own affairs, to indulge in that cheap triumph, and after Dick had gone away things went on very much as before. The neighbors continued to call; Captain Cunningham and Miss Herbert continued to ride about the country together; and one or two large shooting-parties took place, which Hope did not feel called upon to grace with her presence. She might, perhaps, have found the time hang rather heavily upon her hands had it not been for Jacob Stiles, whose task of educating the bay mare was soon completed, and who, at Hope's request, accompanied her the first time that she made trial of her new acquisition. He was evidently so gratified at being asked that she repeated her invitation a second and a third time, thereby scandalizing the head coachman, who, however, was old and discreet and kept his opinions to himself.

Jacob on horseback was not quite the same person as Jacob on foot. That aspect, as of a beaten hound, which prejudiced so many strangers against him, disappeared at such times, and he became a well-knit and not ill-looking youth, whose perfect seat and light hand no observer could fail to admire. His manner, too, gained something in confidence, and, although he was always reserved and respectful with Hope, he was able to speak to her with authority upon the management of horses, and also—which interested her more—upon that of the pencil and the brush. She spent a good many hours with Jacob, which were pleasant enough to her and blissful to him. He was in some sort a *protégé* of her own, whom nobody else cared to notice; nor was she insensible to his devotion, although she hardly comprehended the extent of it. Moreover, she was filled with compassion for him because his views of life were so dark. Not that he was given to expatiating upon these; but every now and again a phrase would escape him which exhibited his quiet pessimism in a more striking light than could have been thrown upon it by any loud lamentation or railing.

Hope did not attempt to comfort him. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and she herself sometimes thought that existence was a doubtful sort of boon. She was beginning to make a discovery which is seldom made in youth and is always painful when so made,—namely, that for the majority life must, at best, be a commonplace and uneventful affair; also that nine-tenths of the human race are neither sheep nor goats, but uninteresting mongrels. This conclusion, though a little saddening and perplexing (because it is plain that from the moment that you admit the fusion of good and evil you have taken

the first step into a labyrinth of the most abstruse speculation), had at any rate the good effect of making her more tolerant of mortal infirmities in general, and of those of a young guardsman with insufficient means in particular. It was absurd to expect too much of Bertie Cunningham, or to quarrel with him because he had not set up lofty ideals for himself. His code, no doubt, was that of his class, and how should he have learned any other? She did not see much of him,—indeed, she fancied that he purposely avoided her,—but when they met he was always cheery and friendly. He referred once or twice, in a joking tone, to his possible marriage, and as often as he did so Hope expressed her fervent desire that the lady who had never been named between them might refuse him; but at the bottom of her heart she did not think he would be refused, because she saw no immediate prospect of his giving anybody the chance of refusing him. This, perhaps, may have helped her to be tolerant.

After dinner, one evening, he informed her that Miss Herbert and he had been concocting a scheme for their own amusement and the delectation of the neighborhood. "It's subject to your approval, of course," he added; "but we were thinking that it would be rather a good thing to get up some theatricals. We could have the stage in the dining-room, and——"

"But I don't think we could very well do anything of that kind while Dick is away," interrupted Hope.

"Dick will come back. In fact, he *must* come back, because we shall want him to take a part. Besides, we can't possibly be ready until after Christmas. I shall have to leave you before then; but I can easily ride over from Windsor and rehearse. I need hardly say that you will be expected to act."

"I have never acted in my life," said Hope.

"That is of no consequence. I have, lots of times, and I'll coach you. Now, about the piece. Miss Herbert and I haven't made up our minds about that yet; but I have a fancy for 'She Stoops to Conquer.' It isn't exactly a novelty; but I know it by heart, which is a great pull; and the dresses are pretty. Do you think it would do?"

"Oh, yes, I should think so," answered Hope.

But Carry, more prudently, said, "Let us hear what cast you propose to make."

"Well, I should be Charles Marlow, because I know the part," answered Bertie. "Herbert could take old Hardcastle, and Bob West—you know Bob West, don't you?—would be glad enough to do Hastings, I dare say: he isn't particular. About Tony Lumpkin I can't quite see my way. Can you think of anybody?"

"I am not sure that I can. How do you mean to distribute the ladies' parts?"

"Oh, I don't know. What should you say to Mrs. Herbert for Miss Hardcastle, and yourself for Mrs. Hardcastle?" asked Bertie, airily. "There ought to be no difficulty in finding a Constance Neville somewhere."

He must have been very well aware that this arrangement would not meet Carry's views, or he would not have mentioned it in that off-hand manner. Seeing gathering clouds upon her brow, he proceeded to improve his position by adding, "Grand part,—Mrs. Hardcastle; in fact, I believe it might easily be made *the* part of the piece by a really good actress, such as you are."

"So I should imagine," observed Carry, dryly. "Your cast is admirable: the only improvement that I can suggest in it is that you should take Toby Lumpkin and give up young Marlow to Jacob Stiles."

"Jacob Stiles?" repeated Bertie, looking puzzled. "Can he act?"

"As well as other people who have never acted before, I dare say; and if you offered him the part you would gratify Hope, who has already stooped to conquer him. The main thing in amateur theatricals is to please the performers."

"I can answer for one performer who would not be pleased with the *rôle* of Miss Hardcastle," said Hope, quietly. "If I am to appear at all, it must be in some less ambitious character than that, and Constance Neville would do very well for me. You had better be Miss Hardcastle. As for Mr. Stiles, I am afraid we can hardly ask him to join us, since we don't consider him worthy of sitting down to dinner in our company."

"Mr. Stiles, as you call him, is not very likely to appreciate such fine distinctions," remarked Carry, who did not allow her wrath to be turned away by this soft answer, and who chose to vent it upon Hope, rather than upon the real offender. "However, I am not personally eager for his society, either on the stage or elsewhere."

"Oh, he's all right; artists are all right," interposed Bertie, perceiving that there was thunder in the air, and not wishing that his project should be strangled at birth. "He keeps out of sight so much that I had really forgotten he was in the house; but a sharp fellow like that ought to be useful to us. I don't think I'll give him my part, all the same; but he can have his pick of the others. Now, what are we to do about Mrs. Hardcastle? We must get somebody pretty good for that part, or we shall spoil the whole thing. I wish Mrs. Pierpoint would come! But you don't know her, do you?" he asked, turning to Hope.

"Unfortunately, I don't," she replied.

Carry, who, having obtained what she wanted, was now a little ashamed of her ill humor, said, with unwonted civility, "Would you mind my writing to her and asking her down, Hope? I don't know whether she will be able to come or not; but she is a great friend of mine: so perhaps you and she would both agree to dispense with formality for once."

The great advantage possessed by those who are habitually rude is that anything like amenity on their part is sure to meet with grateful acknowledgment. Hope declared that she would like nothing better than to make Mrs. Pierpoint's acquaintance, and the discussion was continued in a much more friendly spirit than had marked its opening.

"Will you speak to Stiles about acting, Mrs. Herbert?" asked Bertie, as he wished Hope good-night. "I really believe he would be rather an acquisition, and it might cheer him up a bit, poor chap, to come out of his den for one evening. If he didn't care about taking a part, he might help us as stage-manager. An artist should be a good judge of scenic effects."

Hope thought this very good-natured of Bertie; and she was not best pleased when, on communicating the proposed arrangement to Jacob, she was met with a somewhat brusque refusal.

"We thought you might be glad of a little amusement," she remarked.

"The jackdaw who stuck the peacock's feathers in his tail got very little amusement for his pains," answered the young man. "The other birds didn't molest him so long as he kept to himself: they only looked at him out of the corners of their eyes, and said, 'Thank God we are not jackdaws,' and strutted by. But he hadn't the sense to thank God that he was not a peacock, and so he got into trouble."

"What a wrong-headed way you have of looking at life!" exclaimed Hope. "If you go on like this you will never have a friend in the world."

"I suppose I never shall," said Jacob, sadly. "There are no jackdaws at Farndon, and I don't know how to strut. I should look very foolish if I attempted it. Don't think me ungrateful. I have no doubt that Captain Cunningham means kindly; but, even if I wished to accept his offer, I could not. Mr. Herbert would not like it."

"You are quite mistaken——" Hope was beginning, but he interrupted her with a quick motion of his hand and a smile.

"No, indeed: I don't speak without knowledge. You are too kind and good to understand; and even you, if I told you all——but I won't tell you all,—at least, not now. Mrs. Herbert," he went on, with more

animation, "I am a poor hand at expressing myself; but I should like you to know how much I have felt your kindness. As you say, I shall never have a friend, and to talk about friendship between you and me would be absurd; but if ever I can serve you in any way, great or small, and if you will let me know of it, you will confer the truest favor upon me that it is in your power to confer. I see by your face that you think that an exaggerated way of speaking. It is not exaggerated. I mean what I say, quite literally; and all kinds of things are possible. A day may come when you may want help, and when even I may be able to help you."

"Then help us with our theatricals," returned Hope, laughing.

In truth, she did think Jacob's language a little too high-flown, and his manner, even more than his words, affected her with a vague feeling of uneasiness.

"I won't press you to act, since you dislike it, Mr. Stiles," she went on; "but you might give us the benefit of your advice as to dresses and scenery, and so on."

"That I will do very gladly," answered Jacob. "Miss Herbert will snub me; but I am accustomed to that, and there will be no need for me to show myself on the night of the performance. Only one thing I want to ask you, Mrs. Herbert. Would you mind calling me Jacob instead of Mr. Stiles in future? Both names are equally hideous; but the second gives offence to some people, and the first doesn't. If I am to walk among the peacocks for a time, nobody shall say that I have borrowed a feather of their plumage."

CHAPTER XXII.

MRS. PIERPOINT IS PEREMPTORY.

PRETTY little Mrs. Pierpoint wrote a pretty little note to Hope, expressing her thanks for the invitation that she had received, and her willingness to undertake the part of Mrs. Hardcastle, or any other that might be assigned to her. She said that she felt as if she were already well acquainted with her future hostess, of whom she had heard so much from two of her most intimate friends,—Carry Herbert and Bertie Cunningham,—and only regretted that other engagements would prevent her from reaching Farndon until within about a week of the date fixed upon for the theatricals. She hoped, however, that the play would not suffer on that account, as she meant to study it carefully in the mean time.

The same post brought a brief missive to much the same effect from Dick. He, too, did not see his way to being at home before Christmas eve, but had found a copy of Goldsmith, was committing a stated portion of dialogue to memory every night and reciting it before the looking-glass the next morning, and expected to know his part perfectly by the end of the year. Wished to be informed whether he would be required to shave off his moustache. Would prefer to retain it, for choice, and had heard that there was some dodge of gumming it down, so as to render it invisible beyond the foot-lights, but was ready to make any sacrifice in the interests of art and the drama.

"It looks to me as if we were positively courting disaster," remarked Hope, after she had read the substance of these two letters aloud at the breakfast-table. "We shall all be scattered abroad until the last moment, and when we assemble we shall find ourselves more abroad than ever."

"It will go right enough, you'll see," answered Bertie, confidently. "The great thing is not to be nervous; and I don't think any of us suffer in that way. Besides, there are only two absentees, after all, and the rest of us must set to work to rehearse immediately."

That much was soon accomplished by means of a little decision and energy. The household brigade was able to furnish a Tony Lumpkin, the other subordinate characters were procured from the neighborhood, and in the course of ten days or so a very fair degree of proficiency was arrived at. Jacob Stiles acquitted himself of his functions to the general satisfaction, his suggestions with regard to grouping and properties being thoroughly artistic and hampered by no dread of expenditure,—insomuch that it was evident that, whether the acting were first-rate or not, the piece would be put upon the stage in a style calculated to astonish a country audience. His manner, moreover, was so quiet and unobtrusive that even Carry did not feel it necessary to put him back in his place more than once or twice a day.

Carry herself was somewhat subdued at this time. Her naturally imperious temper seldom asserted itself, and, when it did, was quelled by a word from Bertie Cunningham, who ordered her about unceremoniously and criticised her performance without mercy. Her only wish was to please him, and this she showed so plainly that Hope, little as she liked her sister-in-law, could not help feeling sorry for her. It is said that women have no great sympathy with one another, as a rule; but there is one particular way in which no woman likes to see another ill used,—unless, of course, she be a rival. In the present case there could not be any such cause for enmity, and Hope could almost have found it in her heart to do something towards bringing about the ill-

assorted match which had been contemplated, now that there seemed to be so little probability of its ever taking place. When duty or pleasure (which of the two it was did not quite clearly transpire) took Bertie away, the two women became, if not friendly, at least less intolerant of each other. Perhaps the elder was not insensible to the younger's complaisance in yielding the chief character in the play to her without a murmur; perhaps also she may have admitted to herself that Hope had yet a further claim upon her gratitude, since it was not to be supposed that any one could really prefer the society of Jacob Stiles to that of Captain Cunningham.

Be this as it may, Dick, on his return home for Christmas, found the peace appropriate to the season reigning in his household, together with as much of good-will as could reasonably be looked for. His meeting with his wife occurred in the presence of the servants, where demonstrative affection would have been out of place; and it is not unlikely that Hope had thought of this when she hurried out into the hall to welcome the wanderer back. Nevertheless, the calm, matter-of-course manner in which he accosted her chilled her a little. He was, as usual, good-humored and imperturbable; he had no account to give of his doings during the past few weeks, nor, apparently, any curiosity to be informed as to those of his wife. The only question that he asked referred to Carry and Bertie.

"How are they getting on?" he inquired. "Any sign of coming to the point?"

"None whatever, that I can see," replied Hope. "They were always together while he was here; but it seems to drag, somehow. To tell the truth, I don't think he is behaving very well."

Dick merely shrugged his shoulders, and presently went away to his study. Hope saw him no more until just before dinner, when it appeared to strike him that it would be at least civil to express some interest in his wife's health, for he entered her dressing-room while she was putting the finishing-touches to her toilet, and said, "I hope you have been quite well all this time?"

Hope, without turning round, answered that she had been perfectly well.

"That's all right. Spirits pretty good?"

"About as good as usual, I think," replied Hope, laughing a little.

"That's all right," said Dick, again, in his deliberate way. Then he advanced to the dressing-table and laid sundry parcels, wrapped in silver paper, down upon it. "I stopped in London on my way back," he remarked, "and picked up these at the jeweller's. I thought you

might like to have them. They used to belong to my mother, and I sent them to be reset a short time ago."

There must be something very wrong about cats who refuse fish, Lord Mayors who do not care to accept a baronetcy, and women who have no love for jewels. Hope, fortunately for herself, was not abnormal to that extent. She opened the velvet cases, giving utterance to little cries of delight as, one after another, the glittering clusters and sprays of diamonds revealed themselves. "Oh, Dick!" she exclaimed, "how lovely! Why did you not tell me that I was going to have all these beautiful things?"

"Because I wanted to have the pleasure of seeing you look as you are looking now," he answered.

"How am I looking now?" she asked, and turned quickly towards the glass, which reflected back a beautiful young face, with laughing lips, dimpled cheeks, and eyes sparkling like the diamonds that they had just been gazing upon. She started at the sight of her own image: assuredly that was not her face of every day, nor anything resembling it. With a sudden twinge of compunction, she jumped up, pushed back her chair, and laid both her hands upon her husband's arm, looking up into his face.

"Dick," she said, "am I generally very horrid? Am I cross and impatient without any reason?"

He replied, with that terrible truthfulness of his, "Well, you are rather,—sometimes."

Hope's eyes dropped. "I know I am," she murmured. "I can't explain why. I never used to be like that in the old days,—I mean before my father died. But now—I don't know—sometimes I feel as if there was nobody. You wouldn't understand the feeling, I suppose."

"I think I do understand, though," returned Dick, kindly. "I can imagine that I should have just the same sort of sensation in your place. I should long to get hold of Fate and punch her head; and, as that is impossible, I dare say I might relieve myself by getting a human head into chancery and punching that. But, after all, there is nothing for it but to submit to perverse Fate. Submission and pluck will pull you through; and if you haven't quite got the one yet, I know you have the other."

Possibly this may not have been the rejoinder that Hope anticipated or desired; for it did not seem to please her much, and her face grew graver. Presently, however, she smiled again, and remarked, with apparent inconsequence, "Well, at any rate, you must have been thinking a little about me when you ordered this pendant, because here are two H's

intertwined, and an anchor, which I suppose stands for Hope, and—what is that knot at the top, Dick?"

"It's—it's—a sort of a bowline," answered Dick, departing for once from the path of strict veracity. "Yes, that pendant was a little bit of additional extravagance of my own: the diamonds don't belong to the old lot. I designed it myself, and I think it reflects some credit upon a man who hasn't had much practice in that line. The anchor is meant to be emblematic of your nature as well as your name (because, you know, you are really hopeful, though you may be a little down on your luck every now and then), and the general meaning of the whole composition is, 'Never say die.'"

Hope's eyes glistened as she looked up at him. "Dick," she said, with a tremulous little laugh, "do you know that you are very funny? I am not sure that I can quite make you out; but—but—I think I rather like you."

A look of sincere satisfaction overspread Dick's features at this flattering announcement. "That's the best news I have heard for a long time!" he declared. "We always were friends from the first, and I believe we shall go on becoming better friends now till the end of the chapter."

So Hope fastened her pendant to the pearls that she wore about her neck, and she and her husband descended the stairs arm in arm, as a united couple should, starting asunder in a ludicrously guilty fashion when they were confronted by the astonished countenance of Miss Herbert.

After so promising a renewal of friendly relations, it was to be regretted that the arrival of Bertie Cunningham, Mrs. Pierpoint, and various other guests should have interposed fresh barriers between those whose duty it was to entertain them. Dick devoted himself assiduously to providing sport, in one form or another, for the men; and the task of amusing the ladies, together with the many other occupations incident to that season of the year, effectually prevented Hope from exchanging ideas with her husband from morning to night.

At her first view of Mrs. Pierpoint she could not repress a start, which was not altogether called forth by admiration of the dainty little lady, wrapped in dark sables, whose cheeks were delicately rosy from the outer air, and whose tiny white hand, sparkling with jewels, was extended to her. If that was Bertie Cunningham's notion of one who might be regarded as "a sort of a mother," he must be even more juvenile than he looked. Yet, though Mrs. Pierpoint may not have been exactly motherly in appearance, she soon showed herself to be animated by the true maternal instinct towards the young guardsman

who had arrived under her wing. Hope, watching her, saw that she was watching him, and that she viewed with approval his somewhat ostentatious attentions to Miss Herbert. Worldly she might be, and possibly mistaken as to the best means of promoting her friend's welfare; but that she was disinterested Hope felt sure. Moreover, the touch of time became more legible upon her brow in a stronger light. For the rest, her manners were charming, and at the rehearsal which took place after dinner she achieved a success due quite as much to her good-natured energy in helping others as to her really clever interpretation of the character which had fallen to her own share.

Dick's histrionic talents were not of a high order; but he was docile, and had learned his lesson very carefully, while both Miss Herbert and Captain Cunningham were pronounced to be admirable in their respective parts. The latter, indeed, received a compliment, as soon as the performance was over, which he would quite willingly have dispensed with.

"Allow me," said Mrs. Pierpoint, taking advantage of the first opportunity that offered to draw him aside, "to congratulate you. Your acting is excellent,—perhaps, if anything, too excellent."

"Thanks!" answered Bertie. "You mean something more than you say, I presume."

"Fancy your having the brilliancy to make such a discovery! Yes, I actually do. I have a deep meaning. And, now, what defence have you ready?"

"Oh, I am not so brilliant as all that comes to. I never said I knew what you meant."

"And of course you can't guess. Well, to save time, I will be perfectly explicit. You are trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Poor Carry is to be retained as a last resource, and in the mean time it is not Carry's *beaux yeux* that have induced you to stay several weeks on end in a dull country house, and to get up a play which will keep you here another fortnight at least."

"I knew you would say that," remarked Bertie, resignedly. "It's a pity that you should be so horribly suspicious; but I shall do no good by protesting. If you had seen me riding day after day with Miss Herbert, while Mrs. Herbert potted about with that artist fellow, maybe you would have believed in my sincerity."

"There is a very simple way of proving your sincerity," remarked Mrs. Pierpoint.

"Very well; but do allow me the privilege of proving it at my own time."

"It strikes me that you have parted with that privilege. You

have gone too far now to draw back, and I can't see what excuse you have for putting off any longer what must be done soon."

"And I can't see the reason for such break-neck haste."

Mrs. Pierpoint frowned. "If you are not engaged to Carry Herbert before the month of January is over, I shall think very badly of you," she declared. "To make sure of a woman's consent to marry you, and then to coolly keep her waiting until it is a question between getting possession of her money and going through the bankruptcy court, is not pretty behavior; but to use her as a stalking-horse into the bargain, to pretend to devote yourself to her in order that you may live for a short time under the same roof with her brother's wife, is—what shall we call it?"

"We need not call it anything, since the case does not exist," answered Bertie. "I'll tell you what, Mrs. Pierpoint; I don't often lose my temper; but if anybody but you had said that, she shouldn't have had a second chance of informing me that I am a blackguard."

Mrs. Pierpoint did not seem to be greatly impressed by this outburst of indignant innocence. "As if you could deceive me, after all these years!" she said. "I know you sufficiently well to be able to read you like a book, my friend, and I haven't the slightest doubt in my mind as to what has brought you here at this moment. I had my suspicions all along; but, as there is nothing like the evidence of one's own senses, I accepted Mrs. Herbert's invitation; and when I saw you stealing sidelong glances at her the whole time that you were chattering so busily to Carry, I was satisfied,—or, rather, I was dissatisfied."

"So that was what brought *you* here, was it?" said Bertie, with some displeasure.

"Did you imagine, by any chance, that I came here with a view to amusing myself? Don't you think I might have found it just a shade more enjoyable to spend Christmas in London or at Melton than among a lot of people whom I scarcely know, and who have only invited me because they couldn't find anybody else to take a part in their tedious theatricals?"

"I wish you *had* spent Christmas in London, and asked me to spend it with you!" muttered Bertie, ruefully.

"You forget that you are already engaged here. And you must be still more engaged before you leave. Come, Bertie, you have chosen your fate, and it is not such a bad one, as fates go. Believe me, you won't repent of it, when once the plunge is over. Have you ever repented following my advice?"

"You have never advised me to take so momentous a step as this before. Are you so convinced that I should act wisely in marrying a

woman with whom I beg most emphatically to assure you that I am not at all in love?"

"It is a great deal too late to discuss that question now. I consider that you are bound in honor to propose to Carry. Added to which, I am certain that you *will* propose to her sooner or later. What I wish is that the matter should be settled before complications arise. You will hardly deny that complications may arise?"

"But that is just what I do deny."

"Then I can only say that I am unable to attach any importance to your denial. Once for all, are you going to do as I tell you, or are you not?"

"Oh, I suppose so," answered Bertie, in a sort of desperation. "I always end by doing as you tell me, and you are always right. Now perhaps you will be satisfied, and will kindly leave off scowling at me."

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN UNREHEARSED EFFECT.

TAKING a comprehensive survey of the population of the British Isles, it must be conceded that Christmas is merry to the majority. The majority get good things, or what they consider good things, to eat at that season; they receive presents or tips; holidays are granted to them, and they enjoy themselves by dancing, flirting, boozing in public-houses, or breaking one another's heads, according as their various tastes may incline them. But to the minority who have to provide the tips and presents and pay for the festivities it is apt to be a troublous time, fraught with present anxieties and sad memories, and rendered doubly distressing by reason of the enforced joviality which must be assumed on its approach. Dick Herbert, however, was one of the exceptions which prove the rule. Having plenty of money, he was very willing to disburse it; without any personal liking for plum-pudding and mince-pies, he did not object to look on whilst others devoured those delicacies, and, although not himself a dancing man, was prepared to encourage as much dancing under his roof as might be desired by those who cared to disport themselves in that way. It was many years since Berkshire society had been entertained on a large scale at Fardon Court; but the servants always had their ball at Christmas, and on this occasion its brilliancy was enhanced by the presence of the young mistress of the house and her guests.

Hope, after treading a solemn measure with the butler, retired to

her seat at the end of the hall, with a strong impression upon her mind that the sooner she retired altogether the more lively the proceedings would probably become; but this modest view was evidently not shared by the rest of the company from up-stairs, who showed no inclination to move, and seemed to derive much amusement from a temporary suspension of class distinctions. Bertie Cunningham, in particular, was indefatigable. Even the stately housekeeper was persuaded to jog through a polka with him, after which Hope saw him tearing round the room with housemaid after housemaid; and, from the red cheeks and delighted gigglings of these young women, she judged that he must be making himself very agreeable indeed.

By and by he found his way to her side, and said, beseechingly, "Mrs. Herbert, you'll give me a dance, won't you? I have induced them to have a waltz. They don't much like it; they would prefer to have nothing but polkas and galops; but they have granted this as a special favor to me, because I have been so affable, and I want you to dance it with me, if you will."

Hope stood up, but looked dubious. "Had you not better find a partner among the servants?" she asked. "I don't think we ought to dance together, ought we?"

"I dare say not," answered Bertie, as he placed his arm round her waist and whirled her lightly away; "but that makes it all the pleasanter. There is no pleasure in life so great that it may not be made greater by a conviction that it isn't altogether right."

"I can't quite agree with you there," said Hope, laughing.

"Ah, but you are not such a martyr to duty as I am. You don't know what it is to be harnessed and bitted and driven along the dull high-road, when you want to be galloping across country, and you can't understand the wild delight of flinging up one's heels occasionally. Not that I am really flinging up my heels now, or that I ever shall again."

Hope did not inquire his meaning: she was satisfied with the exhilaration of rhythmic movement, and was scarcely listening to what he said. But, losing breath at last, she signed to him to stop, and then he suddenly burst out laughing.

"Do look at Mrs. Pierpoint being hustled along by the coachman!" he exclaimed. "Did you ever see such an expression of suffering and conscious virtue? And, oh, isn't she calling us bad names for enjoying ourselves, instead of imitating her noble example!"

Hope, glancing at Mrs. Pierpoint, was unable to see any indication of that lady's being so unamiably employed, and said as much.

"Ah, that's because she knows we are talking about her. You

ought to have seen her a minute ago. She was looking daggers—poisoned daggers—at me.”

“I thought you were so fond of her,” said Hope.

“So I am, in a general way; but not to-night. Were you fond of your parents when they gave you nasty physic in your childhood? I wasn't fond of mine; I positively loathed them, though I have no doubt that they did it for my good.”

“Has Mrs. Pierpoint been giving you nasty physic?”

Bertie heaved a great sigh. “Don't speak of it!” he exclaimed. “I haven't swallowed the dose yet, but I am going to swallow it; and when once it has been gulped down I shall feel better, perhaps. At any rate, let us hope so. In the mean time, I would rather talk about any other subject.”

But he did not seem able to talk or think of any other subject. He recurred to it, in more or less plain language, every minute, and Hope could hardly affect to misunderstand his drift. In spite of herself, she was sorry for the poor young fellow. Of course he deserved no sympathy: what he was pleased to call duty was really nothing but selfishness, and if he was now compelled to sell himself into bondage, that necessity had only been created by his own fault or his own will. Nevertheless, she could not help feeling for him in his present distress. Had not she herself passed through a somewhat similar struggle once upon a time? He remained by her side, and they danced together once more. It would have been niggardly to refuse him a favor for which he pleaded with so much earnestness.

“There!” he exclaimed, tragically, when the music ceased; “now it is all over! The old life has come to an end, and the new life is about to begin. Good-by youth; good-by liberty; good-by—hope!”

Then, as she glanced inquiringly at him, “Don't be offended,” he said; “I didn't spell the word with a capital H: I only meant that in a few days' time I shall have nothing left to hope for.”

“Does that imply that you will have obtained all that you want?”

“Exactly so: I shall have got what I wanted,—unless, by some miraculous piece of luck, what I wanted should be refused to me.”

It was high time that such a conversation as this should terminate; and so Mrs. Pierpoint may have thought, for she now bore down upon the couple, and, after a few minutes, drew the reluctant Bertie away.

Hope got no further speech of him until the succeeding evening, when a final dress-rehearsal for the theatricals had been appointed to take place. These promised to prove a genuine success, thanks partly to the dexterous management of Mrs. Pierpoint, and partly to that of Jacob, who had spared no pains to bring the *mise-en-scène* up to the

high standard of excellence demanded by the taste of the present day. There was a sufficiency of antique—albeit recently-acquired—furniture at Farndon to provide all that was necessary to reproduce the semblance of an old-fashioned English parlor; there were family portraits and antlers to adorn its walls; and, finally, Jacob, being in want of some object to fill up a corner, fixed his choice upon a marble bust of some defunct Herbert, which, with its pedestal, he caused to be dragged on to the stage,—an unlucky inspiration, as matters turned out, for this bust was destined to play as dramatic a part in the performance as the statue of the Commander in “*Don Giovanni*,” and the consequences of its removal were both many and far-reaching.

However, it looked very well with a glimpse of red curtain behind it, and got into nobody's way until the rehearsal was all but finished. It was when the entire strength of the company was drawn up near the foot-lights for the final scene that the impersonator of Tony Lumpkin, who had been plunging about the stage throughout with a good deal of needless exuberance, managed to fall foul of it, and very nearly put an end to his career then and there by his impetuosity. For, starting forward to renounce Constance Neville with the clumsy gait which he conceived to resemble that of his original, he lurched against the pedestal and upset its equilibrium. Had he not at the same time upset his own, he might perhaps have been killed: as it was, he was sent sprawling upon his face, and for an instant the tottering mass of marble seemed about to descend upon Mrs. Herbert's head.

Bertie saw the danger just in time to avert it. He pushed Hope forcibly away, and at the same moment the heavy bust fell with a crash, breaking through the planking of the stage. The pedestal followed suit, and, after knocking Bertie over, rolled slowly as far as the foot-lights, most of which it smashed and extinguished. A great hubbub ensued, succeeded by general laughter and mutual congratulations. Dick was the first to notice that Bertie was still lying prone and making no effort to rise.

“Get up!” said he, employing his customary formula.

“Can't, old chap,” answered Bertie, with a faint smile. “I've broken my leg.”

“Nonsense!” exclaimed Dick, dropping hurriedly upon his knees beside his prostrate friend.

“By Jove, he has, though!” he muttered, presently. “That infernal pedestal must have come down upon the top of him. What the deuce do people want with busts on a stage? Here, somebody run and fetch a blanket, and we'll pass it under him. Hope, send off a groom to tell Dr. Simpson he is wanted immediately, and let him know what

has happened. We'll soon put you all right, Cunningham: only we shall have to move you into the next room. You mustn't mind a minute or two of pain."

Anybody who has either broken his own leg or seen another person's leg broken knows what the process of removal is like, and whether the pain entailed thereby is usually trifling. In Bertie's case this was accomplished as skilfully as possible; but the pallor of his face and the drops that started out upon his forehead showed what he had to suffer during the brief transit. However, he kept his lips tightly closed, and did not utter so much as a groan, thus earning golden opinions from his host, who exclaimed afterwards, with unwonted warmth, "That's a plucky little chap! I wish it had been the other duffer's leg instead of his. No more hunting for him this season, I'm afraid."

"Oh, if that is all!" returned Hope, to whom this characteristic expression of regret was addressed. "But is he very much hurt, Dick? Do you think it is serious?"

"Well, it isn't a compound fracture, if that's what you mean; but it's a pretty bad break, I expect. However, we shall see what the doctor says."

The doctor, when he arrived, did not seem much inclined to say anything to anybody until the injured limb had been set; but, this operation having been accomplished, he looked into the drawing-room to allay the anxiety of the little group of ladies who were waiting there.

"We shall not have to cut the young gentleman's leg off this time," he announced, cheerfully; "but he must remain on his back for six weeks or thereabouts, and for the present, if you please, he is to be kept quite quiet."

Thus it was that "She Stoops to Conquer" was never performed at Farndon Court, after all; and those who were to have taken part in the play, feeling that their presence was superfluous, made haste to leave. Mrs. Pierpoint went with the rest. Just before her departure she was allowed a short interview with the sufferer, and expressed her sorrow for his accident, as well as her very sincere regret that she could not stay and nurse him.

"But I don't suppose I should be allowed to do that, if I did stay," she remarked; "and I am leaving you in good hands."

She had not the cruelty to add a word of caution, though sorely tempted to do so. If Bertie was to break his leg at all, nothing could be better than that he should do so in a house where Carry would be able to while away the slow hours of convalescence for him. On the other hand, nothing could be worse than that Mrs. Herbert should have

opportunities of engaging in the same work of mercy. "Fortunately," reflected the little lady, "Carry is quite capable of holding her prey. I should not care to dispute it with her myself. And Mrs. Herbert seems to be a good, innocent sort of woman. She won't do wrong intentionally,—if that is any safeguard."

Carry, indeed, was not slow to assert her rights, if such they could be called; and it must be owned that Bertie found her pleasanter company now than he had ever done before. She was perfectly quiet and self-possessed; she was always at his side when wanted, yet never in the way; she made friends with the trained nurse who had been sent for, and was highly commended by that functionary, while Hope was given to understand that ladies were a great trouble and hinderance in a sick-room. All of which was quite as it should have been.

The one inconsolable person in the house was Jacob Stiles, who reproached himself bitterly with having been the cause of the disaster. "You see," he said to Hope, "what a mistake it is to have anything to do with me. I am born to bad luck, and nothing that I touch can prosper. Why wasn't I the one to save you and get my leg broken?"

This was probably what Jacob felt to be the worst piece of luck in the whole business.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PLEASURES OF HOPE.

"THIS," remarked Carry, in a tone of deep vexation, as she looked up from a letter that she was perusing at breakfast one morning, "is Aunt Anne all over. I expected no less of her. Never, from the day of my birth up to the present moment, has she missed an opportunity of putting me to inconvenience; and if this is to be her last request, as she assures me it will be, she will have the satisfaction of knowing that she has been consistent to the end."

"What has she been doing now?" inquired Dick.

"Really I don't quite know. Most likely she has only caught a cold in her head; but she swears she is dying, and implores me to 'come and be reconciled' to her. I was not aware that we had had a quarrel."

"H'm! You had a pretty good imitation of one, to the best of my recollection. Shall you go?"

"I suppose I must; but it is most provoking. How like her to send for me just when I am wanted at home! I don't remember that I ever before was particularly wanted either at home or elsewhere."

"And now you are wanted in two places at once. Flattering, but

troublesome. Aunt Anne," added Dick, explanatorily, for Hope's benefit, "is the sole survivor of my mother's family. She resides in Yorkshire, and at one time there was an idea of Carry's living with her. It was then that they—didn't quarrel. The experiment was persevered with, I believe, for a week——"

"Nearly a month," interpolated Carry.

"So much as that? Anyhow, it was abandoned, and they have never met since. Aunt Anne is possessed of considerable property, and we are her nearest relatives."

"She may leave her property to you, or to a hospital, or take it with her, for anything that I care," Carry declared; "but if she is really as ill as she professes to be, some one ought to be with her, and I know it wouldn't be the least use to ask you to go."

"She wouldn't see me," answered Dick: "I offended her beyond all chance of pardon years ago by declining to marry somebody whom she had kindly picked out for me, and you see she doesn't even express a wish to be reconciled with me at this supreme moment. Probably you will find her all right, and we shall have you back again in a day or two. We'll endeavor to take care of Cunningham during your absence."

"Oh, the nurse will take care of him. If only you will abstain from bothering him, he will do well enough. And I don't think I need be long away," continued Carry, musingly. "In a week, at the outside, one ought to be able to tell how things will go." *

Possibly it may have consoled her to know that Bertie, at all events, must be a fixture for many weeks to come. She softened the pain of parting for him by an assurance that she would be with him again very shortly; and the invalid, whom a feverish and restless night had left indifferent to all that might take place outside the four walls of his room, murmured what was fitting in reply, without much animation in his tone. He had almost, if not quite, forgotten that he had been upon the brink of proposing to Miss Herbert before he had created a diversion by pulling a bust down upon himself, and felt neither joy nor sorrow at her departure.

This unnatural apathy, however, lasted no longer than the sleeplessness to which it was due, and in a few days' time he was able to hear with a distinct sensation of pleasure that Carry would be prevented from redeeming her promise of a speedy return. Her aunt Anne, it appeared, was suffering from an attack of bronchitis, which the doctors believed must end fatally, but, with glaring bad taste and selfishness, was clinging to life in a manner which seemed to presage a prolonged struggle.

"She won't hear of my leaving her," Carry wrote, "and, as the first thing she said to me was that she had made a will in my favor, I can't very well turn my back upon the poor old woman. Please tell Captain Cunningham how distressed I am that I am unable to be of any use to him in his illness, and warn him that he must be very careful not to over-exert himself and not to talk too much."

The above passage occurred in a letter addressed to Hope, and was read aloud by her to the patient, who observed, with a smile, that he didn't see how a man in his position could over-exert himself. "And as for talking, you don't give me a great many chances of doing that."

"Have we left you too much alone?" asked Hope, anxiously. "I would have sat with you longer, only I was afraid you would be tired; and indeed I believe Carry is right: you ought not to talk. Would you like me to read something to you?"

Bertie thanked her and said that he would. The truth was that he cared very little how she was employed, so long as she remained in sight. There are people whose mere presence in the room is soothing to a fretful convalescent,—whose voices and gestures are "like the melody that's sweetly played in tune;" just as, unhappily, there are others whose proximity can only suggest the idea of a discord. Bertie, lying on his back and following Hope with his eyes as she moved noiselessly hither and thither, found similes for her which quite astonished him by their gracefulness, seeing that he was not, at ordinary times, of a poetic turn. But certain circumstances will convert the veriest clod into a poet of a kind, and Bertie was powerless to disguise from himself the fact that to those circumstances he was now a prey. Probably he did not attempt to deceive himself about the matter; for according to his system of ethics it was no great sin to be in love with a married woman: it was one of those things that a fellow couldn't help.

Between being in love and declaring one's love there is, however, obviously a wide distinction; which distinction he stoutly bore in mind. And this was the more creditable because self-denial was to him an absolutely novel experience. Any one who should have told this young man that he was doing wrong in harboring feelings which afforded him so sweet a melancholy, and that it was his duty to crush them ruthlessly, would have surprised him very much indeed. His own belief was that, on the contrary, he would do himself a great deal of good by encouraging them. His thoughts about Hope were all pure, refined, and elevating; she made him feel ashamed of his past and present life, a thing which he had never felt before; he wished for her sake—though, to be sure, it would make no difference to her—that he could achieve something fit to command the admiration of his fellow-men, "like that

beggar Stiles :” there were even moments when he contemplated setting up an entirely changed standard for his future guidance,—the standard taught him by his mother with the aid of the Church Catechism ever so many years ago, and which no single human being whom he was acquainted with acted up to or thought of acting up to. However, it must be confessed that, upon mature reflection, he did not see his way to going quite such lengths as that. For the present, it seemed sufficient to form sundry good resolutions, which, at all events, could not be broken until his leg was mended.

Hope, quite unconscious of the beneficial influence that she was exercising upon her patient, thought him greatly changed for the better by the uses of adversity. His patience and cheerfulness were admirable; he never grumbled nor admitted that he was in pain; he had laid aside the little airs and affectations of a young man much sought after in society, and discoursed frankly and naturally, like the grown-up school-boy that he was. He told her all about his home and his brothers and sisters; and she, in return, spoke more freely to him of her father and her past life than she had ever spoken to her husband. The difference between Bertie and Dick was that the former was profoundly interested in everything that concerned her, while the latter evidently was not. Now, if there is one thing more than another which a young and beautiful woman is entitled to resent, it is being treated with the utmost indulgence and consideration by a man who takes no interest in her. Dick, therefore, earned very little gratitude by presents of diamonds, and not much more by taking his wife out hunting and thus utterly sacrificing his own sport. Hope, mounted on a powerful and well-trained animal, and fortified by the instructions of Jacob, did not come to grief a second time; but she had hardly experience enough to be trusted without a pilot, and when she found that Dick was determined not to leave her to her own devices she declared that hunting did not amuse her, and refused to persevere with it.

“You yourself told me that you did not think the hunting-field the proper place for a lady,” she said, in answer to Dick’s protestations, and, as he was too honest to withdraw a rashly-expressed opinion, that clinched the matter.

Some men might have thought that their wives would be safer in the hunting-field than by the couch of a fascinating youth; but Dick was not of that mind. It was into his study that Bertie had been carried on the night of the accident, and there the invalid had remained ever since, a bed having been brought down-stairs for him. Dick used to stride in thither, booted and spurred, when he returned home in the evening, and would sit for a while, listening contentedly to the light

conversation which his entrance did not interrupt. Hope had taken to painting again. Her easel had been placed in the window, so that she could work and keep the prostrate Bertie entertained at one and the same time. Sometimes Jacob Stiles was induced to descend from his lair and aid her with his counsels; but he generally rose and stole away when the master of the house appeared. Thus the weeks slipped away pleasantly enough for all the inmates of Farndon Court, and it is to be feared that not one of them regretted poor Miss Herbert, detained in Yorkshire by the exasperating vitality of Aunt Anne, who during this period had been again and again at the point of death, but had always rallied, and who maintained her hold upon her niece with a tenacity which it may be hoped, for the credit of human nature, that she would have relaxed had she known what terrible havoc was being wrought with her niece's prospects thereby.

For it is certain that before his accident Bertie had finally determined to ask Miss Herbert to marry him, and it is probable that if she had lingered by his bedside he would have carried his determination into effect. Now, however, all was changed. Providence had interfered; circumstances for which he could not be held accountable had given him a respite; and this he did not fail to represent in answer to certain anxious missives which reached him from Mrs. Pierpoint. Few and brief were the replies obtained from him by Mrs. Pierpoint; few and brief also were those which he despatched to Yorkshire, whence Carry wrote him letters of several sheets, which she did her utmost to render amusing, knowing full well that he would never read them if they were not. To any one who could read between the lines—as Bertie should certainly have been able to do—there was something not a little pathetic in the laborious jocularity of these compositions, interspersed here and there with some involuntary phrases which betrayed the writer's uneasiness; but their recipient was not touched by them; for in all the world there is no creature so hard-hearted as a lover.

It so chanced that the climate, all through that winter, exhibited itself in one of the gentlest of its many moods. A mild, moist January was succeeded by a February so warm that people who ought to have known better declared winter to be at an end, and Nature herself, always ready to be deceived by this ancient trick, began pushing forward her preparations for the coming spring as though there had been no such things as March east winds and April frosts to ruin her handiwork. But English people must take their weather as it comes and be thankful when they can. To be able to lie in an invalid-chair out of doors in the month of February is something to be thankful for when your walking-powers are in abeyance, and Bertie freely admitted as much,

adding that he would be most happy to break his other leg for the sake of spending six more such weeks as he had just left behind him.

This was said with artless spontaneity in the presence of Dick, who remarked, placidly, "What a tremendous cram!" But Hope thought it a very pretty speech, even though it were a trifle hyperbolic. She was not so selfish as to wish that their guest should pass through a second six weeks of suffering; but she would gladly have kept him with them a little longer, and was rather annoyed with the doctor for forcing the young man to begin walking as soon as he could put his foot to the ground. He himself protested that he took this first step with the utmost reluctance. "I was in hopes that I shouldn't be able to manage it," he said; "but the melancholy fact is that I am very nearly as sound as ever. And what are legs given to one for except to carry one away?"

"And to bring one back again," remarked Dick. "Windsor isn't quite at the antipodes, you know."

"No; but, after giving you such a dose of my company, I shan't venture to come over often. Besides, you will be moving to London before long, I suppose."

"So will you, for the matter of that. By the way, Hope, I was going to ask you whether you would mind running up to town with me for a couple of days next week. I have heard of a house for sale in Bruton Street which I think might do for us, and I should like you to have a look at it."

This was the first that Hope had heard of her husband's intention to set up a London establishment, and she expressed some surprise.

"I thought it would be more comfortable for you," Dick explained. "It's a nuisance having to hire every season, and I believe it costs nearly as much, in the long run, as having a house of your own. You'll excuse our leaving you for forty-eight hours, won't you, Cunningham?"

"My dear fellow, I don't think I shall be here next week," answered Bertie.

But neither Dick nor Hope would hear of his hastening his departure, and as the doctor backed them up, saying that Captain Cunningham was certainly not quite fit to return to duty yet, it was agreed that he should allow himself a further ten days of repose.

There was no fault to be found with the house in Bruton Street, nor very much with its furniture, which was to be had at a valuation and which Dick was in favor of purchasing. As to that, however, he begged Hope to please herself. If she preferred to choose her own furniture, she was at liberty to do so; but she replied, quite sincerely, that she did not care enough about the matter to take all that trouble. She might

have cared, if he had ; for she had the eye of an artist, besides a woman's natural love for pretty surroundings ; but it is dull work to have only one's self to please. Hope was satisfied to make a very brief inspection of her future London home ; having done which, she left Dick to arrange details with his lawyers, and drove off to see Mills, by whom she was received with a loud and joyful welcome. The rooms which she had once occupied were tenantless, and thither Mills conducted her, seating herself upon the edge of a chair and contemplating her young mistress with eyes of pride and contentment.

"Poor old room !" murmured Hope, gazing round her at the four walls, which somehow seemed to have contracted a little since she had seen them last ; "I was very happy here."

"How can you talk so !" cried Mills, not ill pleased. "'Twas no place for you, ma'am, and glad I am that you're out of it ; though I've missed you terrible."

Then she proceeded to make many inquiries about Mr. Herbert and Farndon Court, and was glad to learn that the flattering reports which had reached her of both had not been exaggerated. "As for your being happy, I don't need to ask no questions about that : 'tis enough to look at your face. There's only one thing more you want."

"And what is that ?" asked Hope, unsuspectingly.

"Why, a little son and heir, my dear," replied Mills, with great archness of manner. "Aren't you going to let your poor old nurse hold a baby in her arms again ?"

Hope thought this remark of Mills's in rather bad taste ; but, not wishing to take offence where none was meant, she only answered that there was no prospect of the event alluded to occurring, and changed the subject.

From Henrietta Street she had herself driven to South Kensington to exchange greetings with another old friend. Tristram was at home, and the forbidding frown which had gathered on his brow at the announcement that a lady wished to speak to him vanished when the identity of his visitor became revealed.

"You are the very person whom I wanted to see !" he exclaimed, as he shook hands with her. "What is this I hear about a young artist of the highest promise whom you are keeping hidden down in Berkshire ? I saw a few of his pictures the other day, and I give you my word that they took my breath away. What a draughtsman ! What a colorist ! Who in the world is he ? And why has he never exhibited ?"

Hope furnished the required particulars, while Tristram listened to her attentively. When she had done, "Give my compliments to your young friend," said he, "and tell him that I will venture upon a prophecy

about him. In a very few years' time he will be well on his way towards making a large fortune, and he will be the most popular artist in England."

"I am very glad to hear you say so," remarked Hope. "But why?"

"For three good reasons. First, because he can draw; secondly, because he can paint; thirdly, because, judging by such of his productions as I have seen, he has very little taint of originality in him. Just listen to this," added Tristram, catching up a newspaper which was lying beside him: "the criticism doesn't refer to your friend, but it is just as edifying as if it did. 'It is always a relief to pause before one of Mr. ——'s canvases. In his careful and admirable handiwork we find none of that undisciplined fancy, that straining after bizarre effects, that determination to be singular at any price, which so sadly disfigure modern art. Mr. —— is content to adopt the canons upheld by generation after generation of illustrious predecessors; he has had the wisdom to concede that art is governed by certain laws which no man may venture to transgress. Of these laws he has gained a thorough knowledge; by the light of them he has labored, and it is to his allegiance to them that he owes——' etc., etc., etc. I haven't the patience to read on: I don't know what it is that he owes to his allegiance to the laws of art,—the praise of this competent critic, perhaps. Who the deuce ever said that art had no laws? It is as if somebody should pompously announce that Gray is a poet and Browning isn't, because Gray happened to live at a period when poets were tied and bound by laws that were not laws of art at all, and had to amble along as best they could, like Arab horses; whereas Browning, who has had the good fortune to flourish a century later, may kick about as he pleases. I don't deny that Gray was a poet, I don't deny that this man is an artist. But, by George! I am an artist too."

Tristram was fast working himself up into a rage, and felt that it was time to desist. "Well, well," he said, "I dare say all this doesn't interest you much. But inform your young friend from me that he has a great career before him. I should say that he has as much technical knowledge as any man in England, and he possesses the priceless merit of being commonplace. Let him stick to that, and he will do. Now let us have a look at you."

He knitted his brows, scrutinizing her closely for a few seconds, and it seemed as if the conclusions at which he arrived from a study of her face were not identical with those drawn by Mills, for he ejaculated "Ha!" And then, "Have you fallen back upon painting yet?"

"I have lately," answered Hope, a little confused by his abruptness.

"I thought so. You are quite right: you will never have a better

friend than art. What sort of a life do you lead at Farndon Court? How do you employ yourself every day?"

Hope answered by giving him a list of her ordinary duties and occupations, among which she omitted to mention that of nursing Captain Cunningham. She did not wish Tristram to suppose that she was dissatisfied with her lot, and laid a good deal of stress upon her husband's kindness, giving as one instance of it the circumstance that he had just purchased a house in London for her especial benefit. But there is reason to believe that she failed in throwing dust in the eyes of her auditor, who wound up the interview by remarking, "You haven't changed, I see: your face is the same as when I painted your portrait—how long ago is it? You are still Hope. Well, you might be worse off. I suppose there can't be a great many happy people in the world; perhaps there is no such thing as happiness, and perhaps hope is the best substitute for it that exists. Do you know those lines beginning,—

Espérance qui m'accompagnes,
Depuis qu'ensemble nous allons
A travers bois, prés et montagnes,
Ai-je jamais trouvé les chemins longs?

They always remind me a little of you, somehow."

He followed her to the outer door and lingered for a moment, looking at her with the wistful expression which his eyes took at times. "Don't ask too much of life," he said; "but don't sink into acquiescence either. Maybe a good time is coming; and, if it isn't, what matter, so long as you can look forward to it? I'll dine with you some evening when you come up to town, if you'll ask me; and that is more than I would say to any other lady in London, let me tell you."

Hope went her way, a little perturbed by Tristram's observations, and a little ashamed that she should have allowed her thoughts to be so readily divined. The concluding stanza of the short poem that he had quoted hung in her memory as she went:

A travers bois, prés et montagnes,
A tes côtes pressant le pas,
Espérance qui m'accompagnes,
Marchons toujours, n'arrivons pas!

Possibly Tristram and the French poet might be right; possibly it is better to long for what will never come than to sit down in a sort of contented despair and make the best of what cannot be helped. Still, in order to taste the pleasures of hope, one should at least have some approximate idea of what it is that one hopes for.

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

OUR EXPERIENCE MEETINGS.

III.

MY EXPERIENCES IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT.

I WAS born in Dundee, Scotland, March 1, 1832, and employed my early leisure in growing. My growth was not so much in height as in breadth. Though short in stature, my weight soon reached a good round figure, I developed considerable strength, and became quite a sturdy leader among my playmates.

As far back as I can remember, I always felt a keen, innate hatred for the injustice so persistently meted out to the weak by the strong; and many a youthful riot have I incited among my playmates at the discovery of some glaring piece of cruelty or oppression. "You wouldn't do that if Martin Irons was here," was said a thousand times. I have suffered frequent insult without a thought of retaliation or revenge; but when the same insult has been offered one of my weaker friends I was ready to take up the cudgels at once.

One of our neighbors had a son of large frame and brutal nature, who was proud to consider himself a "bully," and made constant raids on marbles, tops, or any other toys he might fancy that belonged to smaller boys. "Big Sam," as he was called, one day discovered several little boys in an open lot playing top. Selecting the nicest top in the ring, he coolly proceeded to walk away. The little fellows were "spunky," and showed fight; but Sam threw himself on them and pinned two to the ground. A third one came running into our yard, exclaiming, "Mart! Mart! Big Sam's got Jerry and Phil down, and is stealing their tops! come quick!" Now, Sam would outweigh me by fifteen pounds, and was larger and stronger. But I forgot everything in the moment of indignation except that Jerry and Phil were being imposed on. Catching sight of me, Sam released the boys and prepared to meet me. As I rushed upon him, he dealt me a terrible blow that knocked me down and rolled me over. Then he sprang forward to fall upon me, but his foot caught in a tangled coil of old wire, and he fell. In an instant I was up. His feet had become so entangled in the wire that he could not move them. I seized both his hands, drew them over his head as he lay on his back, and held them to the ground. I told Phil and Jerry to pound him while I held him down. I knew my advantage, and determined to cure his bullyism. Jerry and Phil

took turns at hammering him with their fists until he yelled most lustily. I let every small boy in the crowd give him a good pounding, and made him acknowledge that each had "licked" him. On his giving his promise never again to impose on a boy smaller than himself, I released him. I am glad to say that Sam kept his word, and was ever after that a resolute champion of weaker and smaller boys, and a faithful friend of mine. I always felt, however, that it was the fortunate circumstance of that snarl of wire that cured Sam; and this, too, has led me to believe that every effort in after-life which I put forth in the betterment of my fellow-men has been seconded by some providential circumstance which perchance has been the real factor in my success.

I was fourteen years of age when, with my parents, I landed in New York and saw my first Yankee and my first black man. The Yankee had sold the black man a "yaller dog" for a shilling, the dog persisted in following the Yankee, and the black man wanted the money refunded. Then the white man ran away, and the dog followed him. I soon learned this to be an old trick, played alike on black or white, and ever since I have had an aversion to a man who owns a "yaller dog."

Shortly after my arrival in New York I entered a machine-shop as an apprentice, doing the customary chores about the shop and helping the journeymen. Our foreman was a coarse, rude, and overbearing man, who seemed to think men were best ruled by profanity and fault-finding. I soon learned to hate him with all the powers of my nature, all the more because of his seeming determination to render one little, pale, cowering machinist as miserable as possible. The little man was really a good mechanic, faithful and industrious, but he trembled like a leaf before the foreman's unreasonable criticism and constant threats of discharge. The foreman had a habit of standing about six feet from the little man and glowering upon him like a personified Fury. Although I was only a boy, I determined that I would avenge the little machinist, who was a favorite with everybody save his taskmaster. Immediately over the spot where the foreman was in the habit of standing to overawe and abuse my little friend was a girder to which the shaft-hangers were attached. One day at noon, when the hands were all out at dinner, I obtained an old oyster-can and filled it with black oil from the bolt-cutter. Climbing up to the girder, I placed the can on the edge, so that a mere touch would knock it over. I then set a trigger, to which I attached a black thread. This I ran over another girder and down the wall to near where I was at work, so that the least jerk of the thread would upset the can and spill the oil. It was not fifteen minutes after the blast of the one-o'clock whistle when the foreman pounced upon my little friend like a tiger for not having a two days' job done in six hours.

The eyes of every man in the shop were turned on him as he stood there scowling and swearing. I reached for my thread, and in a moment he was drenched in a shower-bath of oil. I was working very industriously. All eyes were instantly turned to work ; no one dared to smile ; no one saw what happened but the little man, who was almost paralyzed with fear. But the profanity ceased. The foreman looked unutterable fury, but, in his rage, feeling that he could not do justice to the occasion, was speechless. Gathering a lot of waste, he wiped away as much of the oil as he could, and went to the engine-room to wash. While he was away I drew the black thread down. Though he made a careful investigation of the scene of the accident, he never discovered where the oil came from. But ever afterwards he avoided that spot and treated my little man with less cruelty. I did not delight in malicious mischief, but rather sought to inflict instructive mishaps on those whose position placed them above the reach of reason or force.

I was very painfully impressed about this time by the discovery of the treatment meted to poor women who earned their bread, and sometimes bread for several children or even a crippled husband, by plying their needle from early morning till late at night. In order to obtain work at all, they were compelled to beg from store to store for the pitiful privilege of making shirts at five cents apiece ; and their anxiety was so great that the merciless manufacturer would encourage a cut-throat rivalry among them in order to force the price lower still. Besides this, I learned that often after a poor weak woman had finished a dozen shirts the soulless employer would find fault about a few missed stitches and discount half her pay.

I shall never forget one instance that came under my knowledge. A poor young creature had been deserted by a brutal husband. She was left with a sweet little girl of fifteen months, which was pining away with consumption. Her work was binding shoes ; and by incessant toil she had kept the wolf from the door and provided for her dying babe. She had frequently moistened its parched and fevered lips with juice squeezed from an orange. One day, when she had almost completed work enough to earn fifty cents, she suddenly discovered a great change had taken place in the child. She knew it was death. One little wasted hand was lifted, as if to plead for the orange ; but orange she had none, nor money with which to buy it. Hastily summoning a neighbor to watch her babe, she ran to the store with what work was completed and told the story of her dying child. She wanted a few pennies to buy the orange before it was too late for the little fevered lips to taste again. She was refused unless all the work were completed and brought in. She hastened home, and, with flying fingers and aching

heart, completed her task. But on returning to the store she was again refused, because through her blinding tears she had missed a stitch or two. With bleeding heart she returned to the bedside of her babe. Its lips were discolored, its eyes were glazed, its spirit had fled.

When I heard the story of that mother's woe, I registered a vow to be among the first in coming years to help humanize men and debrutalize those that have power over the weak.

On another occasion, learning of a clothing-dealer who was in the habit of systematically refusing, on flimsy pretexts, to pay his seamstresses after their work was done, threatening at the same time to refuse them work altogether if they made any complaint, I gathered the evidence in about thirteen cases, employed a lawyer at my own expense, and compelled the payment of the full amount due, together with a large bill of costs. I afterwards went to the store and told the dealer that, no matter to whom he gave work, I should watch him and bring suit in every case of injustice. I never had any more complaints. This was during my apprenticeship, and, as my pay was very small, my field of operations was necessarily limited.

Once out of my apprenticeship, I left the shop where I had learned my trade, hoping to find an employer or foreman who at least recognized ordinary manhood in men. Seeing an advertisement for a machinist in a daily paper, I started out to answer it. When I arrived at the place, I found not less than twenty applicants for the position. I soon discovered that the foreman was utterly unprincipled. He had set a man to work for an hour at a job, at the end of which time another man was to take the job for another hour, and so on through the twenty,—each man being told to call again at a certain fixed time. A choice was to be made after the twenty had passed the testing ordeal. I saw that his object was to get twenty hours' work without pay, and I resolved to spoil that game at once. Leaving with the nineteen, I made an appointment to meet the unsuccessful ones at a given place after the trial-hours were over. It so happened that, as I was the last man to apply for the job, I was the last to be tried. It so happened, also, that I proved the successful applicant in the end. At the appointed time I met the other nineteen men and instructed them each to go to the foreman on the following day and demand pay for one hour's work. This they did, and were refused, the foreman claiming that they were not employed, but were simply applying for employment, during their test-hour. Next day there were nineteen suits filed for nineteen separate hours' work. The costs and lawyers' fees cost the concern over one hundred and twenty dollars. I devoted two weeks' wages to feeing a lawyer to prosecute the case, and never paid a bill so cheerfully in my

life. The foreman was discharged when the concern learned of the suits ; but it was never known that I was the instigator of the prosecution.

After working several weeks, and receiving pay regularly every Saturday night, it was announced that henceforward payments would only be made semi-monthly. No complaint arose, and all went well for several weeks, when another announcement was made that payments in future would be made once a month. I protested strongly against this, but my shopmates cowered with fear, and said that if we complained we should all be discharged. I was indignant at my employers and I was indignant at the men, but was compelled to nurse my wrath because of the slavish fear of my shopmates. My employers boasted that they were doing a cash business. They required cash, or its equivalent, for all work as soon as it was done, and yet they were forcing a loan from their employees to the end of each month for all pay earned since its beginning, and the employees dared not complain, for fear of discharge.

Thus early in my mechanical history I began to realize the fearful bondage of the white slavery that prevailed around me. I have known men to work for employers who would never pay in full, but put the men off with a dollar or two at a time, keeping them in constant fear of discharge, and threatening to black-list them if discharged ; and all the time the men were paying heavy interest on debts which the money due them would have liquidated. I have seen men begging piteously at the store for a little credit when their pay was long overdue, and who scarcely dared demand that pay, for fear of discharge. I felt a deep desire within me to emancipate my fellow-workmen from their wage-bondage, more intolerable, it seemed to me, than the involuntary bondage of the Southern black.

Disgusted with the cringing cowardice of my shopmates, I determined to seek some other field, in hope of finding more tolerant employers and more independent men. I boarded a vessel bound for New Orleans, and was soon out on the shoreless ocean, breathing an atmosphere of royal liberty that seemed unknown upon the shore. But even here I found the blight of man's inhumanity to man. The mate of the vessel, like too many of his class, was coarse and brutal. His language was revolting,—never a sentence without an oath, not even a jest without profane and obscene embellishments. On the second day of our voyage I saw him approach a sailor who was washing in a bucket of water, and with an outburst of profanity demand the bucket. "Yes, sir ; in a minute," said the sailor. Whereupon the mate seized the bucket and threw the contents in the face of the astonished sailor. I

was seized with an immediate impulse to punish the brute, and before I took a second thought had landed my fist directly under his left ear. He staggered and fell upon the bucket, the wire bail of which cut a deep gash in his cheek. All this was witnessed by the captain and the carpenter. They seized me and placed me in irons. The mate seemed to enjoy the statement that Irons was in irons much more than he did the memory of why I was placed there. After a few hours' confinement I was released; and during all the remainder of the voyage, as the men told me afterwards, the mate was more like a man than ever before. When I inquired why they submitted to such indignities, I was told that resistance would be mutiny, no matter how gross the outrage they suffered, and mutiny might mean death. Under the interpretation of law as rendered in courts of justice, when a sailor is hired by a ship's commander he is bought for the time being, soul and body.

All these things kept working like leaven in my soul; my thoughts by day and my dreams by night were about the subdued and broken spirits of my fellow-workmen. Like the youth whose "banner with the strange device" was inscribed "Excelsior," I wanted to swing out a banner on some mountain-top, with the inscription, "Emancipation for the white slaves of America and the world." Swinging banners on mountain-tops was all very nice to think about, but my *rôle* seemed to be more in the line of knock-down facts. So I went on my way, trying to inspire men to be more independent and self-assertive, believing as I did that manly self-respect would insure the respect of others more than truckling subserviency of spirit.

On landing in New Orleans, I was directed to Carrollton, six miles away, and there found no difficulty in obtaining employment. This time my boss proved to be a genial fellow, easy-going, but fond of liquor, which frequently unmanned him. Inattention to business had permitted disorder and dilapidation to creep in everywhere. Tools were worn out and broken down, custom was impaired, and everything was going to ruin. After a few weeks' struggling to work with broken tools, the proprietor placed me in charge of the shop and the men, and, seeing that I developed some business tact, gave me permission to put the tools in repair and bring order out of chaos. To this task I applied myself with so much energy that within a year I had a well-regulated shop, good mechanics, and contented and industrious men. But a new trouble arose. Seeing his business increasing, and feeling relief from the care of men and material, my master plunged into dissipation and gambling to such an extent as to absorb all the business profits. Pay-day frequently found him without funds to meet his pay-roll or supply material for further use. And I began to reason again. Here were

skilled and intelligent men, creators of values, recreators of earth's crude materials, coining wealth with muscle and brain, both of which are priceless, only that their coinage might be scattered or squandered by one who lent neither brain nor brawn to its production. I felt there was fearful injustice in the business economy that ordered this manifest inequality of compensation for physical and mental outlay. True, there was ten thousand dollars invested in the business. But the statutes said money should be worth not more than ten per cent. The proprietor was no doubt entitled to a thousand dollars' return on his capital. I was paid nine hundred dollars for my skill and labor for one year, which amount was ten per cent. on nine thousand dollars. Ten other men were paid an average of six hundred dollars each, which altogether was ten per cent. on sixty-nine thousand dollars. According to legislative wisdom, this was the value of our capital invested in that concern. The net product of the business, without deducting wages, was twelve thousand dollars, leaving a clear income for the owner of the capital invested in shop and tools of five thousand one hundred dollars, after meeting the pay-roll,—or fifty-one per cent. for doing nothing and simply owning the instruments with which labor and intelligence created wealth. And, seeing that wealth squandered in riot and dissipation while many of my fellow-workmen went to their homes and families in tattered garb or strove to maintain a large family in comfort on the pittance doled out to patient skill and unremitting toil, I determined to no longer lend my ability to create the means for my employer's debauchery.

I had now been for several years with this concern, and had accumulated a little means. I returned to New Orleans, and embarked in the grocery-business. Here I made the mistake that hundreds of better men have made before me. Thinking that success in machinery meant success anywhere, full of confidence in myself, I invested my money in a business the primary elements of which I had yet to learn. Between ill-advised purchases and too great a desire to sell, I soon had my shelves filled with unsalable goods and my books with unpaid accounts. I had not the heart to refuse credit to the poor who solicited a little indulgence for a few days, or until a pay-day that was always coming but never came. Any pitiful story of wrong or oppression would so enlist my sympathies that I could be imposed upon; and I learned too late that my weakness was traded upon by every dead beat within half a mile of my store. To prevent a worse fate, I sold out my remaining stock, settled with my creditors as best I could, and, with my self-esteem badly demoralized, set out for Lexington, Kentucky. Here I found employment for a time in a rope-factory, but eventually drifted

back to my own trade and found myself in a machine-shop. The men were all required to work twelve hours a day, and sometimes fifteen, receiving only the same pay per hour that was given for the standard ten hours of the day. After enduring this for several months, I began to agitate the question among the men of asking the proprietor to grant us ten hours each day and employ more men. For this purpose they appointed me a committee to present the matter to the employer. I had no sooner stated my errand to the "boss" than I was very curtly informed that he proposed to run his business to suit himself, and that any one who was not pleased with his manner of doing business could quit at his pleasure. Piqued and wrathful, I returned to my shopmates, and made my report with all the embellishments that my state of mind could suggest. The result was that each man resolved to take the boss at his word. Each packed his kit and left.

There are always a few inferior men idle who are ready to drop into any vacant place and work at any slavery that will afford them bread and beer; and our employer soon found about one-third of a force by whose aid he could turn out about one-fifth of the usual work. We succeeded in passing the word among skilled mechanics, and no good men applied for work. As a result, at the end of thirteen days the boss sent me word that we might all return to work at ten hours per day, and he would use the men already engaged to do the extra work necessitated by shorter hours.

Exasperated with the men who had "scabbed" during our strike, we refused to go to work while they were in the shop. We agreed, however, to furnish all the good men needed, and when everything was satisfactorily arranged we returned to work. This was my first strike. As Lexington was then a small place, with few machinists in it, the decreased hours of work and the increased number of men required in consequence very soon absorbed all available men and created such a demand as at once wrought increase of pay. From this time I saw that fewer hours for all meant better pay and work for all; and I have ever since continued to talk and agitate in favor of an eight-hour standard of time for working-men.

In Lexington I became an Odd-Fellow, passed the chairs, and was conductor for four lodges in the place. At thirty years of age, I wearied of Lexington, left for Louisville, and embarked on a steamer for St. Louis, Missouri. Here again I witnessed the disposition of man to oppress his fellow-men. We had engaged our passage at a given price and paid our fare; but when some hours out the boat grounded on a bar, and we were detained two days in sparring off. As finally we approached St. Louis, the captain demanded an additional

fare because we had been so long *en route* and he had been compelled to board us two days longer than he had expected. Unreasonable as this demand was, quite a number of the passengers were preparing to submit to the extortion, when I peremptorily refused and inaugurated open rebellion. The captain threatened to land the boat and put me ashore, but I defied him. Emboldened by the stand I had taken, the other passengers joined with me; and the captain finally let the matter drop.

After working a year in St. Louis, with no very startling experiences, I went to Hannibal, Missouri, where I first graduated as a full-fledged shaker of the chills-and-fever persuasion. This, it seemed, I could neither kill, cure, strike against, nor boycott; and for once I was compelled to retreat, which I did in good order, fixing my next head-quarters at Lexington, Missouri. There I worked for several years, advocating trades-unionism, eight hours for labor, anti-land-monopoly, and anti-child-and-woman-labor in the factories. These things brought me in sympathy with the Grange movement, then becoming very popular. I at once united my name and influence with the Grangers. In less than two years I was master of the largest grange in the State, and at the end of four had successfully carried forward a move to establish a Grange wagon-factory, which is still in operation.

I next drifted into Kansas City. Having again acquired some means, and thinking to profit by former experience, I once more embarked in business; but, seeing the dead-beat element marshalling around me again, I took advantage of the first opportunity and sold out. I then went to Southwest Missouri, and prospected for lead until I reached the bottom of my pocket-book, when I again returned to Kansas City. Finding work in Rosedale, near by, I continued to work and agitate my favorite hobbies for several years, during which time I joined the Ancient Order of United Workmen and the Knights of Pythias, each of which possessed some features in harmony with the trend of my nature and education. Not until several years later, however, when I had removed to Sedalia, Missouri, and learned of the objects and aims of the Knights of Labor, did I feel that I had struck the chord entirely in harmony with my soul. When that beautiful watchword of knighthood, "An injury to one is the concern of all," resounded through my life, and when I learned that knighthood embraced every grade of honest toil in its heights and depths,—when I learned that it meant broad and comprehensive union for labor on a basis that would counterbalance the power of aggregated and incorporated wealth and give to the creator of wealth a just share of the wealth he creates,—then I felt that I had reached a field on which I was

ready to spend the remaining energies of my life. I was the first to enroll my name on the list to organize an assembly in Sedalia. I was there during the strike against a reduction of pay in March, 1885. I was one of the committee that waited on the Governor to convince him that there was no necessity for troops in Sedalia during the strike. I was made chairman of the executive board of District Assembly 101, which executive board, under instructions from the various locals of the district, first sought to adjust a series of grievances that had been long accumulating. Failing after repeated efforts, we then ordered all Knights of Labor to withdraw their skill and muscle until the railroad company was ready to recognize our manhood and our knighthood rights.

This great strike need not have been,—would not have been, had it been made possible for myself and my coadjutors to approach and negotiate with the general manager of the railroads, now under enjoinderment of the employees. We exhausted every effort in seeking a peaceful solution of the question. Every avenue was closed by a barrier of unapproachableness. Our only resource was to lift our hands and let the roads feel the loss of our power and skill. One hour's gentlemanly courtesy on the part of the manager would have averted all this disaster.

I have never known a strike that might not have been avoided by the simple recognition of the equal rights of man, or the application of the elements of reason and common sense. Strikes are the outgrowth of imperial assumption of superiority on one hand, and of a corresponding repudiation of that assumption on the other. Strikes are not right; nevertheless they seem necessary as a protest against wrong. It is not right that they should seem necessary. But they are the counter-irritant to a virulent disease.

Let us hope that a perfect health will soon render such remedies forever unnecessary!

Martin Irons.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A WORKING-GIRL.

It has been said by a famous anatomist that the physical organization of woman in its delicate adjustment is so peculiarly susceptible of suffering that it seems like a cruelty of nature to have created such a being. Under the most favorable circumstances, the tenderest care and consideration, this statement still holds true. All that civilization, chivalry, and religion can do for woman is to reduce her bodily sufferings to their minimum: they must still be borne with more or less of fortitude. But if

any man would know what is the most unnatural and purgatorial mode of life extant in modern times which women are called upon to bear, let him follow me in fancy into the manufacturing departments of a wholesale house and study anatomy there.

By what painful steps and tortuous processes in fighting my way in the world I at last found myself forewoman in a factory would take too long to tell, but I began at the beginning on three dollars a week, and what I know at all I know thoroughly, having had it ground and burned into me by the hardest of practical lessons.

In my childhood, in the safe shelter and seclusion of home, I used to imagine myself endowed with as much courage as Joan of Arc, and a trifle more, and dreamed that it would be an easy task to "take the giant world by the throat and throw him." I was fond of reading the story of David, and saw my own victory foreshadowed in his, though I did not know that double his pluck would not have balanced the misfortune of my being a girl. It may be as well to state here that these Amazonian propensities were enclosed in a slight frame of eighty pounds avoirdupois, and that from the start I was handicapped by the very visible blue vein across my nose which emphasized the fact or the fancy that I was predestined to an early death. . But the courage I possessed certainly availed me nothing when one fine morning a red-handed, rough-shod fate confronted me, and addressed me in much the same tone as that I overheard a burly butcher use to an unruly son :

"You're on your own hook now, and you've got to hang there."

Not having so much as a pebble to fling at my Goliath, I knew no more where to turn nor what to do than if I had been suddenly carried and set down on the far side of the bleak, cinderous moon. A most urgent necessity stared me out of countenance with the brazen effrontery of a Tammany ringster, and with his insolent, unanswerable "Well, what are you going to do about it?" upon its lips. I was not much given to tears, but upon that occasion I retired to my corner in a very poor boarding-house and did what any girl not yet out of her teens would have done,—cried long and bitterly, then rose and washed my face, that no one might know of it : a work of supererogation, for many such tears as I shed wear grooves on the cheeks. The room I occupied was a very little room,—so little that if I walked in I was obliged to back out, and in order to dress myself I stood upon the bed. But even this must be paid for ; and I had not a penny "to bless" myself with, if one would have bought me a papal benediction. The giant I had throttled so often in imagination dwindled to one mean imp, who pursued me night and day with inquiries relative to bread, butter, and shoes, and whose importunities banished sleep from my eyes. It is no

wonder, therefore, that in desperation I took the first advice which was given, brief and to the point: "Tackle the Jews: they've always plenty of work." I went down into Judea; and I shall never forget my first employer, a handsome, dark-eyed, black-browed man, who trusted me with material to make twelve small dresses for a child. He distinctly said, and wrote upon the bundle, twelve, and they were to be a trial of my workmanship. If by some freak of fortune I should be crowned queen to-morrow, all the glory of a throne could not bring me any weightier sense of responsibility than I felt in the confidence this stranger had reposed in me. I bestowed infinite pains upon the garments, for which, when finished, I was to receive twenty-five cents each, and managed by careful cutting to get fourteen dresses, instead of a dozen, out of the goods. I was so happy that I sung aloud over my work; but my joy was destined to be short-lived indeed, for the woman with whom I lived suggested that, "as God himself couldn't keep up with the tricks of them Jews in the wilderness," it was hardly likely I could, being, so she said, "as green as the grass," and that my employer had purposely given me extra material to test my honesty. I had read a great deal about chivalry, and had my own notions of honor, my own ideal of knighthood. It is true I was an "unlessoned girl," so far as those lessons dealt with deceit, or fraud, or trickery, but up to that hour all men had been to me gentlemen, heroes, miracles of bravery, strength, wisdom, and their protection like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The suggestion I have mentioned filled me with boundless astonishment and indignation. What kind of a man was this, who would stoop to tempt so slight a creature to wickedness, would use his leisure and degrade his powers to the meanness of setting snares for my feet, into which, my very necessities aiding him, I might have walked? I lost no time, but gathered up my work, now finished, and rushed through the streets with it to the manufactory, then and there pouring out such a stream of sorrowful reproach and girlish scorn as made Mr. S——, who, fortunately, happened to be alone, stand dumfounded.

"You said there were twelve; but you knew there were fourteen. I never stole a thing in my life; but suppose I had been some other girl, and been tempted!" I cried. "What a dreadful thing to be ruined by falling into such a trap! and how unworthy of a man to set it!" I felt so keenly for that "other girl," I suffered such sharp vicarious shame and terror for her weakness, that I spared no words to bring remorse to the breast of the tempter.

Many a time since I have seen in my remembrance the gaze, keen and thoughtful, which my "gentle Jew" bent upon me, without an effort to interrupt me. When at last I paused for breath,—for, with

running and eloquence, I was nearly spent,—he said, quietly, “Although I am a Jew, do you think I would do to another what I should hate to have anybody do to me? No! The quantity of material I gave you was represented to me as exactly sufficient to make one dozen dresses. Some one in my work-room is incompetent, and but for your skill I should never have known it. As it is, here is my invoice-book: look for yourself. I did not dream of tempting you.”

I had wronged him, that was certain, and, in much distress, I begged his pardon. In after-days it used to tickle him immensely to recall my nonsensical accusation and tragic appeal to his honor,—“as if you couldn’t have stolen twelve as easily as two,” he said; but it had been no laughing-matter to me. Upon this circumstance was founded an arrangement that I should work for him in the manufactory, instead of outside, much to my subsequent advantage. It was not the least valuable part of this experience that I did not, in the very outset, have any cause to lose my faith in my kind. I have, in the hardest, roughest, most unsentimental of schools, been taught that after all, and under all, “the great soul of the world is just;” and I make the record gratefully.

My business as forewoman brought me twice a week into direct contact with the two hundred women who took material to their own homes to be made up, and I associated daily with the fifty girls who, on an average, were required in the department over which I especially presided, their work being of a finer grade than that given to outside hands. These people were the wives, daughters, and sisters of respectable laboring-men, mechanics, and farmers in the country adjacent. It filled me with new and painful wonder to note the anxiety and persistent eagerness with which they solicited even the poorest and most unremunerative kind of work, and to find that they were not driven into the markets to sell the labor of their hands so much by their own isolation, orphanage, or widowhood as by the inability of the man at the head of the household to support them upon the wages he earned. In hurried whispers they told me their stories,—the same, always the same strain, however the circumstances might vary: they “must help.” Questioning, sifting, as I was obliged to do, often made the recipient of humble confidences, one thing became plain to me in my seven years of service,—viz., that, from some cause which neither they nor I understood, a man’s wages would no longer suffice to keep his family decently clothed and fed; that not only his wife but his children must help eke out a living. It was my habit to ask a new hand, “Who takes care of the home and little ones while you are doing this work?” and it

made my heart ache to see the tears spring, the lip quiver, unable to reply, or to hear a bolder, more defiant spirit answer,—

“If I’ve got to work for the bread they eat, they’ll have to take care of themselves. I can’t do both.”

Here is food for a legislator to digest in those careless hours when he sits down to watch the clock and draw his pay; for when any method of living in vogue among a people deliberately tramples out the *home-life*, the nation is in jeopardy. But it was not even the outside hands, pitiful as was their case, nor yet the children who are employed in manufactories, who interested me so warmly as the young girls who worked under me, and who number thousands in similar factories. There are laws for child-labor, which any one who cares to may invoke for their protection, but for *these* there is no protection. They are “dumb as the voiceless worm on the unfrequented hill,” suffering wrong with no clear knowledge on whom or what to lay the blame, and wearing the brightest hours of life away in a bondage compared to which the lot of a black slave in the cotton-field, God’s sky above him, God’s air about him, a strong body and a happy, childish temperament to sustain him, is blessedness. I have no wish to emulate Cassandra, shrilly prophesying, madly tearing her hair,—no desire to give way to Mrs. Gummidge’s weakness of being “very low” and feeling it “more than other people,”—but I would solemnly declare that in this growing misuse of womanhood there is grave cause for alarm, and that it is no foolish prophet of modern times who has written, “The last and worst thing which can be said of a nation is that it has made its young girls sad and weary.”

There is a town in the Alps in Switzerland whose streets are paved with garnets; the heavy-footed peasants trample them, grind them to powder beneath their wheels,—the jewels which, when polished, might sparkle like wine and adorn the pillars of a temple; and not less dull than those clodhoppers is the nation which complacently crushes the maidenhood that must some day wive and mother its sons. I have seen young girls not only sad and weary, but dying upon their feet, no man regarding them. Sitting upon painted chairs, in air that is visible with foulness, bound to iron wheels, through long hours, they give life and love, sunshine and happy laughter—for what? A competency? A comfortable home? A grave, then, and decent burial? Alas! no. The pittance they earn barely keeps them alive to do *more* work. That is the utmost honest, earnest, protracted labor wins for them; and I know whereof I speak. Nor is there in their occupation any compensating pleasure in the thing done, any nobility in it, any affection for it as an artistic achievement.

By the system of working in teams, by the division and subdivision of labor, a girl does but a part, depressing in its monotony, or tends a machine which, as if by diabolic magic, thrills with motion while she stands before it or sits before it like one dead in spirit, if not in body. The saddest face I ever saw was that of a very bright, pretty, delicate girl of seventeen who worked on a machine for quilling ribbons. The gay strips sped through her fingers like many-colored lightning, and made, to a careless observer, a picture pretty enough; but only fancy sitting there from dawn till dark, from January to December, doing that, and without hope to lighten the task,—this, too, in the morning of life, in bodily revolt and discomfort, with a fifty-horse-power engine and hunger to drive the wheels! And this is but a single instance, not strained nor exaggerated, nor one in which any great bodily strength is demanded for the position.

Grimy floors, blank walls, stern penalties and prohibitions placarded upon every entrance and bristling on every hand, are the general features of the background, and men have more considerate sanitary measures in their dog-kennels and their stables than they have for these hapless, voiceless workers. If any one should ask me wherein the fault lies, I would say, not especially in the employers, themselves the hardest of workers, driven by cut-throat competition to undersell their rivals, not especially in any one cause or in any one set of men, but in something behind and beneath these,—the enormous greed and selfishness of the individual men and women who compose this enlightened Christian community. The laborer is worthy of his hire; but who that snaps up a bargain ever pauses to ask himself for how *little*—not how much—he would have put similar labor on a similar article, or if the price he paid bears any just relation to the time and work another spent upon it? Take the simplest and commonest of all things, a pin,—seven men to each, “and not a man too much,”—and then try to count the bodies with immortal souls in them who have toiled upon a man’s—or, worse, a woman’s—entire outfit. Does any mere money pay the debt, after all? If I were a man to-day I would lift my hat to the “unspeakable Turk,” whose treatment of his women is in absolute harmony with his faith. He believes the infinitesimal souls in them require no nourishment, but their bodies he feeds well and adorns them beautifully. For this he surely deserves the respect of his chivalrous, carping, critical Christian brother, who is wiser and wickeder, and who may well pause in his haste to be rich, take this remonstrance from one who knows, and, bearing it to the sachems of the land, tell them to “put that in their pipes and smoke it.”

MY EXPERIENCES AS A STREET-CAR CONDUCTOR.

I WAS born and bred in the country. When about eighteen years old, wishing to do more to help my mother than I could have done had I stayed at home, I fled to the neighboring city. I had no idea what I should do when I got there. But the sight of the street-cars, with their conductors looking so nice in their blue uniforms, and the information that these men obtained two dollars a day, decided me. I would make a desperate struggle to become a conductor myself. I did not know how to go about it, however, and spent many dreary days turning the matter over in my mind. I confided my troubles to some friends I had made in the city, and at length, through the influence of one of them, I obtained a letter from a prominent councilman to the president of a street-railway company. The first time I presented my application I was refused. I believe there were no vacancies. At any rate, the president asked me to come again, which I did the following week. I was again refused. The president must have seen how greatly I was discouraged by this second refusal, for he spoke kindly to me, saying he was sorry he could not do anything for me.

I was a raw country lad, full of enthusiastic ideals. The president of a street-car railway seemed to me a sort of a god,—a being of a different mould from the ordinary man. These few kind words from so lofty a person touched me more than I can say.

Next week I plucked up my spirits, and again called upon the president. He happened to be in very good humor, and when I presented my letter he appointed me without asking any questions. It would be impossible for me to describe my delight. I had been under the doctor's charge for a few days back for a critical case of sore throat, and, in fact, had been ordered to go to bed. I did not obey until after I had received my appointment. I remained in bed for four days, under the constant charge of the doctor. He treated me skilfully, but I think my appointment had more effect than all his prescriptions. I kept it lying near me, in order that I might read it occasionally, and as often as I read I found a new delight in the perusal.

As soon as I was on my feet again I donned my uniform and reported at the street-car dépôt. I had first to be taught the duties of my position. I got in the hands of a good instructor, and soon learned how to conduct a street-car. New conductors have to run as "extra-men" for a while before they get a regular car; but I was more fortunate than most new men, for in two weeks' time I had got a regular car.

I liked my position. It is true that my hours were long and my work was wearisome. I used to get up at five in the morning, hur-

riedly eat my breakfast, and report for work. I did not get to bed before eleven. I had no time for recreation, and very little time for attending to my private affairs. I used to get home so tired that the effort of writing a letter would sometimes exhaust me, so that I could hardly get to sleep at all. But, in spite of my hard work, I felt better than ever before in my life, and gained flesh. So, you see, railroading does not kill men, provided they take care of themselves. Conductors must not think they can drink rum at both ends of the route and spend the night in a liquor-saloon. Many of my fellow-conductors used to complain that they had no time for pleasure. My answer was that we were better off than many others. "Look at the men that work with pick and shovel," I would say: "surely none of us would exchange positions with them. If the men in factories and stores have shorter hours,—which is not always the case,—their work is more exhausting, and is not often as well paid as ours." So I would advise my complaining friends to give up the idea of having so much pleasure, and wait for the time when they could better afford it. As for myself, I determined to do justice to my employers, and to refrain from all bad habits, in the hope that something better would turn up for me in the future.

At first I was very green at my new duties. I often got confused and forgot whether I had asked this or that man for his fare. When a person handed me an official pass I used to get all of a tremble, for I thought he must be a very great man indeed, almost as great as the president of the company himself, and I was afraid of making some mistake in his presence. Our superintendent often took my car to ride down to the city in. He was a kind man, who had frequently shown a friendly interest in me, but he was very strict and very wide awake. Often he would call my attention to the fact that I had overlooked taking some passenger's fare. But the very fact that I knew his eye was upon me used to increase my confusion, so that I was all the more likely to miss fares when he was in my car. Other officers of the company were not so particular as the superintendent. Indeed, I knew one conductor who boasted that he had stolen fares under the very nose of the president himself.

I found a great deal of difference in passengers. Some, when asked whether their fare had been taken up, would answer civilly, others would swear at me, others would try to be funny, and tell me to wear spectacles or take the hayseed out of my eyes. As I grew more familiar with my duties, however, and came to know the people who patronized my car regularly, I firmly believe that the majority of my passengers liked me for a conductor and were glad to ride on my car. I cannot attribute it to anything more than that I tried to be civil (and even

sociable with those who were inclined that way) and to keep myself neat in appearance.

Regular passengers often like to be on friendly terms with the conductors, as the latter are able to oblige them in many ways,—by carrying bundles or letters which can be delivered along the route, etc. Sometimes they carry their friendliness too far. I have known passengers, when they got a fair opportunity, to insist that the conductor should take their fare without registering it, and to get angry if the request was refused.

But, though passengers, as a rule, are apt to take sides with the conductor in any question between the conductor and the company which employs him, if any dispute occur between passenger and conductor the general disposition of the other passengers is to join in against the conductor. But here I should like to say a word to my fellow-employees. Remember, the company pays us to collect and return the passengers' fares, while the passenger pays for the privilege of his seat. Has the latter not a right, therefore, to make complaints occasionally, when he does not understand, and even when his complaints are not in themselves just? The conductor can explain in a sensible manner, and if he fails to convince, he had better hold his peace and let the passengers fight the thing out among themselves. Of course we come across a great many cranky and unreasonable people, but we should not lose our tempers and insult a passenger in the presence of others. We are paid to receive insults, not to give them.

Sometimes passengers are not only unreasonable, but offensive or dishonest, and it is easy to make short work of such people. I remember, in the early days of my conductorship, a woman used to ride on my car who beat her ride whenever she could. She would purposely wait until a car came along with an inexperienced conductor on board. Her favorite trick was to carry an open porte-monnaie in her hand, and when the conductor neared her to shut it up and put it back in her pocket, as though she had just paid her fare. At first this trick was puzzling. But after she had tried it on me a few times, I found out she was a "beat," and made her pay her fare in spite of her protests. She never troubled me any more, but patronized other conductors on the same line.

As to conductors themselves, though dishonesty is not frequent among them, it is not entirely unknown. "Do you know how to beat the punch?" asked a conductor of me one day. I answered that I did not; whereupon he hit his bell-punch a sharp, peculiar blow, and it rang in much the same way as when it registered a fare. This, however, is a very rare accomplishment, and one difficult of acquiring.

Men who wish to be dishonest usually carry a small bell somewhere in their pockets, and strike that instead of striking the punch. Passengers are not likely to discover the trick, as they have no interest at stake; but it is one which the professional "spotters" employed by the companies to shadow suspected men have no great difficulty in finding out.

Where a dishonest conductor knows that his passenger only intends to ride a few blocks, he may wait until the passenger gets up to go before collecting his fare. This is of course a violation of the rule which requires that all fares shall be collected as soon as the passenger is comfortably seated. The passenger who hurriedly hands in his money on the platform and then jumps off the car does not care to note whether the fare is registered or not. And, even if he is curious about the matter, his ear will not be sharp enough to distinguish whether it is the bell-punch or the driver's bell that has been struck.

Even from a worldly point of view, honesty is the best policy. Conductors who make a practice of beating the punch live in a state of anxiety and fear which makes their lives a torture to them. One of these men took me into his confidence. He told me that he never handed in his punch at night without trembling. His sleep was restless and feverish. In the morning, when he went to receive back his punch, he always felt that that might be his last day in his position, or even his last day out of jail. "Thank heaven," he would say to himself when the punch was at last placed in his hands, "I haven't been found out yet." Criminal as he was, I could not help pitying him.

In conclusion, I must say that I have never found any reason to complain of my employers. Whenever complaints were made against me by passengers who considered themselves aggrieved (and the most careful conductor cannot escape the complaints of the unreasonable and the unjust), I have found them always anxious and willing to hear both sides and to do justice to all. Whenever they have known a man to be faithful and industrious, they have done their best to give him assistance. Nearly all the best positions in the principal street-railway corporations are now filled by men who were formerly drivers or conductors. Even the presidents of some companies have begun life in the same way. I myself succeeded in a few years in working up to a good position. I am satisfied with the present, and I believe the future will hold out something better for me if I deserve it.

JOHN TURNOR'S INVENTION.

I.

IT was no mere coincidence or accident, the similarity between the illness that carried off John Turnor and that to which I almost succumbed. That similarity was due to a deliberate attempt at murder, successful as to him and almost successful as to me. I speak as one having authority ; for the hand of the Lord alone saved me from following John Turnor into the Valley. The history of my escape I write that those who consider me insane may perceive their error, or may, at all events, if I am insane, learn that there is reason, terrible reason, for my being so.

I had hardly begun to practise medicine when my uncle died, leaving me a fortune sufficiently large to allow me to devote my entire time to chemical research and investigation. I had so devoted it for several years when those events began the history of which I shall endeavor to set down. And if I seem to lose control over myself and to set down aught in malice, I would ask all who may happen to read these lines to remember that I am said to be insane, that I have suffered greatly, and that I am more sinned against than sinning.

I do not know how long ago these things began : my boy says he is ten years old, "going on 'leven," so they must have begun about twelve years ago. One evening I was in my study, correcting the proof-sheets of my book on the chemistry of gases. That book was the pride of my heart, the first-born of myself, Roger Dupré, and my wife Experimentia, and I loved it with paternal affection. I gave it a fancy name, which I see now on the title-page of the book as it lies open before me, "On the Chemistry of the Unseen. By Roger Dupré, M.D., Ph.D. Harv." But I have torn out the dedication. Well, one evening I was reading the proof-sheets of this book, when suddenly, without any knock, my man Philip came rushing into the room. I am naturally nervous, and his sudden entry startled me considerably.

"What do you want?" I asked, irritably.

"Dey've sent over for you fum nex' door," answered Philip ; and as he spoke there appeared in the door-way the dripping figure of an elderly woman. As I looked up at her she spoke.

"Dr. Dupré, will you come over to Mr. Turnor's? He is very ill, and the doctor who attends him has been called out of town." The woman spoke earnestly, in a strangely-constrained voice, and pointed to the door, as though she expected me to move at once. I knew Mr.

Turnor's house, and had passed its owner in the street ; but the proof-sheets were inviting, and I did not move. The woman repeated her petition.

"Who is your regular physician?" I asked, crossly, as I pushed aside the proofs.

"Dr. Graham, sir ; but he is out of town, and, though we have telegraphed to him, he can't get back until to-morrow morning."

"It's a bad night," I grumbled.

"It's only a step, sah," suggested Philip.

"Hold your tongue !" I exclaimed. "What difference does it make to you if it is only a step? Get me my umbrella !"

"Thank you," said the woman ; and then she repeated, in the same constrained voice, "Mr. Turnor is so ill."

When Philip had brought my umbrella, I took the woman under it, and with her stepped out into the wet. Although the house to which we were bound was "next door," it was on the other side of a cross-street, and had around it a garden, very large for New York, so that when we climbed up the steps we were quite wet. As I stopped in the vestibule to shake myself, I thought I heard a deep-toned bell sound continuously within the house. I was not certain that I did hear it, and before I could ask my companion the door was opened by some one on the watch for us, and we entered. The hall into which we stepped was large and square, richly carpeted and furnished, and odorous of flowers. It was so dimly lighted that at first I could see nothing ; but I could still hear the deep-toned bell ringing continuously, never varying in intensity of sound or in time.

"Here is Dr. Dupré, Miss Sylvie," said my guide, and advancing from behind the open door appeared a delicate-looking girl. She bowed in response to my salutation, and then led me immediately into another room. From its furniture, this room was evidently the parlor ; but in the middle of it stood a heavy reclining-chair, converted into a bed, in which lay a man of about sixty years of age, of fine features, but so wasted by sickness that I could scarcely recognize them as those of my neighbor John Turnor. And the Angel of the Lord stood at the head of the bed to give the signal to the Angel of Death when he should summon the spirit of the sick man to accompany him to its appointed place.

From behind the bed a handsome woman came towards me, holding a Bible in her hands.

"I thank you for coming, Dr. Dupré," she said. "I am Mrs. Turnor. Dr. Graham was called out of town suddenly before this attack came on, and, you being our nearest physician——"

"Do not apologize, madam," I interrupted, seating myself on a convenient chair, and laying my hand on Mr. Turnor's wrist. There was absolutely no movement there, nor in the carotid, and for an instant I thought the patient was dead. But I found a pulse finally, very weak. Prompt measures were evidently necessary. I looked at the bottles arranged on the mantel-piece.

"Rub his hands and feet," I commanded; then, "I will run back and get my portable battery——"

"What do you mean to do?" asked Mrs. Turnor, eagerly.

"Apply electricity,—give a hypodermic of brandy,—perhaps try transfusion of blood," I answered.

"Let Eliza go," said Mrs. Turnor, imploringly. "I should feel more comfortable if you could stay here."

I nodded, and wrote a few words on a piece of paper, which I handed to Eliza, the woman who had come for me.

"Philip can get them: he can help you bring them," I said, and the woman departed. Then I began rubbing the sick man's feet, relieving Miss Sylvia of that duty.

As we rubbed, Mrs. Turnor her husband's hands and I his feet, she gave me a short account of his illness. Suddenly I interrupted her.

"What is that noise?" I asked, for the deep-toned bell seemed very near, and I could not account for it in any manner.

"That," said Mrs. Turnor, somewhat impatiently, "that is the only thing that keeps Mr. Turnor quiet. I know it's wicked to feel about it as I do, but it drives me nearly wild. It calms him, though," she said, wiping away a tear.

"Can't it be stopped?" I asked. Mrs. Turnor looked at me reproachfully. "If it can be," I continued, "let us have it stopped, at all events for a few minutes."

Mrs. Turnor shook her head sadly, but signed to her daughter, who touched a small electric button on the wall. Almost instantly the sound ceased. As it did so, I noticed a twitching in the sick man's eyelids, a pulsation in his wrist. Mrs. Turnor noticed the same things.

"You see," she cried, in a tone of agony, "he notices it immediately. Ring again, Sylvia!" and again her daughter touched the button, and again the room was full of the deep, reverberating sound. At this moment the door opened. I looked up, to see Eliza carrying the instruments for which I had sent her. My eyes were raised only an instant, but before they had returned to their gaze on Mr. Turnor's face, as they were in the very act of returning, I perceived something—I know not what to term it—which told me that my next-door neighbor was dead. It was not alone the cessation of the heart-beats;

that could not be noticed at once. It was a sort of disintegration of the bones beneath my touch. The wrist-bones crumbled as I felt for the pulse, the jaw-bones became soft as I felt for the carotid artery. As I bent hastily over the bed, horror-struck and terribly puzzled, Mrs. Turnor spoke to the servant.

"Put them here, Eliza," she said, dragging up a small table. "Which will you use first, doctor?"

I did not answer at once: I was too much thunderstruck by what had happened. Mrs. Turnor repeated her question.

"They will not be needed," I said, raising my head.

"Is he dead?" asked Mrs. Turnor, in a strange, hollow, yet relieved tone; and her daughter repeated the question.

"Mrs. Turnor," I answered, "your husband is dead. He has died a most terrible death— Do not touch him!" I almost shouted, as the widow made a motion to kiss her husband's hand. But she eluded my grasp, and, falling on her knees by the bedside, snatched one of Mr. Turnor's hands, which she kissed passionately. Then she sprang to her feet, frightened and horrified.

"What is this?" she shrieked, pointing to the hand. It lay on the bed, still a hand, but its bones had crumbled at her touch, and it was a mere hand-shaped bag, limp, except for the *rigor mortis*, which had already set in.

"Oh, God!" gasped Mrs. Turnor, "I did not think of this!" Then she pushed the little button again, and, as the deep notes died away, ran to the bedside. But there was no motion of her husband's eyelids this time, and the unfortunate woman rushed out of the room in violent hysterics.

"Miss Sylvia," I cried, detaining her as she followed her mother, "have you a man-servant in the house? No? Then send over for my man, while I attend to your mother."

Mrs. Turnor's hysterics were severer than I had anticipated, and not until after daybreak did I get a chance to return to my own home. Dr. Graham had been telegraphed for, I knew, and would soon be back: when he came, I should be free again. Meantime, duty bade me return to the Turnors', and thither I went after a hasty toilet and breakfast.

I looked into the parlor as I entered the house, and found the necessary preparations already being carried out.

"This is a queer case," said the undertaker, confidentially; "I don't know as I ever saw a queerer one. Are you the regular family physician, may I ask?"

I explained my position to him, and, assuring him that Dr. Graham would attend to everything necessary, went into the reception-room.

Listlessly I picked up the paper, but in an instant was reading with the greatest interest the short account of a railroad accident which had happened that very morning near the city. My interest arose from the fact that the first name in the list of the killed was that of "Dr. George Graham, New York City."

"Good-morning, Dr. Dupré," said a voice; and I looked up, to see Miss Sylvia enter the room.

"Good-morning, Miss Turnor," I answered, collecting my wits as well as I could.

"I am not Miss Turnor," she said. "I am Sylvia Mayhew. My mother was twice married," and she added, with infinite pathos, "and twice a widow."

"Miss Mayhew," I said, "pray don't be startled, but is your doctor's name George Graham? It is? Then—look at this!" She read the account of the accident with a paling cheek.

"I must show this to mamma," she said, in a trembling voice, and, with the paper in her hand, left the room. In a few minutes she returned hastily.

"Will you come up-stairs to mamma?" she said. "She has hysterics again. Hark! you can hear her laughing!"

II.

Mr. Turnor's death was a great shock to his wife, and until the day of the funeral I was constantly in attendance upon her. Dr. Graham's death also added to the work I had to do. It was I who furnished the certificate of death on which the permit was granted to bury,—not the bones, for there were none, but the body of John Turnor. I rode in the first carriage at the funeral, assisted when the will was read, and attended the widow when, shortly after the funeral, she took to her bed, worn out by long watching. In short, I became the family physician, and was soon treated rather as one of the family who had studied medicine than as even that family friend. I was continually invited to dine with Mrs. Turnor and her daughter, and exhorted to remember their loneliness and not again to seclude myself when greater calls were made on me than those of chemistry. It was Mrs. Turnor who spoke thus: Sylvia only looked at me.

In thinking the matter over, even now I can truly say that I do not wonder I fell in love with Sylvia Mayhew. In a young girl, excellently educated and beautiful, whom I had met under strange circumstances, it was only natural that I should take an interest. At that time I was younger than I am now, though even now I am not so very old, and a pretty face exerted a great influence upon me. And Sylvia

had a face that was more than pretty : it was beautiful. I do not think I can describe it justly : first, because the love I bore its owner rendered me blind to any defects it might have had ; second, because a long seclusion, such as mine has been, warps the mind and makes it loath to render justice to one who has injured it. And Sylvia has injured me.

In course of time I was allowed to return to my proof-sheets ; but when I went back I found something continually rising between them and me, and that something was the image of Sylvia Mayhew. So it came to pass that I grew to love her with the love of a man who has passed the days of his youth ; for, though the love of a lad may be passionate compared with that of a man, it is as the light of a candle to that of an electric lamp.

Mrs. Turnor penetrated my feelings, though I thought I had concealed them well. One morning she questioned me, and I had to confess to her what I had hardly confessed to myself. But she gave her consent, and spoke words of encouragement, so that it only remained for me to make my feelings known to Sylvia.

How well I remember the day I spoke to her ! I had been down to my publishers' to correct the proofs of my preface, and had walked across from the elevated-railway-station to Mrs. Turnor's.

"Miss Mayhew is out," said my old friend Eliza : "she has gone up the avenue a little way." And I hurried after her. Luckily,—I say "luckily" because I am writing of things that were as I thought them at the time,—I met Sylvia before I had gone very far, and walked along with her. It was a beautiful afternoon about the middle of April, and the time and the weather, the birds, the buds on the trees, everything, conspired to turn my thoughts towards love and Sylvia.

We talked of all sorts of things, relevant and irrelevant,—of Mrs. Turnor's health, of the weather, of the carriages, of the passers-by, of the new houses, of my book. This last subject of conversation afforded me the opportunity I wanted. I spoke of the progress the book was making through the press, of my occupation that very day, and at last—when we were well beyond Sixty-fourth Street, and quite alone—I turned to my companion.

"Miss Mayhew," I said, trying to make my voice sound composed, and failing, "I want only a dedication to make my book complete. To whom shall it be dedicated?"

"I thought all that kind of books were dedicated to the instructors of the authors. Who was your instructor?" she asked.

"I would rather—I would rather dedicate it to you," I said, as boldly as I could. She looked at me in surprise,—yes, in surprise, for I do not think she knew what was coming.

"I would rather dedicate everything I have to you," I continued. "Don't you know, Sylvia, that I love you, that I love you dearly, better than anything else in the world, and that I want you to be my wife? Sylvia,—Sylvia,—will you marry me?"

Sylvia said nothing, though she flushed up to her temples. She walked along slowly, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left. I trembled, for my happiness was in the balance; ay, it was indeed, though not as in those days I thought it.

"Sylvia," I whispered again, when I could bear the suspense no longer, "Sylvia, may I dedicate the book to you?" Then she put her hand in my arm, and we walked home; and inside the vestibule I kissed her.

That evening I made my first call in the character of an accepted suitor; and, for the first time since Mr. Turnor's death, Sylvia's mother opened the organ and bade her daughter play. Sylvia turned so pale that I sprang to her side, fearing she was about to faint; but she motioned me away with a faint smile and sat down at the instrument.

"Sylvia is so sensitive," whispered her mother, as we sat listening: "she used to play to her father,—for she always called Mr. Turnor father,—she was so young when Mr. Mayhew died, a mere baby, and only six when I married again; and the remembrance of the old days is almost too much for her." And Mrs. Turnor talked on all the while that Sylvia played, pouring into my ears stories the refrain of which always was, "Sylvia is so sensitive." What with endeavoring to listen to both Sylvia and her mother, I appreciated nothing that was said or played. Finally Mrs. Turnor, tired of being answered either in monosyllables or not at all, asked me, with a certain emphasis which even now I remember I thought strange, whether I was fond of music.

"Moderately," I answered. What man ever told the exact truth in similar circumstances, when his future wife was playing?

"Sylvia," said Mrs. Turnor, rising and standing between her daughter and myself, "play that piece your father liked so much. Sit here, Roger," she continued, pointing to a large arm-chair placed behind the performer's seat: "you will hear better." And I dutifully obeyed.

The music began, and the organ, an instrument of marvellous compass, seemed as though possessed of life. Sylvia herself seemed under a charm. I could see her face in a mirror, and its expression absolutely shocked me. She looked like a being urged on to a terrible act by a will stronger than her own, urged on to her own destruction, to the destruction of all she loved. She looked as though she would have given everything to be released from the task she was completing, yet she could not be,—yet she was compelled by an unknown but powerful

force to finish it. The music was very peculiar,—weird, but withal stately, almost solemn. First the room rang with deep, gong-like notes, one of which, even to my unmusical ear, seemed strangely familiar. Its repetition made me recollect that it was the same note I had heard when I made my first call on the Turnors, and I shuddered, for I recognized the chair in which I sat as the reclining-chair in which my next-door neighbor had died. But from that note the music glided off into other notes, higher, shriller, more piercing, and I forgot Mr. Turnor, and heard only one high note, calling to me, calling to me, calling to me. Trembling with strange excitement, I sprang to my feet, but, dazed and curiously weak, fell to the floor. Still that high, shrill call was repeated and repeated and repeated.

The next thing I knew, I found myself upon a sofa in my own room, bathed in perspiration and languid beyond reason, with my heart beating rapidly, as though after great and prolonged exertion; and it was daylight.

That day I apologized to Mrs. Turnor,—I hardly knew for what,—and she accepted my excuses kindly, with little of the severity I had expected.

“It was partly my fault, Roger,” she said, sweetly. “I should have warned you against that old Hungarian wine: it is very sweet, but very insidious.”

“I doubt whether it was the wine,” I ventured to object. “I took very little of it; but of course——”

“Oh, it was the wine, Roger, and the room was hot, and you were excited, and had been under a strain all day. Sylvia understands it all perfectly. Only, my dear Roger, don't let it happen again.”

III.

My book obtained its dedication, and was published and criticised and praised, and in course of time, about a year after I had first met Sylvia Mayhew, we were married. After the wedding-trip we settled down with Mrs. Turnor, who was unwilling to give up the house, “hallowed,” so she expressed it, “by the death of Mr. Turnor.” So I used my own house merely as a laboratory, and lived with Sylvia's mother. The latter, however, was unwilling to let me use even my own house as I wished.

“Roger,” said she to me one day, “I am so glad you married Sylvia——”

“So am I,” said I, promptly. I had not been married long at the time.

“Of course,” said Mrs. Turnor; “of course. But I have always wanted you to move your horrid laboratory away, and now I have a

right to ask you, and I do ask you: please move it to some other place."

I made a slight objection, but was silenced by the remark that Sylvia had never liked the proximity of the laboratory, and that it might be positively dangerous for her a few months later to have it so near. This last argument was convincing, and, like a dutiful husband, I moved my laboratory, and the gentility of our street was shocked by the sight of the sign on old John Dupré's most respectable mansion of "This House to Let."

Everything went on happily and quietly for several months, until our boy was born. It was not that his advent caused any trouble or unhappiness to arise, but that shortly after his birth began those occurrences which have caused all my trouble. And as I distinguish the years as they pass only by the recurrence of my boy's birthday, so I date my trouble from his birth.

I had been at my laboratory all day, and did not reach home till after nine o'clock. Sylvia was in the parlor for only the second or third time since John Turnor Dupré had made his appearance, and as I kissed her she warned me not to wake my heir, who had just been put to sleep. I went up-stairs on tiptoe, stole to my room on tiptoe, and locked the door with as little noise as possible. Then I dressed as quickly as I could, and, kicking off my slippers, looked for my evening-shoes. They were not in their usual place, and, still in my stocking-feet, I went to the closet to find them. The closet, of course, was dark, and I put out my right foot to feel for the shoes, intending to push them out into the dressing-room. Suddenly my stocking caught on a projecting nail, and, in spite of all my efforts, I could not disentangle it. I took it off, and, stooping, repeated my attempt, but again in vain. Then I gave a sudden wrench, determined in my anger to tear it loose. This time the stocking came away, and with it a small piece of board about as large as my hand.

"What's this?" I exclaimed, taking stocking and board to the light. The board had evidently been cut off intentionally, and not nailed down: so with a candle I returned to the closet to prosecute my discoveries. Cautiously I put my hand into the hole laid bare by the removal of the board, but in an instant drew it forth again, holding in it a sealed parcel.

"Whew!" I whistled, as I read the address: "To the District Attorney of this city, New York." "To the District Attorney!" I muttered. "I'll look into this before I send it to the District Attorney." And, so saying, I took the parcel to the light and opened it.

The words which I then read for the first and only time are burned

into my memory, and, though years have gone by since that night, I think I have not forgotten one of them :

“To the District Attorney. My wife, Laura Turnor, and her daughter, Sylvia Mayhew, have conspired to kill me, and I write these words in the expectation of death. My married life with Laura Turnor has never been very happy, and the last few years have been especially unhappy ones. I do not blame her entirely for that. But now she wishes me out of her way, and she is taking steps to remove me. The instrument which she will use for my taking off will be a terribly powerful machine which I myself devised, under which I, like the Sicilian inventor, shall be the first to suffer. I cannot describe this invention ; but with this letter I place a note-book containing my memoranda of it. Should this letter be found after my death, take testimony if I did not die in a state of collapse, if a single deep note did not sound continuously through the room in which I died, if my bones did not crumble away at the slightest touch. And if these things did not happen, then I was not murdered ; but if they did, then I was murdered by my wife, Laura Turnor, and my step-daughter, Sylvia Mayhew. I swear that this is true, so help me God. John Turnor.”

Hardly knowing what I did, I opened the note-book. The first thing that I saw was a drawing of some sort of musical instrument, seemingly an organ, evidently of great compass. Connected with the organ was a heavy arm-chair, the connection being made by a large number of wires. At the top of the page was a reference to “Joshua vi.” Over the leaf was a memorandum, “Every one has his key-note, could it but be found ;” and throughout the book were notes and references indicating that Mr. Turnor had devised his organ to find out the “key-notes” of different persons and things. The chair connected electrically with the organ was not necessary to give the “key-note” its power, but simply intensified it : so at least the notes seemed to show. One note was a question whether criminals could not be put to death by means of the continuous sounding of their “key-notes ;” and another was to the effect that, having experimented upon an animal, he found that it took seven days to kill it. Still another memorandum gave the “key-note” of the inventor, and mentioned heavy perspiration and extreme weakness as consequent upon the repetition of one’s note. On the very last page of the book, as I wildly turned it in my hands, I saw this written : “A tense string maintains the note, a slack string does not. Query : would relaxation of mind slacken the string ?”

This last I did not understand ; but the letter and the other writing in the book were easily comprehended. To me, who had stood at his death-bed, it was only too evident that John Turnor had indeed been

murdered, and that I had married his murderess, or, at all events,—for in those days I did not wish to think Sylvia guilty,—the daughter of his murderess! My blood stood still in my veins, great drops of perspiration rolled down my forehead, I shook all over, while ever through my mind ran wildly the terrible thought, “It is true! it is true!”

How long I remained in this state of mind and body I do not know, whether minutes or hours, but I was roused by repeated knocks on the door. As I was, one foot bare, I staggered across the room and opened the door. There stood the old murderess, the she-devil, the slayer of her own husband, who came to know why I did not come down-stairs.

I turned upon her, shaking the papers in my hand, and crying out, “Murderess! murderess!” She said not a word, but rushed down the stairs as if for her life, and I followed her blindly. She was in the parlor before I was half-way down the stairs, and then I knew how foolishly I had acted, that she had me at her mercy, and I determined to get out of the house before she could use against me the power her husband’s invention gave her; but before my foot touched the last step I heard a high, shrill note ring out from that infernal organ, and another and another, and then I saw the fiend standing by the knob Sylvia had touched the night Mr. Turnor died. Again and again the note rang out, and my heart beat wildly and more wildly, and I grew weaker and weaker. Still that fiend kept smiling at me from the parlor, and still I determined that the papers should never fall into her hands while I was alive. But even as I repeated this determination the notes became more and more piercing, a feeling of awful pain came upon me, and increased with each motion I made, until, no longer able to support it, I sank to the floor, unconscious of anything.

IV.

When I recovered my senses I found myself lying in the same reclining-chair in which Mr. Turnor had died, and opened my eyes to see Mrs. Turnor, with a Bible in her hand, in the same place as when I first saw her. The same great array of bottles was upon the mantel-piece; in fact, everything except the actors in the tragedy was unchanged.

Mrs. Turnor had evidently been watching me, for as soon as I moved she spoke.

“I have had your key-note stopped for the present,” she said, “for I have something to say to you. But first drink this bouillon— Oh, you need not be afraid! What do I need of poison? It will do you no harm, and can do you no good. There; will you have any more? You may. Very well. Now listen to me. You were very foolish to

make such a scene last evening. If you had acted sensibly, you might have got me into trouble. As it is, you have only got yourself into trouble. You have put yourself into my power, and compelled me to use it. The papers you found are doubtless interesting, and they contain only the truth, but it is your existence that makes their existence dangerous to Sylvia and me,—yes, Sylvia,—Sylvia and myself. You know too much for our safety : so I have decided to prevent you from ever revealing what you know. Now, Roger, I shall read you a chapter from the Bible,—the same one I read to Mr. Turnor while he was ill.”

Then she began to read,—not that part of the Bible that people usually read to those sick unto death, but out of the Old Testament, out of the book of Joshua, yea, and the sixth chapter of that book, the account of the destruction of Jericho :

“ . . . And it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times : only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, . . . that the wall fell down flat. . . . But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. . . . And Joshua saved Rahab alive.” And presently the chapter was finished.

“ There,” said the she-devil, “ Roger, I shall read you that chapter once a day for five days more, and on the seventh day I shall read it to you seven times.” Then she closed the book ; and as I shut my eyes I heard that accursed note begin again, and she left the room.

Six days more of life she gave me, I dimly thought : she would not give me too much, for she knows how long it takes to kill by the “ key-note.” Had she not killed her husband John Turnor? And from thinking of my own near death this succession of thoughts passed through my mind. I thought of John Turnor's end, how he died in the same room and the same bed in which I was soon to die, how he died by the machine he himself had invented ; and then I thought of the inventor of the iron shroud, who had been the first to test its working ; and then I wondered where I last had seen a reference to that hapless man, and I thought of John Turnor's letter, the source of my sickness, the cause of my death, and of his note-book, and then of the incomprehensible words on the very last page of that book, “ A tense string maintains the note, a slack string does not. Query : would relaxation of mind slacken the string ?” And, as I thought of that, a great light flashed upon me ; the meaning of those words seemed clear : if I could relax the tension of my mind I need not die. I would be

saved, I inwardly determined; but the determination caused that awful note to sound more loudly and piercingly than before; and had I not practised what Tom Hughes called "mental gymnastics," and made my mind a blank, I should have fallen into another stupor, from which I might never have waked in this world.

It is much easier than people imagine to think of nothing: so until the next day I managed to get along very comfortably. I had intended to make a stroke for freedom that day, but, to my despair, found myself fastened down to the chair. Then this thought came to help me: Mr. Turnor was not fastened in his bed; they will certainly release me before they call in the doctor. And that thought sustained me during the week,—the most awful one I ever spent. Those days passed slowly, but, thank God, they did pass.

On the seventh and last day, very early in the morning, about the dawning of the day, Mrs. Turnor read that chapter to me again. When she came into the room to read it for the eighth time, my wife followed her. My wife! The first time I had seen her since that night. How pale she was, how haggard, how changed!

She did not look at me, but showed her mother a paper.

"Mother," she said, in a hollow, dead tone, "here is a Dr. Charles Elton who fell overboard from a ferry-boat. Will that name do?"

"Of course it will," said Mrs. Turnor, impatiently. "Now change the date of the paper to to-morrow. Elton? Charles Elton? I can remember that name: of course, the same story we told him." And she pointed at me. "'Dr. Elton has been called out of town,' and the rest of it. That will do." Sylvia left the room, and her demon mother began and ended that awful chapter. Then she came over to the bed, and bent down, and in a minute rose with a long strap in her hands, and my bonds were removed. Scarcely had she left the room and shut the door behind her when I rose. Every motion of my body seemed to make the sound strike more deeply; but with a sort of instinct—it was not reason or thought—I stumbled across the floor to the wall and pressed the button. Instantly the terrible, monotonous note ceased.

I heard sounds as of one approaching, and with the last remains of my momentary strength pushed a heavy chair in front of the button, and sank down behind a curtain. Just in time; for in rushed Mrs. Turnor, her face pale with apprehension. She evidently had no idea of how matters really stood: she thought only that some part of the machinery of that awful organ was not working. Straight towards the button she rushed, without looking at the bed; but when she saw the arm-chair she stopped suddenly, and a look of wonder and doubt came over her face. She glanced towards the bed, and, with a perfect glare of hate and terror,

turned and grasped the chair. If she pulled it away from the wall, I was lost. I rose behind the curtain. Blindly I seized from the mantel-piece the bottle nearest to me, and hurled it at the demon. It struck her on the forehead; it broke, its contents poured over her; there was a shriek,—a shriek of rage and hatred, but above all of pain. With both hands pressed to her face and eyes, the woman sank to the floor and writhed in agony. I felt no pity for her. I stepped from behind the curtain, and, with a piece of the broken bottle in my hand, knelt by her side, and felt until I found her throat. When I had found it—They tell me I cut her throat with the broken bottle. I think it likely: at all events, I do not see why people should lie to me uselessly. Certain it is, when I stood up again, my hands and knees burnt with the strong acid that had been in the bottle: she was dead. I walked as I was into the hall.

“Rahab! Rahab! where is Rahab?” I cried: “she shall be spared, she and all that she hath.” But when I saw Sylvia coming towards me with the baby in her arms, I remembered who Rahab was, and for very shame’s sake stopped so calling my wife, and cried out, instead, “Sylvia! Sylvia!”

But she passed me by, saying not a word, and fled into the parlor. And as I stood in the hall I heard shriek after shriek coming from the room. I looked in, and saw Sylvia sitting near her mother, rocking herself forward and backward; but her boy lay crying where she had let him fall when she first saw the dead woman. I picked him up and comforted him as well as I could; and then came Eliza, who, when she saw me in my night-clothes looking as one raised from the dead, gave a great cry and ran from the house. What passed then I do not know. I played with my boy till some one touched me, and I looked up and saw Philip and a man in blue, with brass buttons on his coat; and he took away the boy, who played with the buttons, and laughed, and Philip helped me to dress and brought me here. And here I have been ever since: it is ten years now. Philip is with me still, and my boy comes every week to see me. Except for him and Philip, I am all alone. My wife’s mother is dead—I saw to that; and Sylvia, they tell me, is dead—perhaps I saw to that also; but, however that may be, God rest her soul; she was but a weak creature. But my boy John is alive. Yes, he is alive; and he and I play together every week. Not on the piano or on the organ; for I hate music. And besides music there is one other thing I hate,—the Book of Joshua.

This is the whole story of my sickness; and, if I am insane, is there not reason why I should be so?

R. N. T.

A PLEA FOR THE SPOILS SYSTEM.

THE Honorable William Henry Tyler is about the most genial and popular politician in one of the largest cities of the United States. For many years he took an active and leading part in the councils of his party, and, although he insists to-day that he is "out" of politics, he may be "in" again to-morrow, so numerous and strong are his personal friends and political affiliations. During his term as mayor it was generally admitted that no one had ever filled the chair of the municipal executive with more success or wider favor. Great, therefore, was the surprise when it was announced that the pressure of private business had induced him to quit the political field, just at a time when even his opponents conceded that he might look with confidence for further advancement, and when his friends were beginning to whisper his name in the preliminary conferences upon the approaching gubernatorial nomination. Since his retirement he has acted as a sort of Political Sage, to whom more than one of the rising and ambitious members of his party has been indebted for shrewd advice in those ticklish emergencies where probable temporary advantage has to be weighed with such nicety of balance against possible future gain.

Not long ago, some demagogues in the State legislature introduced an amendment to the civil service law, which, under the guise of a patriotic discrimination in favor of veterans of the civil war, in reality sought to break down the whole reform system. A member of the local association called upon Mr. Tyler and tried to secure his influence in opposition to the hostile bill. "Mr. Mayor," said he,—in some cities, when a man has once been chief executive the common council keep gas-lamps in front of his door, and his friends give him an emeritus title for the rest of his days,—“Mr. Mayor, as you doubtless know, the reform system is in danger, and we want your aid in beating this underhand attempt to break it down.”

"My friend," said the ex-mayor, "sit down. You Reformers are generally too good for the good things of this world: so I don't suppose a little Irish whiskey would tempt you. But perhaps you are not above a good cigar?"

"I will adapt myself to the environment for the good of the cause," said the Reformer, meekly, as he lighted a cigar and poured out some of the mountain-dew. "It exhales a genuine bouquet of the peat-bog," said he.

"It's from Quinn of Limerick," said the Sage; "and I got it at the Americus Club sale after Tweed's downfall. It has a history of its own. But never mind all that. I am glad you have come to me on this business, for it gives me a chance to free my mind. Do you know," he cried, with sudden warmth, "of all the milk-and-water poppycock that has diluted our politics for the last half-dozen years, I think this civil-service business is the worst; and it is high time for fair-minded men to examine the practical working and effect of what you call the Reform Law, so as to decide whether that measure should be approved or condemned."

"But, Mr. Mayor, has the new system had a fair chance?"

"A fair chance? How long, pray, do you propose to keep us in a constant fret with your confounded experiments? The system of appointment to office after some sort of an examination, competitive or otherwise, has been in operation two years in the State of New York, a year in Massachusetts, and three years under the laws of the United States,—quite long enough to enable us to judge it on its merits. What voters are beginning to ask now is, whether the laws which have been passed at Washington, Albany, and Boston changing the method of filling the public offices have really succeeded in reforming anything, or whether, after all, we were not better off under the old system. Oh, yes, yes, of course there are two sides to every question like this; and the fact that you Reformers admit a certain reasonableness in the argument of your opponents, a concession you would not have dreamed of making eighteen months ago, shows that you are already beginning to feel the reaction and to see that some of your pretensions are likely to influence reasonable people against you. Take, for example, all this hue and cry against the assessment of office-holders and candidates. Have you even dabbled in the politics of a great city like this without finding out that there are numerous political expenses the details of which people generally know very little about, and which amount in the aggregate to many thousands of dollars, are absolutely necessary, and have to be met in one way or another? Besides the election disbursements, which include printing millions of ballots, keeping booths manned in hundreds of districts, hiring distributors, engaging halls for campaign meetings, and sending speakers out upon the stump, whose services and expenses must be defrayed, there is also, as you ought to have learned by this time, an immense and continued outlay needed to keep up the regular political organization. This means, especially in these large cities, a constantly-recurring tax, greatly increased at election time. Putting aside all talk about 'buying votes,' the outlays referred to, all of which are admitted to be perfectly legitimate and necessary,

call for large sums of money,—the postage-bills in this city, for example, amounting sometimes to as much as five thousand dollars. The question naturally arises, who is to bear this burden, if the office-holder, who profits by his party's success, or the office-seeker, who hopes to profit by it, does not stand his share, proportioned to the salary he receives, or hopes to receive, from the office he holds or hopes to win?"

"But, Mr. Tyler," broke in the Reformer, "isn't it the duty of every citizen——"

"Hear me out, sir! You fellows have had the floor these four years. Give an old-timer some show. It is all very well to say that it is the duty of every citizen to take an active interest in the selection of the men who are to govern him, and that, if good government is the object of patriotic men in a democratic country, their patriotism ought to touch their pockets at least to the extent of inducing them to contribute to what are admittedly legitimate campaign and election expenses. That's all very good to talk about. Yet, somehow, the impossibility of providing for these expenses in any way other than the customary and natural one stares us in the face. Just recollect how Mr. Garfield, deferring to what he thought was a pressing public sentiment, set himself against the established custom at the beginning of his Presidential campaign. But as soon as the emergencies of the political situation demonstrated the impracticability of his position, he at once changed his attitude, like a sensible man, and secured the necessary funds without which the fight had been lost. On the other hand,—and I speak by the card, you understand,—when in the late gubernatorial campaign in the State of New York wealthy non-office-holding members of the Republican party were applied to for contributions, the very first question invariably asked was, 'How is the custom-house doing?' And when the collectors had to reply that, owing to the damned civil service law, they were unable to squeeze a dollar out of the place, the non-office-holders naturally declined to bear the whole of the burden, and hundreds were with difficulty collected where formerly thousands had been easily secured. Now, how was it in the days before the leaven of Mugwumpianism began to work? The business of providing for these necessary and proper disbursements was attended to in the natural and business-like way. In the city of New York, for example, the Democratic party organization controlled most of the ten thousand municipal offices, where the salaries aggregated something like ten and a half millions of dollars. The twenty-five hundred Federal offices were held by Republican workers, whose salary-list footed up about three millions and a half. Each contributor, from the head of a department down to the sweep or the office-boy, knew exactly what was expected of him, had

been glad to get his place upon the understanding that he owed it to the party, and no more thought of trying to evade his proportion of tribute to the party's needs than of cheating his butcher or his baker."

"But, Mr. Mayor, do you mean to contend that the American citizen cannot be counted on to do his public duty unless he has a pecuniary int——"

"I'll tell you what I mean, if you won't keep throwing me off the track with your interruptions. I know just what you had on your lips about the theory of our form of government resting upon the supposition that every voter is bound to show an intelligent interest in the selection of the men to whom he intrusts the conduct of public affairs, and all that. When and where do we find this general interest that you count upon? As you know very well, just about once in four years, when everybody seems to rouse to a conception of his duty. But how is it in the 'off' years? Upon whom do the great mass of people depend to keep up the party organization from month to month? Is any one so ignorant as to fancy that a political machine, any more than a business concern or any other form of organization, can be left to run itself until the exceptional occasion arises for its use? You Reformers need a little familiarity with hard facts. In a great city like New York, Philadelphia, or Boston, where at every election each voter has to choose many names from a mass of nominees, the great majority must rely upon their acknowledged party leaders for information as to the proper candidates for whom to vote. It is all very well to prate about the deplorable ignorance of the masses, yet the fact remains that in the so-called 'brownstone districts' of New York, for instance, the residents know far less about the men between whom they are supposed to exercise an intelligent and independent choice than the Harlem workman or the West Side mechanic.

"The two great political parties have adopted in that city two systems of political machinery. The Democrats have their 'halls,' and the Republicans their 'district associations,' and neither party has yet found anything better to take their place. The vast majority of respectable citizens, who are either too lazy or too indifferent to take an active part in politics, confine their attention to public affairs for eleven months out of the twelve to an easy perusal of the leading article in their evening papers over their after-dinner cigars, and spend the rest of the year in wondering why the management of the party has drifted into bad hands, and in composing diatribes against the 'henchman' and the 'heeler,' which they print in the *Nation* or the *Evening Post*. Look into the facts for a moment, and consider what a complicated and difficult task is involved in the management of a single Assembly district in

the city of New York, multiply the labor and outlay by twenty-four, and then say that it is a thing which may be left to itself, or which, if not left to itself, is a matter of little expense. Under our system of government, and with our election machinery in its present condition, political management has become an art; and it is not an art which the amateur can pick up off-hand by reading Mill's Essays or Lieber's Treatise. The man to whom is intrusted the management of his party's interests in a single Assembly district has enough work cut out for him to employ all the time and all the energies of an able-bodied, active, and intelligent man. He must make it his business, his profession; and, unless we count upon an altruism unlooked for and undemanded in any other walk of life, he *ought* to get his living from it. And the only way in which he can get an honest living is from the office he wins by his successful work. Supposing, for instance, his is a good-sized district, containing, we will say, thirty election districts. It is his business to select and command a 'captain' for each of the thirty, who is responsible to him, as he is in turn responsible to the central committee. Every one of his subordinates must keep a roll-book and see to it that the name of every resident within his limits is properly entered. Does it ever occur to you gentlemen 'who sit at home at ease' to whom it is that you owe the gentle hint which reaches you on the eve of the last day of registration, politely reminding you of an unperformed public duty? Does it ever occur to you, as you deposit your virtuous suffrages, that to secure you fair play every such district leader has to select and oversee the work of, say, sixty inspectors, thirty poll-clerks, thirty lieutenants in charge, fifty box-men, thirty supervisors, sixty marshals, with messengers, and ticket-distributors,—a round total of three hundred and fifty or four hundred 'workers'? And where is the pay for all this work to come from? You worthy gentlemen who look upon politics as a 'dirty trade' certainly do not bear the burden; and yet these items form but a small part of the cost of every election,—a burden which the organization must bear, and which the candidate, for whom the party's success means individual benefit, is in honor bound to share. Bear in mind that the main work of the 'halls' and the 'district associations' from year to year, week in and week out, is done by two sorts of people. First, the 'professionals,' so called, who make a living out of politics, and to whom party success means office, promotion, or increase of power. Besides these there is a very large class of active and industrious politicians—a far larger proportion of the 'workers' than the parlor statesman has any idea of—who have never made one cent out of politics, and who, whatever their secret hopes may be, never will make a cent from it, though they may continue in active politics all the rest of their days. These are the clerks and

shopkeepers of small means, the mechanics and day-laborers, to whom the 'hall' or the 'district association' is a sort of club, and who, instead of regarding their attendance at a mere business meeting during the 'off' years as an irksome political necessity or public duty, really enjoy the thing, and listen to the roll-call and the formal reports of committees with a grave and pleasurable feeling of self-importance. In some ways men of this kind are of the most valuable aid in keeping up the spirit of interest in the organization, so that the machine is held up to working order and ready for use, not only at the approach of an election or convention, but in the event of any of those political emergencies which every now and then spring up in 'off' years to mar the plans and confound the speculations of the most astute and long-headed political managers. These are the voters whom you could never catch tripping in regard to their local candidates. They know all about the political leanings of their neighbors, for usually they have lived for years in the district, one of its principal attractions being their connection with the local organization. They can tell you in a moment the estimation in which this candidate or that is held in this or that election district, and what would be his chances of 'drawing' from the opposite party. They are, to be sure, more like the politicians of the country grocery or the village post-office in this respect; for, unlike the average New-Yorker of the richer sort,—the 'better element' I believe you call it,—whose friends and acquaintances are scattered all over the island, and who thinks nothing of changing his residence from one end of the city to another every two or three years, *their* friends are among their neighbors, and they cultivate and foster a sort of local pride to which ninety-nine out of a hundred of your 'better-element' kind are strangers. Although perhaps never wholly without a secret feeling that the lightning of office may strike in their direction, such men, I can tell you, never dream of making a serious claim of reward for the really valuable services which they render their respective parties; and though they may not be able to compose stirring 'Appeals to the Independent Voter,' nor to see their hitherto unknown names in print attached to a list of searching 'Questions to Candidates,'—here memory tinged with bitterest irony the ex-mayor's voice,—“they lend quite as valuable assistance to the cause of political improvement by showing a real and unflagging interest in public affairs, which, except on the very eve of an election and when such topics are uppermost in popular attention, your genuine Reformer fails even to simulate. It is upon these men that the active and energetic district leader has to rely, and to whom he owes in great part his ability to keep in running order the organization for which they are glad to work, accepting as their only reward the success of the party to which it is

their pride to belong. Take away from that party, as you are trying to do, the legitimate results of party success, and these men will be, and indeed are to-day, quite as bitter in their disappointment and severe in their denunciation of what they naturally consider unfair treatment as their friends and colleagues to whom this treatment means a denial of the well-earned fruits of a victory for which all have fought hard to win. Oh, you may grin," cried the old war-horse, as he mopped his glowing face. "I am aware that the existence of such sentiments will scarcely be credited by my Independent friends; for to the lofty mugwump, who would scorn to labor for his party in a 'hall' or an 'association,' and who has never taken part in a political convention, except from the cold superiority of the gallery, such unselfish enthusiasm for the success of a great party is simply incredible. Yet, let me tell you, sir, to the practical politician it often seems as though, in the pursuit of the ideal, you sad-eyed young Reformers had lost sight of the fact that a party is, after all, the best medium yet found for giving concrete expression to political ideas; and so long as poor human nature remains what it is, parties, though founded for great purposes and acting as great moral agencies for ultimate good or evil, will depend for their every-day working energy on the stimulus of hope and fear, of success and failure, which goes to form the fuel of human endeavor. And the great statesman," added the Sage, who rather liked that last metaphor, and would give it a finishing touch,—“the great statesman is he who feeds the flame with even and discriminating hand. You may rest assured, my young friend, that no set of theorists, sitting in solemn conclave of self-constituted and self-called conventions, will ever succeed, though they 'resolute till the cows come home,' in running the every-day politics of an every-day world. Politics, sir, is a profession, and, like every other profession, is to be learned by practical experience and the study of measures and men. And it is high time to stop this drivelling cant which seeks to brand the professional politician as presumptively a blackleg or a knave. What Fisher Ames is said to have declared early in the century, that 'one man who made a business of politics could have more influence than six who did not,' is as true to-day as it was sixty years ago, and will be true in the days to come, when the republic is centuries old and the mugwump is grouped with the mummy. I remember," cried the old politician, with a reminiscent chuckle, "how Jackson Schultz came to this sensible conclusion nine or ten years ago, when he awoke to the fact that Messrs. Sharpe and Davenport were 'fixing' things at the primaries ahead of him, and that when *he* tried to 'fix' things, as he innocently complained, they would always adjourn to head him off. And so he wisely decided to waste no more time in

attending primaries or conventions only to sit as a respectable dummy for the benefit of others who held the strings. 'In fact,' said he, 'inasmuch as they devote their lives to politics, and their bread and butter depends on it, while I can't afford the time to go into it morning, noon, and night, they always beat the game.' Lord! how the boys laughed when he dropped out! No, no, my young friend, you've had your day in court, and it was only a political 'fluke' that gave you anything more than a hearing. Mark my words, sir," continued the ex-mayor, and the Sage's brow lowered with prophetic darkness, "the passage of the Civil Service Act was one of those freaks of legislation that occur only to be swept from the statute-books at the moment of sober reaction. That a measure which struck at the very roots of our theory of government, and which, under ordinary conditions, would have required months of careful examination, discussion, and amendment, in committee and on the floor, should go through the national House of Representatives with a rush, without a debate, and within thirty minutes after the previous question had been called, is a strange subject of congratulation for those who are continually prating about the evils of hasty legislation. The star-eyed goddess of Reform, like a Malay fanatic, ran a-muck through both Houses, driving all before her. Believe me, Mr. Reformer, the measure has had its fair period of probation, and the fiat has gone forth for its recall. The leading men in both of the great political parties have found by this time that the new system, while in no way adding to the executive efficiency, seriously hampers the free action of the dominant party, whether Republican or Democratic, in national, State, or municipal affairs, and prevents the execution of the very reforms to which, before election, they were pledged in the event of success. The mugwumpian idea has been given fair play and has run its course. The real leaders of experience and sagacity have begun to chafe under a system which, while hampering their free use of the executive and administrative power, yet holds them responsible for results. And the people of the great State of New York, the battle-ground of the nation's politics, have emphasized by a significant vote their desire for a return to the simpler methods of the past, when issues were clearly defined, men fought for a substantial result, and to the victor belonged the spoils. There, sir," said the Sage, as he stopped for breath, "I've had my fling, and I feel the better for it. And I think it has done you good, too, to sit for twenty minutes and take in a few chunks of frozen truth."

"I am almost persuaded," answered the Reformer——

"Well said!" cried the Sage, whose ruddy face beamed with a proselyter's holy joy. "I'll drop in to dine to-night and clinch the thing."

“Yes, I am about convinced,” said the Reformer, as he edged towards the door, “of what I have always doubted,—that an intelligent man may believe what he is saying and yet talk for an hour unmitigated bosh !” And the door closed softly but quickly behind him.

George Walton Green.

HAD I BUT KNOWN!

HAD I but known that nothing is undone
 From rising until rising of the sun,
 That full-fledged words fly off beyond our reach,
 That not a deed brought forth to life dies ever,
 I would have measured out and weighed my speech :
 To bear good deeds had been my sole endeavor,
 Had I but known !

Had I but known how swiftly speed away
 The living hours that make the living day,
 That 'tis above delay's so dangerous slough
 Is hung the luring wisp-light of to-morrow,
 I would have seized time's evanescent Now !
 I would be spared this unavailing sorrow,
 Had I but known !

Had I but known to dread the dreadful fire
 That lay in ambush at my heart's desire,
 Wherefrom it sprang and smote my naked hand
 And left a mark forever to remain,
 I would not bear the fire's ignoble brand :
 I would have weighed the pleasure with the pain,
 Had I but known !

Had I but known we never can repeat
 Life's springtime freshness or its summer heat,
 Nor gather second harvest from life's field,
 Nor aged winter change to youthful spring,
 To me life's flowers their honey all would yield :
 I would not feel one wasted moment's sting,
 Had I but known !

Hunter MacCulloch.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

It is impossible to read much of the literature of the day, or of its popular science, without noticing an underlying impression that pervades it all. This is the supposition that we are near the gate of some opening into the Unknown or Unseen,—that some link between the physical and spiritual laws of the universe is trembling just within reach. In the September number of this magazine Mr. Morris has written "A Chapter of Mystery" which is a partial summary of occurrences that have given rise to this faith in a coming revelation of some wondrous psychic force. The writer is indebted to him for learning that a bequest has been left to the University of Pennsylvania by Mr. Seybert for the purpose of carrying on investigations. In view of this fact, it seems proper that every person who can give any testimony on such subjects should put it on record, since nothing can be of greater interest or value to thoughtful minds than the unravelling of this "painful riddle of the earth" on which we move amid an ever-deepening mystery. To place the incident I have to tell in its proper setting, somewhat of preface must be written.

The time was a few years after the close of the war. I was a widow, with two sons, both under seven. They were babies of one and two when their father died, about a year and a half after the final surrender. He died of consumption, caused by the horrors endured in a besieged town of the Confederacy, and when he was at rest I took up the fight with life and the world single-handed. At the time of which I write, I was teacher of science in the public high school of a certain city. I loved my work, and was healthy in brain and body; but any male professor who should attempt to do such work well, and also to be a housekeeper and tend two active children with the scrupulous care of a mother for their mental, moral, and physical well-being, would realize that the situation involved a strain. And if, in addition, when the end of a month came, and the bills for costs of living were laid on his table, his own labor was paid in a depreciated scrip,—a promise to pay instead of money, a piece of paper hardly negotiable, worth a variable figure anywhere from ten to ninety cents on the dollar, generally nearer the former than the latter price, a paper that to dispose of at all would require much running about in spare hours among brokers and money-dealers,—he would most likely exclaim, "That way madness lies!" Such was the life of the public-school teachers in that city. Month after month would pass without any salary at all being paid them, then a fraction was doled out at long intervals. The situation illustrated "the survival of the fittest" in more ways than one, for all of them attempted to meet it by increased work out of school. Lessons in music, in fancy-work, in plain sewing, in drawing, in painting, in languages, helped some to live; others attempted literary work, copying, or kindred lines of effort; some took in sewing, some painted photographs. A few went to insane asylums or other refuges; a few died; a few became moral wrecks, living by their wits, speculation, and trickery, for their treatment was a training in dishonesty. The strong in health, the clever in brain, lived on, with hearts full of untold bitterness. Thus, with me, as with the rest, the years had been

passing, though perhaps with less of cankering rust, because of the character of my work, which aroused all my ardor to master and to impart the noble themes with which it dealt.

I was living in an old-fashioned brick house, set far back from the noises of the street, with a garden in front. About five streets off was the residence of Mr. A——, a relative, in whose family I had lived for several years during my girlhood. He was a man of many virtues; he had shown me much kindness. But he was also a person of singular disposition, addicted to forming strong antipathies for little cause, which then became unconquerable. To my surprise and grief, he took up such an antipathy for me, and thenceforward we drifted farther and farther apart, misunderstanding each other more every day. That he had been generous to me, that I was grateful to him and respected his virtues, seemed to have no power to disperse the cloud that rose between us like an icy wall, shutting away all sympathy or congenial intercourse. Therefore, when the assumed guardianship was over it was a blessed relief, though I left in his house what seemed a part of myself, in the person of a sister, one of the tenderest of human creatures, who seemed especially mine because she had formed no nearer tie. In the years that had passed since I left his home, my marriage, absence, widowhood, had not changed towards me the man of whom I speak. I rarely entered his house. Absorbed in the rush of duties, I seldom saw or thought of him. He was certainly the last man on our planet to whom I should have gone for sympathy or help. When my sister visited me, we had much to speak of that interested us more. She always came like an angel of peace, or a good Samaritan bearing ambrosial oil for a wounded spirit, and we were content to let the priest and Levite pass by unnoticed. The even-time from six to eight was always "the children's hour." Then I resolutely banished care, and read aloud, or sung, told stories and fairy-tales, talked or listened while they had supper and bathed and robed for the long rest of night, after which I generally had work to occupy the silent hours till bedtime.

And so I come at last to the story of a certain evening that illustrates my theme, and that became so vivid in memory because of the information which twenty-four hours later illuminated it with a mysterious light. It was mid-winter, and the night was very cold. The day had been a trying one to me in every way, and I was unusually tired; but the children brought a wonderful story to be finished, so I read on longer than usual. It was nearly nine before they were laid away in their warm and cosy nests, and I turned to the window to shut out the moonlight before going to the work that awaited me. At this hour my relative, Mr. A——, would be about to retire for the night, for he always did so very early; but I did not think of him as I looked out upon the wintry scene. The moon lay between the lids of two dark cloudlets like a sorrow-laden eye, and her cold light and hard shadows seemed to chill the heart. The house was quite hushed. All preparations and orders for the morrow had been arranged, but I thought of the work waiting to be done, with a sick weariness that rebelled at the harness just then, and I turned from the window to the scene within. It was a picture of happiness and peace. The little white beds, with the fair-haired heads on the pillow, the roses by the mirror my pupils had given, all touched with the glamour of firelight, gleaming high in crimson flame,—what vision could be sweeter? But while I looked at it some demon seemed to whisper, "Yours is a home built on sands. Let but your strength fail only for a little while, and it will crumble away like a phantasy indeed." I shivered

through soul and body. Wrapping a light shawl around me, I sat down in a deep arm-chair, and all recollection of work passed from me, for I fell into a strain of thought so full, so deep, so excited, that the blood seemed checked in its flow, and all vitality concentrated in my brain. No sound broke the stillness, save the gentle breathing of the little sleepers, or the soft hiss of the oscillating flame, and I sat motionless, but never more intensely alive in mind. The past stood out in a series of clear pictures, as they say it does to the drowning; the present became steeped in inexpressible bitterness; the future suggested every hideous possibility. I felt as if the book of life were opened before the throne of the Fates, and I argued the case as did Abraham for the righteous men who should spare the doomed city. It almost seemed to me as if I spoke and were listened to by some unseen Intelligence powerless to help, and thus a character of despair ran through all the current of thought. The long succession of injustices and vain struggles that had marked these years of honest toil passed in review. Never an idler in life's vineyard, holding my work in honor, not grumbling at service, and striving ever to do right, I had reached the top of my profession, giving each year months of gratuitous labor, only to find the rewards of that labor lessen each year, and to receive neither money nor true consideration. It was the noon of life, that time when the laborer in earthly fields should see the harvest ripening for that "night wherein no man can work." But to look forward was not to see a calm autumnal evening of rest, in which the soil of the strife should fall from me and life lapse away as a star sets to rise perhaps "upon some fairer shore." Instead of that, the foreground was filled with a crowd of impatient creditors, and the road ended at the gate of some prison-like refuge for paupers. None could measure the bitterness to an honest cultured woman to be a craven debtor: it was the refinement of torture. The womanly love of all things dainty and appropriate in raiment and in all else was strong, as well as the ability to earn them; but all these desires must be hourly crushed. Body and soul must be bent to the ignoble task of grubbing for the means of mere living. Was that the preparation with which to meet the daily needs of pupils who deserved the best a trained mind could give? I thought of my co-laborers, wondering how the weakly ones bore it, when my strength bent down in utter weariness. Then deep in consciousness shone forth what the teachings of science seemed to prove, that to the higher vitality and power to endure came also the keener torture. I realized that the best years of life were slipping away, and in the coming ones I could not hope to have the light step, the keen eye, the ready hand and active brain to wrestle with fate. I had the spirit not to fly before misfortune, to confront any trial, but I seemed to feel the physical sensations of a rapidly weakening swimmer breasting always a current that must overwhelm at last, or of one struggling against a high wind that constantly beat the traveller to the earth. Was there no way out of the coil, no escape from the corruption and ignorance that robbed us of the wages of our labor? These questions seemed to swing through my head with the dolorous monotony of a pendulum. At last the circle of thought was broken by the clear strokes of the city bells striking midnight. The fire had burned to glowing embers, but I felt no cold, and, rising, shook off the painful sensations by reading a few pages of something that had much interested me. Then, preparing for bed, I was soon in the heavy sleep that follows exhaustion.

The next afternoon my little boys came proudly leading in a visitor they so loved to see. "Mamma, here is Aunt Mabel come to stay all night." This was

always a treat to them, to have a change of story-teller and to hear us talk. But when they were in bed, and I brought Mabel down for a cup of tea, then my treat, the one pleasure in my lonely life, began. The iron fetters of endurance fell away, and together we discoursed of all that could help and soothe or strengthen and inspire each the other. This night Mabel evidently had something special to say. "Doris," at last she began, "I have something unusual to tell you. You know how seldom Mr. A—— mentions your name or appears to take any interest concerning you. Imagine, then, my surprise when, nothing leading up to it, he began of his own motion at breakfast this morning to speak of you. He entertained us with a long description of a most vivid dream he had of you last night. He said it seemed to begin as soon as he fell asleep; that you came to him and told him how tired and discouraged you were, how every effort failed and all went wrong through no fault of yours. He said you were most earnest and impressive." In short, Mabel then proceeded to give a full synopsis of my whole current of thought, repeated by him, just as I had thought it out the preceding night during the time that he was dreaming of it. To say that I was thrilled with surprise expresses but faintly the consternation I felt. Mabel noticed the emotion her narrative had produced, and shared it when she heard mine. Some floating belief I may have cherished that "the electric chain which darkly binds" might sometimes vibrate between two minds that were in unison; but Mr. A——! In our waking moments there was positive repulsion; I would have gone to death sooner than ask sympathy from one who had always so cruelly misjudged me, and no thought of him had intruded into that rushing torrent of thought. Yet how could such a dream, with such perfect consonance of time and of theme, have been mere coincidence? What is the mysterious law that governs spirit-force? This was the question we discussed till very late, understanding it no better from Mabel's suggestion, "Doris, your two spirits met last night on the same magnetic current, freed from the repulsions of the flesh." I laughed at this, telling her that my spirit seemed particularly busy right there in its own house, not wandering away on magnetic currents. Mabel has passed beyond my reach; though I call, she answers not. Shall we ever while we live on this earth see the gate of that silent land, even though from afar? Barred against us though it might be while we are clothed in flesh, one satisfactory vision of it would change for some of us the whole of life.

Doris Huntingdon.

WITHOUT having spent even "Two Days in Utah," one cannot help hearing many things in favor of the Mormons from disinterested, dispassionate, perfectly competent observers who have devoted abundant time to the study of them and their ways. Now that we are favored with the edifying spectacle of a crusade by monogamic Christians against polygamic Christians, these things come up in mind and prompt one to say a word or two on the side of the golden rule and fair play.

Why should there be any "Mormon question" at all? If six women in Utah are so foolish as to be content with one-sixth of a husband apiece, is that any business of mine or of Senator Edmunds's? It may be claimed that the bachelors of the country are interested in prohibiting a corner in wives; but surely even they will hardly fear competition in the marriage-market with a small fragment of a Mormon elder. Polygamy, in the nature of things, can hardly be a serious menace to the world while the men in it are approximately as numerous as the women. The charge that the rather absurd "saints" of the Salt Lake

basin are likely to overthrow our own deeply-rooted marriage institutions, or even perceptibly affect them, is tantamount to admitting that monogamy cannot hold its own against polygamy when people are left free to choose between them. It ascribes to American women a latent preference for that obsolete system which we find less shocking in the days of Abraham than in those of delegate Cannon. Of course there is no real basis for this insulting supposition. But without it what conceivable justification can there be for trying to stamp out an institution which is deeply rooted in the religious convictions of a large body of people?

Some distinctions we must be careful to draw, for words are very misleading. The crime of bigamy now and then occurring in our States has very little in common with the polygamy of Utah. No punishment can be too severe for the man who persuades a woman to marry him on the supposition that he is single and the marriage valid, when as a matter of fact he well knows that the form is only a mockery, and that she will be left on the morrow, through no fault of her own, neither maid, wife, nor widow. Such an act ought to be regarded as worse than murder. But the women of Utah marry with a full knowledge of the circumstances in which they place themselves; they have among their own people the honorable status of wives, no matter how many may have preceded them in that relation; their children are regarded as legitimate. They are not social victims turned adrift in an order of things which provides no decent place for them, but a respectable and recognized element in the fabric of society. Clearly, here are two radically different problems; and yet almost everybody seems to treat them as identical.

Again, ever since the promulgation of the first Republican platform we have been accustomed to hear of the "twin evils" slavery and polygamy. Why *twin*? The slave had no choice in the matter. If he attempted to leave his servitude he was chased, brought back, and punished, or sold to some region remote from all whom he knew. But no one pretends that this is the case with the Mormon women. They have married to be sure of a good home, or for love of a man, or—poor creatures!—for the good of their souls. There is no fugitive-plural-wife law to compel their return if they choose to leave. At this very moment they are resisting compulsory divorce by every means in their power, and imploring justice—which they do not get—from the rest of the women of the country.

After all the lessons of history, is it not pitiable that we are still in the era of persecution, of wholly needless suffering for conscience' sake? Certainly it is deplorable that women should suppose marriage essential to salvation, and should therefore be willing to stick by the dozen like burrs on a man's coat-sleeve; but the way to deal with such delusions is to teach people better. No eye sees more clearly for being battered by the fist of power, nor is a woman ordinarily convinced or improved by the ill-treatment of those whom she loves. To get up anti-Mormon laws is a cheap means of courting a still cheaper popularity; but in the long run they will be found as silly and ineffective as they are wicked. There is neither foresight nor Christianity in them.

Mormonism spreads because it is under the ban; and it will spread in spite of all enactments until that ban is removed. Persecution quickly made Christianity formidable to paganism, and Protestantism to Catholicism; and if you only give the Mormons enough of it, you may contrive to build up a temporary importance for them within the next quarter of a century. They do not show less devotion to their cause than other zealots. Several of their missionaries have been murdered or whipped in the mountain-region of the South, but they

multiply under the treatment, and more martyrs will be forthcoming as fast as needed; and the excessive penalties inflicted on their leading men in Utah will have in a less degree the same effect. There is no religious extravagance for which men will not go to prison or to death—and be glad of the chance—if you only rouse the passionate, self-deceiving recalcitrancy of human nature. There is absolutely nothing so dear to a man as having his own way in his own affairs; and when he has convinced himself that it is also an essential part of his religion, no sensible and upright person will try to drive him. How much more emphatically true is this of women, in a matter involving, as they think, both home and salvation!

W. H. Babcock.

W. H. B. has, in his criticism of my suggestions in the March number, so fully illustrated by the citation of examples the point I sought to make, that I can perhaps do no better than to leave the discussion where it is. It is only because he has quite misconstrued my main purpose, and because others may also be misled, that I feel like saying a word in reply. I had no idea that any one would take me quite so seriously, or, rather, so literally. The point to which I wished to call attention seemed to me, and still seems, important enough to justify a much stronger statement than mine. Yet it is with some chagrin that I am compelled now to say that the proposal for a society to look after needy poets was mere chaff. One does not like to explain the point of a joke. While my purpose was perfectly serious, the formal statement was intended to be somewhat extravagant. My remark that the work of such a society could not lie in the direction of a charity should have prevented any misconception on this point. My aim was to show that a poet cannot live by the exercise of his poetic faculty, and to point out the difficulties under which one not born to wealth must labor, if he would do conscientious and artistic work. If I assumed a somewhat tragic air, it was only by way of emphasis. Quite in keeping with this idea was my avowal that I belonged to the class whose case I was presenting. In a deliberate statement I should not think of claiming that I possessed more than a poetical temperament, which, although a prerequisite to a poet, does not make one. It seemed to me at the time a particularly fine point in the argument; but, with the interpretation placed upon it, I have now some regret at being betrayed into making it.

But it is certainly a strange reading that could have led W. H. B. to suppose that I was sighing for some golden age of poetry in the past, or that I thought it a good thing for a poet to be attached to the establishment of some rich man. Surely I said nothing of the sort, and nothing could be further from my thought. It is quite likely that the poet to-day fares as well as he ever did, but it is as Swinburne represents it to be in the "empty, narrow house,"—"For the best man there fares sadly."

I confess I cannot see how the fact of "Milton toiling in the harness of responsible office and patriotically writing himself blind over controversial prose works" was an advantage to him or to the world from a poetic point of view. I see how his salary as a public officer might keep the breath of life in his body so as to allow him to turn the fag ends of his time to poetic uses. But in what way does W. H. B. determine that a part is better than the whole? I can seem to see how Homer, not a beggar, but, according to the usage of his day, the recipient of a cheerful and willing bounty, small indeed, but enough for his simple wants, was thus enabled to devote his whole life to the production of poetry the most perfect in type the world has ever seen, which, after thirty centuries or so, re-

mains as fresh as in the childhood of the world when it was written, and which will endure at least up to the time when the New-Zealander shall moralize over the ruins of London Bridge. That the poet should come in contact with his fellow-men I grant; but how? Shall it be in the way of driving a sharp bargain? Is it knowledge of human nature that he wants? Let him then be a railroad conductor, a police justice, or a peripatetic medicine-vender.

I do not purpose entering upon an *ad hominem* argument. W. H. B. is not under discussion, nor any of the poets he mentions. Perhaps no one of them is or was sad, gloomy, morose, and forever in the Slough of Despond. I venture to think, nevertheless, that none of them who have written what I mean by "meritorious verse" have not in some moods been unhappy men who concealed deep tortures in their hearts. It does not follow that even these were moods of absolute despair. There is certainly a pleasure in poetic pains, and that was profound philosophy which sighed, "Oh, last regret! regret can die."

Many persons possess some of the things that go to the making of the poet, and something more. They may write acceptable verse and be good businessmen besides. They may be far more useful in the community than one who is only a poet; but what is to be done with the latter? And the poet must possess one thing, without which all other endowment is vain. He must be able to take on the moods of all men and things and reproduce them in his verse. He must be *impressionable*, as I said; and this, if not absolutely fatal, is an immense disadvantage, in business. Yet he must work up to his full strength and capacity in the counting-room, the court-room, the office, shop, or field,—for that is what the men do with whom he must compete,—and then give the scant remnants of time, sorely needed for rest and recreation, to poetic composition. Why should not the same rule apply to the musician, the sculptor, and the painter? We do not get the powerful work, says W. H. B. Possibly, under such circumstances, what he means by meritorious verse could be written; but he would be a very cruel taskmaster who should exact more. But, he says, "any very powerful and original poem would quickly meet with a degree of fame and success which ought to be reward enough," even if it does not sell. It would be reward enough, perhaps, to be conscious that you had written such a poem, and the formality of publication might be dispensed with.

The list of poets mentioned, whom he says H. E. W. would recognize as such, curiously illustrates the only point I had in mind. Not one of them, probably, has earned any considerable part of his living by the practice of his art. None of them, with perhaps a single exception, have been in straitened circumstances. If asked which of the Americans named most completely fulfilled the idea of a poet, he would undoubtedly say Longfellow, although in native endowments and capacity for vigorous and powerful work it is questionable whether he should not be placed last. But he wrought as an artist, and devoted his life to poetry, which in his case met with such fame and success as may have been reward enough. His work brought him considerable money too, no doubt; which was not so important, for, though not rich, few men of his generation were ever so little troubled with regard to money-matters.

Finally, let me say, I am not in the least sensitive to W. H. B.'s criticism, and do not reply with the slightest disrespect to the views he is pleased to state. While I speak with the earnestness born of some experience, it is not in the spirit of personal complaint. I see no help for the condition of things, but I cannot take satisfaction in it. I have never been driven to drink or other excesses. I expect to

continue in what W. H. B. considers the better course, and, as for sixteen years in the past, to find in other labor a frugal support for myself and family. I have lost no money on published volumes of verse, and, unless my views change radically, I shall not waste any money in placing before the world something for which it has expressed no desire. I am aware that no publisher would undertake a volume of my verse without a guaranty against loss, nor would he if it were a great deal better than it is. I don't blame him. I would not waste my money if I were in his place. But if W. H. B. wants me to enjoy all this, I must retort upon him his own phrase, "Thou dost not reason wisely concerning this."

H. E. W.

WHEN I was a very small child I dreamed that a train of cars left the railroad-track and came rushing down through a pasture not far from our house. I was much delighted with the occurrence at the time; but I mention it now merely to state that I take no credit to myself for the fact that in after-years a railroad was actually constructed through this very pasture. My modesty in this case is, however, the less a virtue because, as I have never made another attempt in the way of a prophetic dream, it would be idle to seek any reputation in that quarter.

I was a quiet, unsociable, imaginative child; and now that I have come out of those dim, cloudy places, in which I spent the first years of my life, into the light of the common world, I am not always able to distinguish the dreams of that period, which were very vivid, from its waking thoughts, often very fantastical. I remember distinctly, for instance, how the words "If I should die before I wake," in my little prayer, used to call that possibility clearly to my mind, and how, when I awoke later in the evening or the next morning, I frequently glanced around quickly to find out whether I was in heaven or in my own room. I thought I should like very much to know what heaven was like: still, I was always relieved when I found I was safe at home. But when I try to untangle other memories they become hopelessly snarled.

As to a peculiar horror of my childhood, I am quite unable to tell how much of it was in my dreaming and how much in my waking thoughts. It began in this way. There were several chambers in our attic, but in one place a large opening showed the dark, unfinished part which was used for packing away boxes and trunks in, and which we always spoke of as "under the roof." It was a mysterious region to me, because it was so dark, I suppose, and because nobody ever penetrated to the end of it. But one day it occurred to me that there was a similar space over my grandmother's room in the L of the house, and that to this there was no entrance. Henceforth my imagination dwelt with a strange fascination on this unknowable land. I remember one dream I had about it. I thought that at last I was in the unearthly place, and that I found there people, grown small in their narrow confines, who spent their time in an endless, stately dance. They were dressed in the finery of the last century, and I decided at once that they were persons who had lived in the world then and who had been shut up in this prison ever since. "And they have lost their souls," I said in my dream. And the more I watched the little people the sadder I grew, for they danced and they bowed and they smiled, and it seemed as if they would always dance and bow and smile, and yet they had no souls! This is the only one of my fancies about "under the roof" which I can definitely remember. They all leaked out through the shingles years ago, and left nothing but dark

boards and bricks behind them. But even now I can call back something of the awe with which the thought of the place once inspired me.

One of the great joys of my youth was floating in the air. It was my most frequent dream, and I was always glad when I found myself, in the midst of some unfamiliar adventure, taking up this customary and delicious mode of travelling. It is very easy, I assure you. It is only necessary, holding the arms at the sides, to raise one's self a little from the ground, and then, still keeping the body in a perpendicular position, to give a slight impulse in the direction in which one wishes to go. I often floated when I was asleep; and these dreamy flights were so pleasant to think about, and so seemingly real, that I could not withstand the idea that the feat had been performed in very truth, and that I could do it again,—if I once got started right! So late as when I was in long division I made futile and embarrassing attempts to float when I was awake. I knew it was ridiculous; and yet after one has done a thing so often one ceases to reason as to its impossibility.

I had thought that my floating days were over; but only last night I found myself explaining to a friend, and illustrating as I went on, "It is very easy: all you have to do," etc.

But usually nowadays I spend my time on the solid earth. I never visit a certain enchanted palace, through whose rooms, each more wonderful than the last, I used to wander. And not long ago I dreamed a piece of logical reasoning of which I have been proud ever since. I thought that my little sister, who was sleeping with me, was feverish and ill, and that I got up to get her some water. There seemed to be a small hand-lamp in the room, which I made many unsuccessful attempts to light. Match after match refused to burn, and when the matches behaved well the wick would not kindle. After much tribulation of this sort, I made a resolution. I shook the lamp in my hand, and found that there was enough kerosene in it; I held it up before the window, and could see, dimly, that a large part of the wick was in the oil. Then I said, "There is no reason why I cannot light this lamp. I shall try once more; and if the match burns, yet does not light the wick, I shall know that I am dreaming, and I will not get anything for my sister, because she is not really sick." I made my experiment. The first match flamed. I held it to the wick, but that remained dead. With a sigh of relief, I cast away all thoughts of the feverish child, who was still tossing and moaning, got into bed, and was about going to sleep, when I noticed that I yet had the lamp in my hand. I was trying to conquer my drowsiness sufficiently to get up and put it on the bureau, when I happened to think that there was no need of this, because, as it was all a dream, I might as well throw the lamp across the room. I did so, and went to sleep with a clear conscience.

Yet, reason as we will, the mystery is always around us. One day last summer I pulled off a plain ring I wear, and was prodigiously frightened as soon as I had done it. I could not think why, until I remembered that the night before I had had a dream, in which I found myself in Fairy-land, or some such place, where there was a beautiful, mystical ceremony, at the end of which I had promised never to take off this ring. I had not thought of the dream that morning or during the day, but when the ring fell from my finger I felt as if I had broken a spell.

J. E. P.



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