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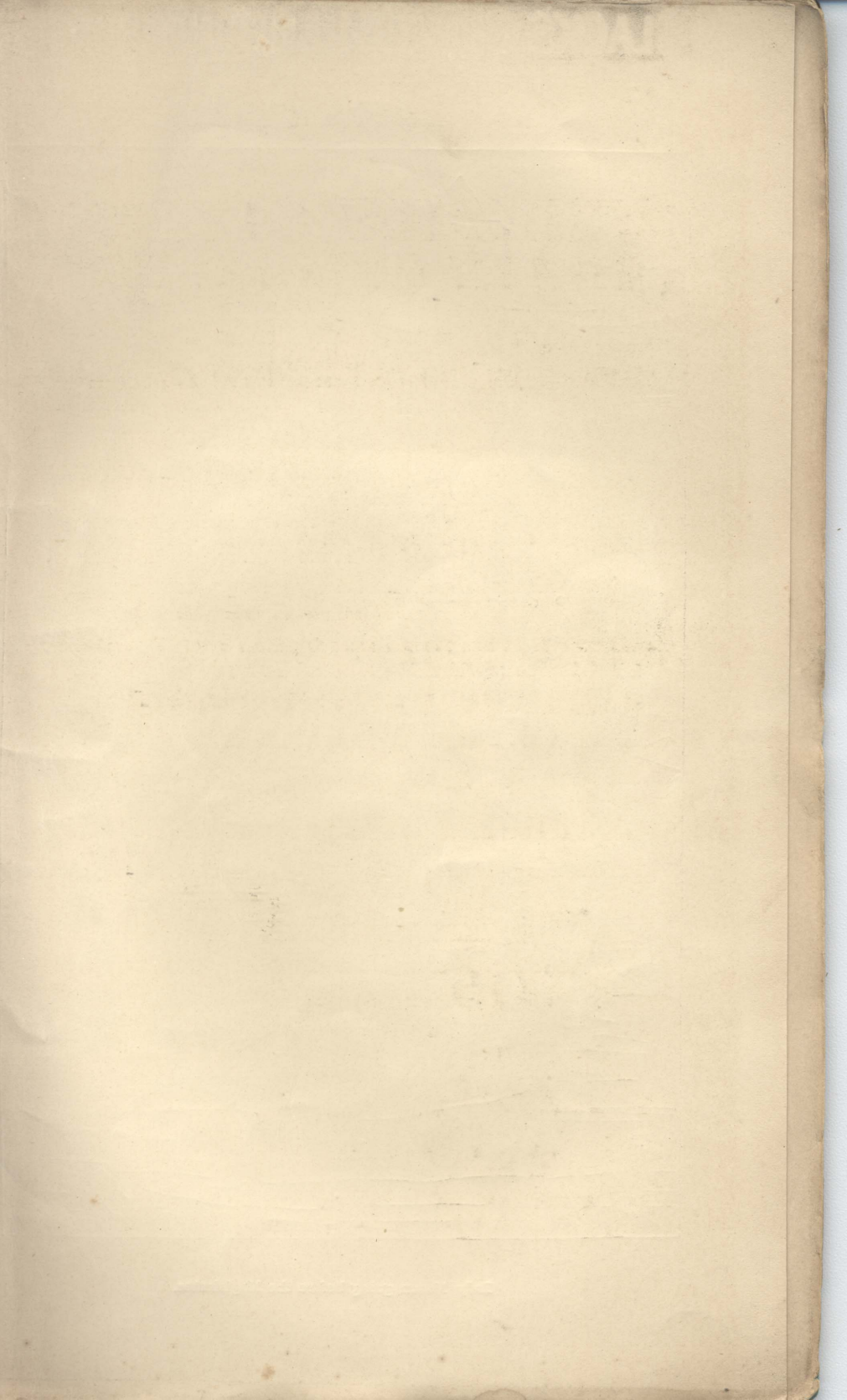
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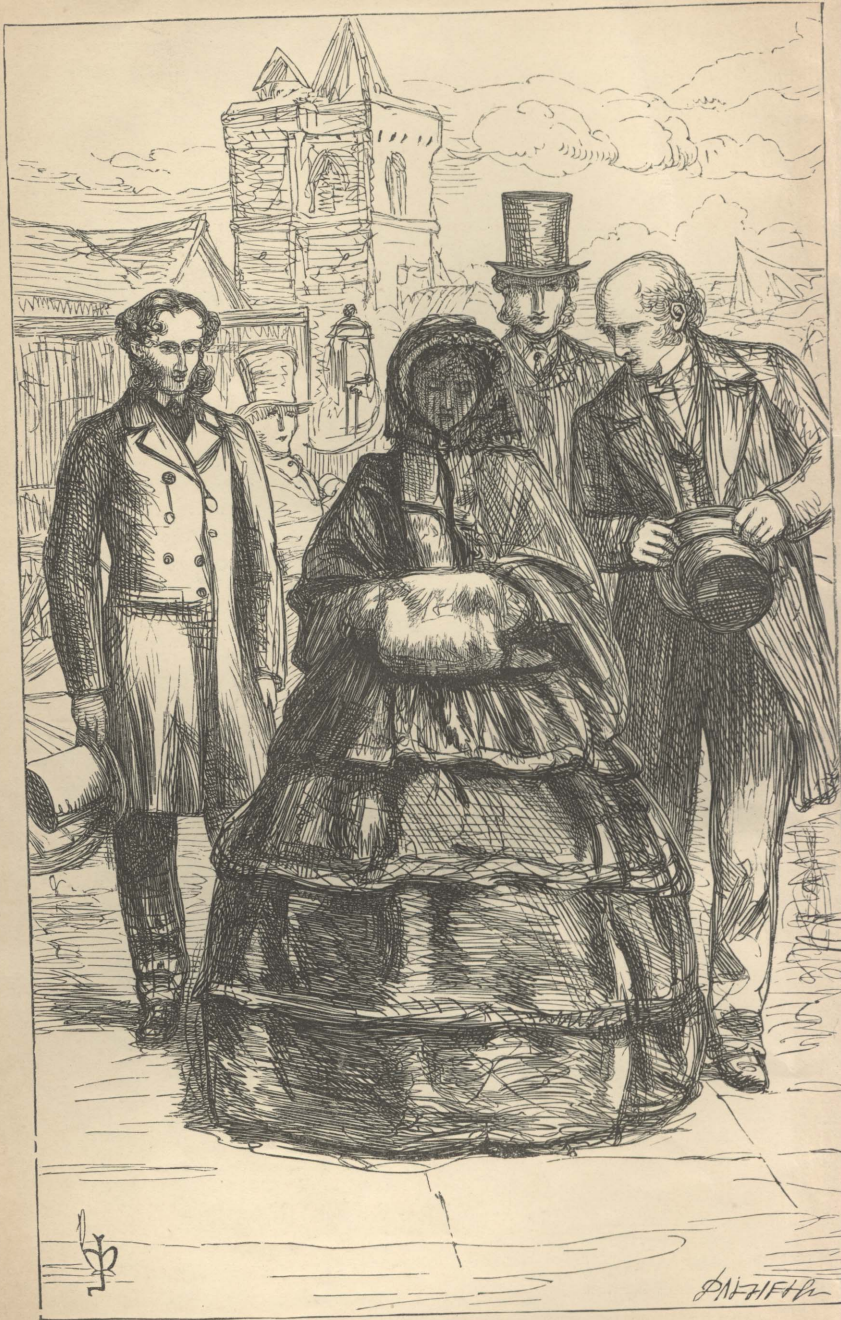
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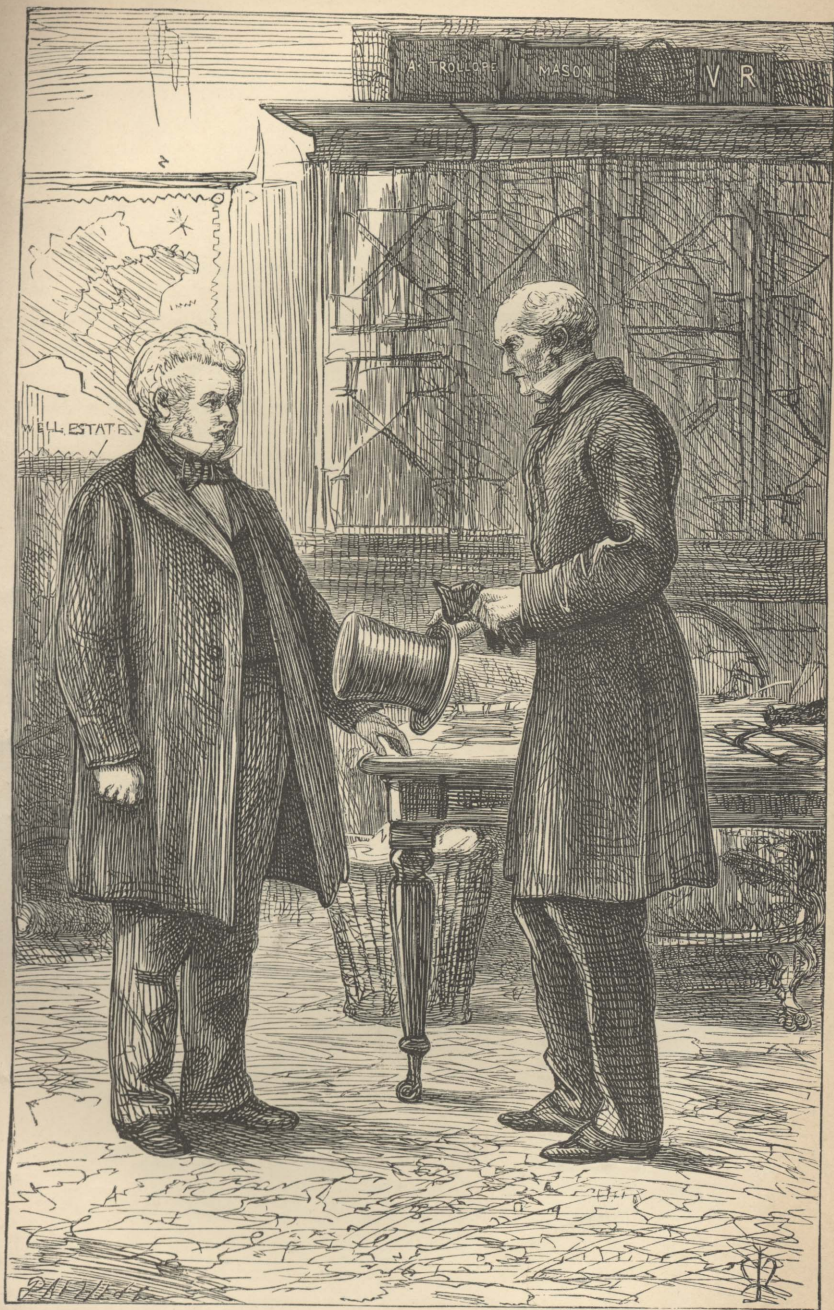


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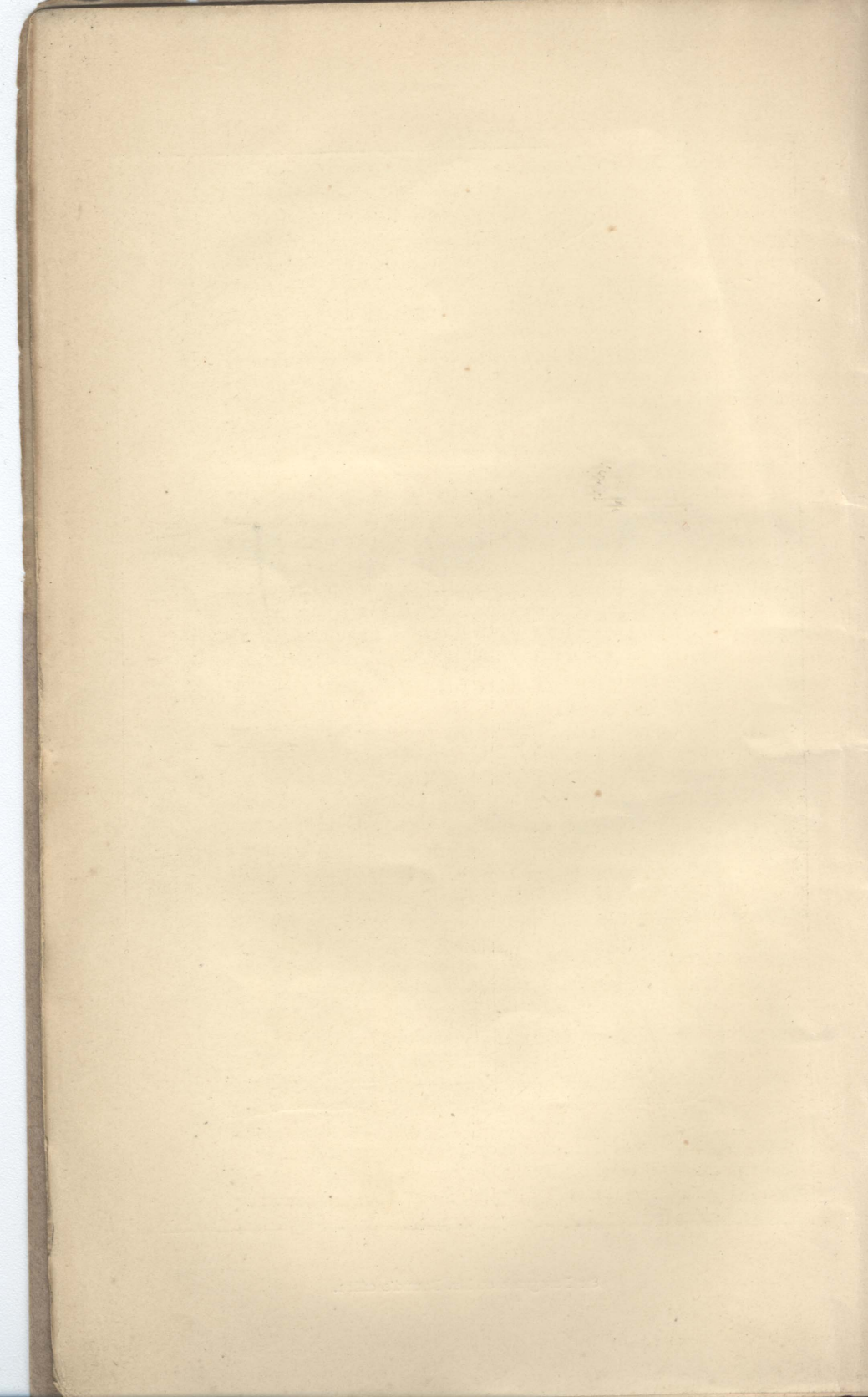




Lady Mason going before the Magistrates.



Sir Peregrine at Mr. Round's office.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### LADY MASON RETURNS HOME.

LADY MASON remained at The Cleeve for something more than a week after that day on which she made her confession, during which time she was fully committed to take her trial at the next assizes at Alston on an indictment for perjury. This was done in a manner that astonished even herself by the absence of all publicity or outward scandal. The matter was arranged between Mr. Matthew Round and Mr. Solomon Aram, and was so arranged in accordance with Mr. Furnival's wishes. Mr. Furnival wrote to say that at such a time he would call at The Cleeve with a post-chaise. This he did, and took Lady Mason with him before two magistrates for the county who were sitting at Doddington, a village five miles distant from Sir Peregrine's house. Here by agreement they were met by Lucius Mason who was to act as one of the bailsmen for his mother's appearance at the trial. Sir Peregrine was the other, but it was brought about by amicable management between the lawyers that his appearance before the magistrates was not required. There were also there the two attorneys, Bridget Bolster the witness, one Torrington from London who brought with him the absolute deed executed on that 14th of July with reference to the then dissolved partnership of Mason and Martock; and there was Mr. Samuel Dockwrath. I must not forget to say that there was also a reporter for the press, provided by the special care of the latter-named gentleman.

The arrival in the village of four different vehicles, and the sight of such gentlemen as Mr. Furnival, Mr. Round, and Mr. Aram, of course aroused some excitement there; but this feeling was kept down as much as possible, and Lady Mason was very quickly allowed to return to the carriage. Mr. Dockwrath made one or two attempts to get up a scene, and to rouse a feeling of public anger against the lady who was to be tried; but the magistrates put him down. They also seemed to be fully impressed with a sense of Lady Mason's innocence in the teeth of the evidence which was given against her. This was the general feeling on the minds of all people,—except of those who knew most about it. There was an idea that affairs had so been managed by Mr. Joseph Mason and Mr. Dockwrath that another trial was necessary, but that the un-

fortunate victim of Mr. Mason's cupidity and Mr. Dockwrath's malice would be washed white as snow when the day of that trial came. The chief performers on the present occasion were Round and Aram, and a stranger to such proceedings would have said that they were acting in concert. Mr. Round pressed for the indictment, and brought forward in a very short way the evidence of Bolster and Torrington. Mr. Aram said that his client was advised to reserve her defence, and was prepared with bail to any amount. Mr. Round advised the magistrates that reasonable bail should be taken, and then the matter was settled. Mr. Furnival sat on a chair close to the elder of those two gentlemen, and whispered a word to him now and then. Lady Mason was provided with an arm-chair close to Mr. Furnival's right hand, and close to her right hand stood her son. Her face was covered by a deep veil, and she was not called upon during the whole proceeding to utter one audible word. A single question was put to her by the presiding magistrate before the committal was signed, and it was understood that some answer was made to it; but this answer reached the ears of those in the room by means of Mr. Furnival's voice.

It was observed by most of those there that during the whole of the sitting Lady Mason held her son's hand; but it was observed also that though Lucius permitted this he did not seem to return the pressure. He stood there during the entire proceedings without motion or speech, looking very stern. He signed the bail-bond, but even that he did without saying a word. Mr. Dockwrath demanded that Lady Mason should be kept in custody till the bond should also have been signed by Sir Peregrine; but upon this Mr. Round remarked that he believed Mr. Joseph Mason had intrusted to him the conduct of the case, and the elder magistrate desired Mr. Dockwrath to abstain from further interference. 'All right,' said he to a person standing close to him. 'But I'll be too many for them yet, as you will see when she is brought before a judge and jury.' And then Lady Mason stood committed to take her trial at the next Alston assizes.

When Lucius had come forward to hand her from the post-chaise in which she arrived Lady Mason had kissed him, but this was all the intercourse that then passed between the mother and son. Mr. Furnival, however, informed him that his mother would return to Orley Farm on the next day but one.

'She thinks it better that she should be at home from this time to the day of the trial,' said Mr. Furnival; 'and on the whole Sir Peregrine is inclined to agree with her.'

'I have thought so all through,' said Lucius.

'But you are to understand that there is no disagreement between your mother and the family at The Cleeve. The idea of the marriage has, as I think very properly, been laid aside.'



‘Of course it was proper that it should be laid aside.’

‘Yes; but I must beg you to understand that there has been no quarrel. Indeed you will, I have no doubt, perceive that, as Mrs. Orme has assured me that she will see your mother constantly till the time comes.’

‘She is very kind,’ said Lucius. But it was evident from the tone of his voice that he would have preferred that all the Ormes should have remained away. In his mind this time of suffering to his mother and to him was a period of trial and probation,—a period, if not of actual disgrace, yet of disgrace before the world; and he thought that it would have best become his mother to have abstained from all friendship out of her own family, and even from all expressed sympathy, till she had vindicated her own purity and innocence. And as he thought of this he declared to himself that he would have sacrificed everything to her comfort and assistance if she would only have permitted it. He would have loved her, and been tender to her, receiving on his own shoulders all those blows which now fell so hardly upon hers. Every word should have been a word of kindness; every look should have been soft and full of affection. He would have treated her not only with all the love which a son could show to a mother, but with all the respect and sympathy which a gentleman could feel for a lady in distress. But then, in order that such a state of things as this should have existed, it would have been necessary that she should have trusted him. She should have leaned upon him, and,—though he did not exactly say so in talking over the matter with himself, still he thought it,—on him and on him only. But she had declined to lean upon him at all. She had gone away to strangers,—she, who should hardly have spoken to a stranger during these sad months! She would not have his care; and under those circumstances he could only stand aloof, hold up his head, and look sternly. As for her innocence, that was a matter of course. He knew that she was innocent. He wanted no one to tell him that his own mother was not a thief, a forger, a castaway among the world’s worst wretches. He thanked no one for such an assurance. Every honest man must sympathize with a woman so injured. It would be a necessity of his manhood and of his honesty! But he would have valued most a sympathy which would have abstained from all expression till after that trial should be over. It should have been for him to act and for him to speak during this terrible period. But his mother who was a free agent had willed it otherwise.

And there had been one other scene. Mr. Furnival had introduced Lady Mason to Mr. Solomon Aram, having explained to her that it would be indispensable that Mr. Aram should see her, probably once or twice before the trial came on.

‘But cannot it be done through you?’ said Lady Mason. ‘Though of course I should not expect that you can so sacrifice your valuable time.’

‘Pray believe me that that is not the consideration,’ said Mr. Furnival. ‘We have engaged the services of Mr. Aram because he is supposed to understand difficulties of this sort better than any other man in the profession, and his chance of rescuing you from this trouble will be much better if you can bring yourself to have confidence in him—full confidence.’ And Mr. Furnival looked into her face as he spoke with an expression of countenance that was very eloquent. ‘You must not suppose that I shall not do all in my power. In my proper capacity I shall be acting for you with all the energy that I can use; but the case has now assumed an aspect which requires that it should be in an attorney’s hands.’ And then Mr. Furnival introduced her to Mr. Solomon Aram.

Mr. Solomon Aram was not, in outward appearance, such a man as Lady Mason, Sir Peregrine Orme, or others quite ignorant in such matters would have expected. He was not a dirty old Jew with a hooked nose and an imperfect pronunciation of English consonants. Mr. Chaffanbrass, the barrister, bore more resemblance to a Jew of that ancient type. Mr. Solomon Aram was a good-looking man about forty, perhaps rather over-dressed, but bearing about him no other sign of vulgarity. Nor at first sight would it probably have been discerned that he was of the Hebrew persuasion. He had black hair and a well-formed face; but his eyes were closer than is common with most of us, and his nose seemed to be somewhat swollen about the bridge. When one knew that he was a Jew one saw that he was a Jew; but in the absence of such previous knowledge he might have been taken for as good a Christian as any other attorney.

Mr. Aram raised his hat and bowed as Mr. Furnival performed the ceremony of introduction. This was done while she was still seated in the carriage, and as Lucius was waiting at the door to hand her down into the house where the magistrates were sitting. ‘I am delighted to have the honour of making your acquaintance,’ said Mr. Aram.

Lady Mason essayed to mutter some word; but no word was audible, nor was any necessary. ‘I have no doubt,’ continued the attorney, ‘that we shall pull through this little difficulty without any ultimate damage whatsoever. In the mean time it is of course disagreeable to a lady of your distinction.’ And then he made another bow. ‘We are peculiarly happy in having such a tower of strength as Mr. Furnival,’ and then he bowed to the barrister. And my old friend Mr. Chaffanbrass is another tower of strength. Eh, Mr. Furnival?’ And so the introduction was over.

Lady Mason had quite understood Mr. Furnival;—had under-

stood both his words and his face, when he told her how indispensable it was that she should have full confidence in this attorney. He had meant that she should tell him all. She must bring herself to confess everything to this absolute stranger. And then—for the first time—she felt sure that Mr. Furnival had guessed her secret. He also knew it, but it would not suit him that any one should know that he knew it! Alas, alas! would it not be better that all the world should know it and that there might be an end? Had not her doom been told to her? Even if the paraphernalia of justice,—the judge, and the jury, and the lawyers, could be induced to declare her innocent before all men, must she not confess her guilt to him,—to that one,—for whose verdict alone she cared? If he knew her to be guilty what matter who might think her innocent? And she had been told that all must be declared to him. That property was his,—but his only through her guilt; and that property must be restored to its owner! So much Sir Peregrine Orme had declared to be indispensable,—Sir Peregrine Orme, who in other matters concerning this case was now dark enough in his judgment. On that point, however, there need be no darkness. Though the heaven should fall on her devoted head, that tardy justice must be done!

When this piece of business had been completed at Doddinghurst, Lady Mason returned to The Cleeve, whither Mr. Furnival accompanied her. He had offered his seat in the post-chaise to Lucius, but the young man had declared that he was unwilling to go to The Cleeve, and consequently there was no opportunity for conversation between Lady Mason and her son. On her arrival she went at once to her room, and there she continued to live as she had done for the last few days till the morning of her departure came. To Mrs. Orme she told all that had occurred, as Mr. Furnival did also to Sir Peregrine. On that occasion Sir Peregrine said very little to the barrister, merely bowing his head courteously as each different point was explained, in intimation of his having heard and understood what was said to him. Mr. Furnival could not but see that his manner was entirely altered. There was no enthusiasm now, no violence of invective against that wretch at Groby Park, no positive assurance that his guest's innocence must come out at the trial bright as the day! He showed no inclination to desert Lady Mason's cause, and indeed insisted on hearing the particulars of all that had been done; but he said very little, and those few words adverted to the terrible sadness of the subject. He seemed too to be older than he had been, and less firm in his gait. That terrible sadness had already told greatly upon him. Those about him had observed that he had not once crossed the threshold of his hall door since the morning on which Lady Mason had taken to her own room.

‘He has altered his mind,’ said the lawyer to himself as he was driven back to the Hamworth station. ‘He also now believes her to be guilty.’ As to his own belief, Mr. Furnival held no argument within his own breast, but we may say that he was no longer perplexed by much doubt upon the matter.

And then the morning came for Lady Mason’s departure. Sir Peregrine had not seen her since she had left him in the library after her confession, although, as may be remembered, he had undertaken to do so. But he had not then known how Mrs. Orme might act when she heard the story. As matters had turned out Mrs. Orme had taken upon herself the care of their guest, and all intercourse between Lady Mason and Sir Peregrine had passed through his daughter-in-law. But now, on this morning, he declared that he would go to her upstairs in Mrs. Orme’s room, and himself hand her down through the hall into the carriage. Against this Lady Mason had expostulated, but in vain.

‘It will be better so, dear,’ Mrs. Orme had said. ‘It will teach the servants and people to think that he still respects and esteems you.’

‘But he does not!’ said she, speaking almost sharply. ‘How would it be possible? Ah, me—respect and esteem are gone from me for ever!’

‘No, not for ever,’ replied Mrs. Orme. ‘You have much to bear, but no evil lasts for ever.’

‘Will not sin last for ever;—sin such as mine?’

‘Not if you repent;—repent and make such restitution as is possible. Lady Mason, say that you have repented. Tell me that you have asked Him to pardon you!’ And then, as had been so often the case during these last days, Lady Mason sat silent, with hard, fixed eyes, with her hands clasped, and her lips compressed. Never as yet had Mrs. Orme induced her to say that she had asked for pardon at the cost of telling her son that the property which he called his own had been procured for him by his mother’s fraud. That punishment, and that only, was too heavy for her neck to bear. Her acquittal in the law court would be as nothing to her if it must be followed by an avowal of her guilt to her own son!

Sir Peregrine did come upstairs and handed her down through the hall as he had proposed. When he came into the room she did not look at him, but stood leaning against the table, with her eyes fixed upon the ground.

‘I hope you find yourself better,’ he said, as he put out his hand to her. She did not even attempt to make a reply, but allowed him just to touch her fingers.

‘Perhaps I had better not come down,’ said Mrs. Orme. ‘It will be easier to say good-bye here.’

‘Good-bye,’ said Lady Mason, and her voice sounded in Sir Peregrine’s ears like a voice from the dead.

‘God bless you and preserve you,’ said Mrs. Orme, ‘and restore you to your son. God will bless you if you will ask Him. No; you shall not go without a kiss.’ And she put out her arms that Lady Mason might come to her.

The poor broken wretch stood for a moment as though trying to determine what she would do; and then, almost with a shriek, she threw herself on to the bosom of the other woman, and burst into a flood of tears. She had intended to abstain from that embrace; she had resolved that she would do so, declaring to herself that she was not fit to be held against that pure heart; but the tenderness of the offer had overcome her, and now she pressed her friend convulsively in her arms, as though there might yet be comfort for her as long as she could remain close to one who was so good to her.

‘I shall come and see you very often,’ said Mrs. Orme,—‘almost daily.’

‘No, no, no,’ exclaimed the other, hardly knowing the meaning of her own words.

‘But I shall. My father is waiting now, dear, and you had better go.’

Sir Peregrine had turned to the window, where he stood shading his eyes with his hand. When he heard his daughter-in-law’s last words he again came forward, and offered Lady Mason his arm. ‘Edith is right,’ he said. ‘You had better go now. When you are at home you will be more composed.’ And then he led her forth, and down the stairs, and across the hall, and with infinite courtesy put her into the carriage. It was a moment dreadful to Lady Mason; but to Sir Peregrine, also, it was not pleasant. The servants were standing round, officiously offering their aid,—those very servants who had been told about ten days since that this lady was to become their master’s wife and their mistress. They had been told so with no injunction as to secrecy, and the tidings had gone quickly through the whole country. Now it was known that the match was broken off, that the lady had been living upstairs secluded for the last week, and that she was to leave the house this morning, having been committed during the last day or two to stand her trial at the assizes for some terrible offence! He succeeded in his task. He handed her into the carriage, and then walked back through his own servants to the library without betraying to them the depth of his sorrow; but he knew that the last task had been too heavy for him. When it was done he shut himself up and sat there for hours without moving. He also declared to himself that the world was too hard for him, and that it would be well for him that he should die. Never till now had he come into close contact with crime, and now the criminal was one whom as a woman he

had learned to love, and whom he had proposed to the world as his wife! The criminal was one who had declared her crime in order to protect him, and whom therefore he was still bound in honour to protect!

When Lady Mason arrived at Orley Farm her son was waiting at the door to receive her. It should have been said that during the last two days,—that is ever since the committal,—Mrs. Orme had urged upon her very strongly that it would be well for her to tell everything to her son. ‘What! now, at once?’ the poor woman had said. ‘Yes, dear, at once,’ Mrs. Orme had answered. ‘He will forgive you, for I know he is good. He will forgive you, and then the worst of your sorrow will be over.’ But towards doing this Lady Mason had made no progress even in her mind. In the violence of her own resolution she had brought herself to tell her guilt to Sir Peregrine. That effort had nearly destroyed her, and now she knew that she could not frame the words which should declare the truth to Lucius. What; tell him that tale; whereas her whole life had been spent in an effort to conceal it from him? No. She knew that she could not do it. But the idea of doing so made her tremble at the prospect of meeting him.

‘I am very glad you have come home, mother,’ said Lucius, as he received her. ‘Believe me that for the present this will be the best place for both of us,’ and then he led her into the house.

‘Dear Lucius, it would always be best for me to be with you, if it were possible.’

He did not accuse her of hypocrisy in saying this; but he could not but think that had she really thought and felt as she now spoke nothing need have prevented her remaining with him. Had not his house ever been open to her? Had he not been willing to make her defence the first object of his life? Had he not longed to prove himself a good son? But she had gone from him directly that troubles came upon her, and now she said that she would fain be with him always—if it were possible! Where had been the impediment? In what way had it been not possible? He thought of this with bitterness as he followed her into the house, but he said not a word of it. He had resolved that he would be a pattern son, and even now he would not rebuke her.

She had lived in this house for some four-and-twenty years, but it seemed to her in no way like her home. Was it not the property of her enemy, Joseph Mason? and did she not know that it must go back into that enemy’s hands? How then could it be to her like a home? The room in which her bed was laid was that very room in which her sin had been committed? There in the silent hours of the night, while the old man lay near his death in the adjoining chamber, had she with infinite care and much slow preparation done that deed, to undo which, were it possible, she would now give

away her existence,—ay, her very body and soul. And yet for years she had slept in that room, if not happily at least tranquilly. It was matter of wonder to her now, as she looked back at her past life, that her guilt had sat so lightly on her shoulders. The black unwelcome guest, the spectre of coming evil, had ever been present to her; but she had seen it indistinctly, and now and then the power had been hers to close her eyes. Never again could she close them. Nearer to her, and still nearer, the spectre came; and now it sat upon her pillow, and put its claw upon her plate; it pressed upon her bosom with its fiendish strength, telling her that all was over for her in this world;—ay, and telling her worse even than that. Her return to her old home brought with it but little comfort.

And yet she was forced to make an effort at seeming glad that she had come there,—a terrible effort! He, her son, was not gay or disposed to receive from her a show of happiness; but he did think that she should compose herself and be tranquil, and that she should resume the ordinary duties of her life in her ordinarily quiet way. In all this she was obliged to conform herself to his wishes,—or to attempt so to conform herself, though her heart should break in the struggle. If he did but know it all, then he would suffer her to be quiet,—suffer her to lie motionless in her misery! Once or twice she almost said to herself that she would make the effort; but then she thought of him and his suffering, of his pride, of the respect which he claimed from all the world as the honest son of an honest mother, of his stubborn will and stiff neck, which would not bend, but would break beneath the blow. She had done all for him,—to raise him in the world; and now she could not bring herself to undo the work that had cost her so dearly!

That evening she went through the ceremony of dinner with him, and he was punctilious in waiting upon her as though bread and meat could comfort her or wine could warm her heart. There was no warmth for her in all the vintages of the south, no comfort though gods should bring to her their banquets. She was heavy laden,—laden to the breaking of her back, and did not know where to lay her burden down.

‘Mother,’ he said to her that night, lifting his head from the books over which he had been poring, ‘There must be a few words between us about this affair. They might as well be spoken now.’

‘Yes, Lucius; of course—if you desire it.’

‘There can be no doubt now that this trial will take place.’

‘No doubt;’ she said. ‘There can be no doubt.’

‘Is it your wish that I should take any part in it?’

She remained silent for some moments before she answered him, thinking,—striving to think, how best she might do him pleasure.

‘What part?’ she said at last.

‘A man’s part; and a son’s part. Shall I see these lawyers and learn from them what they are at? Have I your leave to tell them that you want no subterfuge, no legal quibbles,—that you stand firmly on your own clear innocence, and that you defy your enemies to sully it? Mother, those who have sent you to such men as that cunning attorney have sent you wrong,—have counselled you wrong.’

‘It cannot be changed now, Lucius.’

‘It can be changed, if you will tell me to change it.’

And then again she paused. Ah, think of her anguish as she sought for words to answer him! ‘No, Lucius,’ she said, ‘it cannot be changed now.’

‘So be it, mother; I will not ask again,’ and then he moodily returned to his books, while she returned to her thoughts. Ah, think of her misery!

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### TELLING ALL THAT HAPPENED BENEATH THE LAMP-POST.

WHEN Felix Graham left Noningsby and made his way up to London, he came at least to one resolution which he intended to be an abiding one. That idea of a marriage with a moulded wife should at any rate be abandoned. Whether it might be his great destiny to be the husband of Madeline Staveley, or whether he might fail in achieving this purpose, he declared to himself that it would be impossible that he should ever now become the husband of Mary Snow. And the ease with which his conscience settled itself on this matter as soon as he had received from the judge that gleam of hope astonished even himself. He immediately declared to himself that he could not marry Mary Snow without perjury! How could he stand with her before the altar and swear that he would love her, seeing that he did not love her at all,—seeing that he altogether loved some one else? He acknowledged that he had made an ass of himself in this affair of Mary Snow. This moulding of a wife had failed with him, he said, as it always must fail with every man. But he would not carry his folly further. He would go to Mary Snow, tell her the truth, and then bear whatever injury her angry father might be able to inflict on him. Independently of that angry father he would of course do for Mary Snow all that his circumstances would admit.

Perhaps the gentleman of a poetic turn of mind whom Mary had consented to meet beneath the lamp-post might assist him in his views; but whether this might be so or not, he would not throw



that meeting ungenerously in her teeth. He would not have allowed that offence to turn him from his proposed marriage had there been nothing else to turn him, and therefore he would not plead that offence as the excuse for his broken troth. That the breaking of that troth would not deeply wound poor Mary's heart—so much he did permit himself to believe on the evidence of that lamp-post.

He had written to Mrs. Thomas telling her when he would be at Peckham, but in his letter he had not said a word as to those terrible tidings which she had communicated to him. He had written also to Mary, assuring her that he accused her of no injury against him, and almost promising her forgiveness; but this letter Mary had not shown to Mrs. Thomas. In these days Mary's anger against Mrs. Thomas was very strong. That Mrs. Thomas should have used all her vigilance to detect such goings on as those of the lamp-post was only natural. What woman in Mrs. Thomas's position,—or in any other position,—would not have done so? Mary Snow knew that had she herself been the duenna she would have left no corner of a box unturned but she would have found those letters. And having found them she would have used her power over the poor girl. She knew that. But she would not have betrayed her to the man. Truth between woman and woman should have prevented that. Were not the stockings which she had darned for Mrs. Thomas legion in number? Had she not consented to eat the veriest scraps of food in order that those three brats might be fed into sleekness to satisfy their mother's eyes? Had she not reported well of Mrs. Thomas to her lord, though that house of Peckham was nauseous to her? Had she ever told to Mr. Graham any one of those little tricks which were carried on to allure him into a belief that things at Peckham were prosperous? Had she ever exposed the borrowing of those teacups when he came, and the fact that those knobs of white sugar were kept expressly on his behoof? No; she would have scorned to betray any woman; and that woman whom she had not betrayed should have shown the same feeling towards her. Therefore there was enmity at Peckham, and the stockings of those infants lay un-mended in the basket.

'Mary, I have done it all for the best,' said Mrs. Thomas, driven to defend herself by the obdurate silence of her pupil.

'No, Mrs. Thomas, you didn't. You did it for the worst,' said Mary. And then there was again silence between them.

It was on the morning following this that Felix Graham was driven to the door in a cab. He still carried his arm in a sling, and was obliged to be somewhat slow in his movements, but otherwise he was again well. His accident however was so far a god-send to both the women at Peckham that it gave them a subject on

which they were called upon to speak, before that other subject was introduced. Mary was very tender in her inquiries,—but tender in a bashful retiring way. To look at her one would have said that she was afraid to touch the wounded man lest he should be again broken.

‘Oh, I’m all right,’ said he, trying to assume a look of good-humour. ‘I sha’n’t go hunting again in a hurry; you may be sure of that.’

‘We have all great reason to be thankful that Providence interposed to save you,’ said Mrs. Thomas, in her most serious tone. Had Providence interposed to break Mrs. Thomas’s collar-bone, or at least to do her some serious outward injury, what a comfort it would be, thought Mary Snow.

‘Have you seen your father lately?’ asked Graham.

‘Not since I wrote to you about the money that he—borrowed,’ said Mary.

‘I told her that she should not have given it to him,’ said Mrs. Thomas.

‘She was quite right,’ said Graham. ‘Who could refuse assistance to a father in distress?’ Whereupon Mary put her handkerchief up to her eyes and began to cry.

‘That’s true of course,’ said Mrs. Thomas; ‘but it would never do that he should be a drain in that way. He should feel that if he had any feeling.’

‘So he has,’ said Mary. ‘And you are driven close enough yourself sometimes, Mrs. Thomas. There’s days when you’d like to borrow nineteen and sixpence if anybody would lend it you.’

‘Very well,’ said Mrs. Thomas, crossing her hands over each other in her lap and assuming a look of resignation; ‘I suppose all this will be changed now. I have endeavoured to do my duty, and very hard it has been.’

Felix felt that the sooner he rushed into the middle of the subject which brought him there, the better it would be for all parties. That the two ladies were not very happy together was evident, and then he made a little comparison between Madeline and Mary. Was it really the case that for the last three years he had contemplated making that poor child his wife? Would it not be better for him to tie a millstone round his neck and cast himself into the sea? That was now his thought respecting Mary Snow.

‘Mrs. Thomas,’ he said, ‘I should like to speak to Mary alone for a few minutes if you could allow it.’

‘Oh certainly; by all means. It will be quite proper.’ And gathering up a bundle of the unfortunate stockings she took herself out of the room.

Mary, as soon as Graham had spoken, became almost pale, and sat perfectly still with her eyes fixed on her betrothed husband.

While Mrs. Thomas was there she was prepared for war and her spirit was hot within her, but all that heat fled in a moment when she found herself alone with the man to whom it belonged to speak her doom. He had almost said that he would forgive her, but yet she had a feeling that that had been done which could not altogether be forgiven. If he asked her whether she loved the hero of the lamp-post what would she say? Had he asked her whether she loved him, Felix Graham, she would have sworn that she did, and have thought that she was swearing truly; but in answer to that other question if it were asked, she felt that her answer must be false. She had no idea of giving up Felix of her own accord, if he were still willing to take her. She did not even wish that he would not take her. It had been the lesson of her life that she was to be his wife, and, by becoming so, provide for herself and for her wretched father. Nevertheless a dream of something different from that had come across her young heart, and the dream had been so pleasant! How painfully, but yet with what a rapture, had her heart palpitated as she stood for those ten wicked minutes beneath the lamp-post!

‘Mary,’ said Felix, as soon as they were alone,—and as he spoke he came up to her and took her hand, ‘I trust that I may never be the cause to you of any unhappiness;—that I may never be the means of making you sad.’

‘Oh, Mr. Graham, I am sure that you never will. It is I that have been bad to you.’

‘No, Mary, I do not think you have been bad at all. I should have been sorry that that had happened, and that I should not have known it.’

‘I suppose she was right to tell, only—’ In truth Mary did not at all understand what might be the nature of Graham’s thoughts and feelings on such a subject. She had a strong woman’s idea that the man whom she ought to love would not be gratified by her meeting another man at a private assignation, especially when that other man had written to her a love-letter; but she did not at all know how far such a sin might be regarded as pardonable according to the rules of the world recognized on such subjects. At first, when the letters were discovered and the copies of them sent off to Noningsby, she thought that all was over. According to her ideas, as existing at that moment, the crime was conceived to be one admitting of no pardon; and in the hours spent under that conviction all her consolation came from the feeling that there was still one who regarded her as an angel of light. But then she had received Graham’s letter, and as she began to understand that pardon was possible, that other consolation waxed feeble and dim. If Felix Graham chose to take her, of course she was there for him to take. It never for a moment occurred to her that she could

rebel against such taking, even though she did shine as an angel of light to one dear pair of eyes.

‘I suppose she was right to tell you, only——’

‘Do not think, Mary, that I am going to scold you, or even that I am angry with you.’

‘Oh, but I know you must be angry.’

‘Indeed I am not. If I pledge myself to tell you the truth in everything, will you be equally frank with me?’

‘Yes,’ said Mary. But it was much easier for Felix to tell the truth than for Mary to be frank. I believe that schoolmasters often tell fibs to schoolboys, although it would be so easy for them to tell the truth. But how difficult it is for the schoolboy always to tell the truth to his master! Mary Snow was now as a schoolboy before her tutor, and it may almost be said that the telling of the truth was to her impossible. But of course she made the promise. Who ever said that she would not tell the truth when so asked?

‘Have you ever thought, Mary, that you and I would not make each other happy if we were married?’

‘No; I have never thought that,’ said Mary innocently. She meant to say exactly that which she thought Graham would wish her to say, but she was slow in following his lead.

‘It has never occurred to you that though we might love each other very warmly as friends—and so I am sure we always shall—yet we might not suit each other in all respects as man and wife?’

‘I mean to do the very best I can; that is, if—if—if you are not too much offended with me now.’

‘But, Mary, it should not be a question of doing the best you can. Between man and wife there should be no need of such effort. It should be a labour of love.’

‘So it will;—and I’m sure I’ll labour as hard as I can.’

Felix began to perceive that the line he had taken would not answer the required purpose, and that he must be somewhat more abrupt with her,—perhaps a little less delicate, in coming to the desired point. ‘Mary,’ he said, ‘what is the name of that gentleman whom—whom you met out of doors you know?’

‘Albert Fitzallen,’ said Mary, hesitating very much as she pronounced the name, but nevertheless rather proud of the sound.

‘And you are—fond of him?’ asked Graham.

Poor girl! What was she to say? ‘No; I’m not very fond of him.’

‘Are you not? Then why did you consent to that secret meeting?’

‘Oh, Mr. Graham—I didn’t mean it; indeed I didn’t. And I didn’t tell him to write to me, nor yet to come looking after me. Upon my word I didn’t. But then I thought when he sent me that letter that he didn’t know;—about you I mean; and so I thought

I'd better tell him; and that's why I went. Indeed that was the reason.'

'Mrs. Thomas could have told him that.'

'But I don't like Mrs. Thomas, and I wouldn't for worlds that she should have had anything to do with it. I think Mrs. Thomas has behaved very bad to me; so I do. And you don't half know her;—that you don't.'

'I will ask you one more question, Mary, and before answering it I want to make you believe that my only object in asking it is to ascertain how I may make you happy. When you did meet Mr.—this gentleman—'

'Albert Fitzallen.'

'When you did meet Mr. Fitzallen, did you tell him nothing else except that you were engaged to me? Did you say nothing to him as to your feelings towards himself?'

'I told him it was very wrong of him to write me that letter.'

'And what more did you tell him?'

'Oh, Mr. Graham, I won't see him any more; indeed I won't. I give you my most solemn promise. Indeed I won't. And I will never write a line to him,—or look at him. And if he sends anything I'll send it to you. Indeed I will. There was never anything of the kind before; upon my word there wasn't. I did let him take my hand, but I didn't know how to help it when I was there. And he kissed me—only once. There; I've told it all now, as though you were looking at me. And I aint a bad girl, whatever she may say of me. Indeed I aint.' And then poor Mary Snow burst out into an agony of tears.

Felix began to perceive that he had been too hard upon her. He had wished that the first overtures of a separation should come from her, and in wishing this he had been unreasonable. He walked for a while about the room, and then going up to her he stood close by her and took her hand. 'Mary,' he said, 'I'm sure you're not a bad girl.'

'No;' she said, 'no, I aint;' still sobbing convulsively. 'I didn't mean anything wrong, and I couldn't help it.'

'I am sure you did not, and nobody has said you did.'

'Yes, they have. She has said so. She said that I was a bad girl. She told me so, up to my face.'

'She was very wrong if she said so.'

'She did then, and I couldn't bear it.'

'I have not said so, and I don't think so. Indeed in all this matter I believe that I have been more to blame than you.'

'No;—I know I was wrong. I know I shouldn't have gone to see him.'

'I won't even say as much as that, Mary. What you should have done;—only the task would have been too hard for any young girl'

—was to have told me openly that you—liked this young gentleman.’

‘But I don’t want ever to see him again.’

‘Look here, Mary,’ he said. But now he had dropped her hand and taken a chair opposite to her. He had begun to find that the task which he had proposed to himself was not so easy even for him. ‘Look here, Mary. I take it that you do like this young gentleman. Don’t answer me till I have finished what I am going to say. I suppose you do like him,—and if so it would be very wicked in you to marry me.’

‘Oh, Mr. Graham—’

‘Wait a moment, Mary. But there is nothing wicked in your liking him.’ It may be presumed that Mr. Graham would hold such an opinion as this, seeing that he had allowed himself the same latitude of liking. ‘It was perhaps only natural that you should learn to do so. You have been taught to regard me rather as a master than as a lover.’

‘Oh, Mr. Graham, I’m sure I’ve loved you. I have indeed. And I will. I won’t even think of Al—’

‘But I want you to think of him,—that is if he be worth thinking of.’

‘He’s a very good young man, and always lives with his mother.’

‘It shall be my business to find out that. And now Mary, tell me truly. If he be a good young man, and if he loves you well enough to marry you, would you not be happier as his wife than you would as mine?’

There! The question that he wished to ask her had got itself asked at last. But if the asking had been difficult, how much more difficult must have been the answer! He had been thinking over all this for the last fortnight, and had hardly known how to come to a resolution. Now he put the matter before her without a moment’s notice and expected an instant decision. ‘Speak the truth, Mary;—what you think about it;—without minding what anybody may say of you.’ But Mary could not say anything, so she again burst into tears.

‘Surely you know the state of your own heart, Mary?’

‘I don’t know,’ she answered.

‘My only object is to secure your happiness;—the happiness of both of us, that is.’

‘I’ll do anything you please,’ said Mary.

‘Well then, I’ll tell you what I think. I fear that a marriage between us would not make either of us contented with our lives. I’m too old and too grave for you.’ Yet Mary Snow was not younger than Madeline Staveley. ‘You have been told to love me; and you think that you do love me because you wish to do what

you think to be your duty. But I believe that people can never really love each other merely because they are told to do so. Of course I cannot say what sort of a young man Mr. Fitzallen may be; but if I find that he is fit to take care of you, and that he has means to support you,—with such little help as I can give,—I shall be very happy to promote such an arrangement.'

Everybody will of course say that Felix Graham was base in not telling her that all this arose, not from her love affair with Albert Fitzallen, but from his own love affair with Madeline Staveley. But I am inclined to think that everybody will be wrong. Had he told her openly that he did not care for her, but did care for some one else, he would have left her no alternative. As it was, he did not mean that she should have any alternative. But he probably consulted her feelings best in allowing her to think that she had a choice. And then, though he owed much to her, he owed nothing to her father; and had he openly declared his intention of breaking off the match because he had attached himself to some one else, he would have put himself terribly into her father's power. He was willing to submit to such pecuniary burden in the matter as his conscience told him that he ought to bear; but Mr. Snow's ideas on the subject of recompense might be extravagant; and therefore,—as regarded Snow the father,—he thought that he might make some slight and delicate use of the meeting under the lamp-post. In doing so he would be very careful to guard Mary from her father's anger. Indeed Mary would be surrendered, out of his own care, not to that of her father, but to the fostering love of the gentleman in the medical line of life.

'I'll do anything that you please,' said Mary, upon whose mind and heart all these changes had come with a suddenness which prevented her from thinking,—much less speaking her thoughts.

'Perhaps you had better mention it to Mrs. Thomas.'

'Oh, Mr. Graham, I'd rather not talk to her. I don't love her a bit.'

'Well, I will not press it on you if you do not wish it. And have I your permission to speak to Mr. Fitzallen;—and if he approves to speak to his mother?'

'I'll do anything you think best, Mr. Graham,' said poor Mary. She was poor Mary; for though she had consented to meet a lover beneath the lamp-post, she had not been without ambition, and had looked forward to the glory of being wife to such a man as Felix Graham. She did not however, for one moment, entertain any idea of resistance to his will.

And then Felix left her, having of course an interview with Mrs. Thomas before he quitted the house. To her, however, he said nothing. 'When anything is settled, Mrs. Thomas, I will let you know.' The words were so lacking in confidence that Mrs.

Thomas when she heard them knew that the verdict had gone against her.

Felix for many months had been accustomed to take leave of Mary Snow with a kiss. But on this day he omitted to kiss her, and then Mary knew that it was all over with her ambition. But love still remained to her. 'There is some one else who will be proud to kiss me,' she said to herself, as she stood alone in the room when he closed the door behind him.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### WHAT TOOK PLACE IN HARLEY STREET.

'Tom, I've come back again,' said Mrs. Furnival, as soon as the dining-room door was closed behind her back.

'I'm very glad to see you; I am indeed,' said he, getting up and putting out his hand to her. 'But I really never knew why you went away.'

'Oh yes, you know. I'm sure you know why I went. But——'  
'I'll be shot if I did then.'

'I went away because I did not like Lady Mason going to your chambers.'

'Psha!'

'Yes; I know I was wrong, Tom. That is I was wrong—about that.'

'Of course you were, Kitty.'

'Well; don't I say I was? And I've come back again, and I beg your pardon;—that is about the lady.'

'Very well. Then there's an end of it.'

'But Tom; you know I've been provoked. Haven't I now? How often have you been home to dinner since you have been member of Parliament for that place?'

'I shall be more at home now, Kitty.'

'Shall you indeed? Then I'll not say another word to vex you. What on earth can I want, Tom, except just that you should sit at home with me sometimes on evenings, as you used to do always in the old days? And as for Martha Biggs——'

'Is she come back too?'

'Oh dear no. She's in Red Lion Square. And I'm sure, Tom, I never had her here except when you wouldn't dine at home. I wonder whether you know how lonely it is to sit down to dinner all by oneself!'

'Why; I do it every other day of my life. And I never think of sending for Martha Biggs; I promise you that.'



‘She isn’t very nice, I know,’ said Mrs. Furnival—‘that is, for gentlemen.’

‘I should say not,’ said Mr. Furnival. Then the reconciliation had been effected, and Mrs. Furnival went upstairs to prepare for dinner, knowing that her husband would be present, and that Martha Biggs would not. And just as she was taking her accustomed place at the head of the table, almost ashamed to look up lest she should catch Spooner’s eye who was standing behind his master, Rachel went off in a cab to Orange Street, commissioned to pay what might be due for the lodgings, to bring back her mistress’s boxes, and to convey the necessary tidings to Miss Biggs.

‘Well I never!’ said Martha, as she listened to Rachel’s story.

‘And they’re quite loving I can assure you,’ said Rachel.

‘It’ll never last,’ said Miss Biggs triumphantly—‘never. It’s been done too sudden to last.’

‘So I’ll say good-night if you please, Miss Biggs,’ said Rachel, who was in a hurry to get back to Harley Street.

‘I think she might have come here before she went there; especially as it wasn’t anything out of her way. She couldn’t have gone shorter than Bloomsbury Square, and Russell Square, and over Tottenham Court Road.’

‘Missus didn’t think of that, I dare say.’

‘She used to know the way about these parts well enough. But give her my love, Rachel.’ Then Martha Biggs was again alone, and she sighed deeply.

It was well that Mrs. Furnival came back so quickly to her own house, as it saved the scandal of any domestic quarrel before her daughter. On the following day Sophia returned, and as harmony was at that time reigning in Harley Street, there was no necessity that she should be presumed to know anything of what had occurred. That she did know,—know exactly what her mother had done, and why she had done it, and how she had come back, leaving Martha Biggs dumfounded by her return, is very probable, for Sophia Furnival was a clever girl, and one who professed to understand the inns and outs of her own family,—and perhaps of some other families. But she behaved very prettily to her papa and mamma on the occasion, never dropping a word which could lead either of them to suppose that she had interrogated Rachel, been confidential with the housemaid, conversed on the subject—even with Spooner, and made a morning call on Martha Biggs herself.

There arose not unnaturally some conversation between the mother and daughter as to Lady Mason;—not as to Lady Mason’s visits to Lincoln’s Inn and their impropriety as formerly presumed;—not at all as to that; but in respect to her present lamentable position and that engagement which had for a time existed between her and Sir Peregrine Orme. On this latter subject Mrs. Furnival

had of course heard nothing during her interview with Mrs. Orme at Noningsby. At that time Lady Mason had formed the sole subject of conversation; but in explaining to Mrs. Furnival that there certainly could be no unhallowed feeling between her husband and the lady, Mrs. Orme had not thought it necessary to allude to Sir Peregrine's past intentions. Mrs. Furnival, however, had heard the whole matter discussed in the railway carriage, had since interrogated her husband,—learning, however, not very much from him,—and now inquired into all the details from her daughter.

‘And she and Sir Peregrine were really to be married?’ Mrs. Furnival, as she asked the question, thought with confusion of her own unjust accusations against the poor woman. Under such circumstances as those Lady Mason must of course have been innocent as touching Mr. Furnival.

‘Yes,’ said Sophia. ‘There is no doubt whatsoever that they were engaged. Sir Peregrine told Lady Staveley so himself.’

‘And now it's all broken off again?’

‘Oh yes; it is all broken off now. I believe the fact to be this. Lord Alston, who lives near Noningsby, is a very old friend of Sir Peregrine's. When he heard of it he went to The Cleeve—I know that for certain;—and I think he talked Sir Peregrine out of it.’

‘But, my conscience, Sophia—after he had made her the offer!’

‘I fancy that Mrs. Orme arranged it all. Whether Lord Alston saw her or not I don't know. My belief is that Lady Mason behaved very well all through, though they say very bitter things against her at Noningsby.’

‘Poor thing!’ said Mrs. Furnival, the feelings of whose heart were quite changed as regarded Lady Mason.

‘I never knew a woman so badly treated.’ Sophia had her own reasons for wishing to make the best of Lady Mason's case. ‘And for myself I do not see why Sir Peregrine should not have married her if he pleased.’

‘He is rather old, my dear.’

‘People don't think so much about that now-a-days as they used. If he liked it, and she too, who had a right to say anything? My idea is that a man with any spirit would have turned Lord Alston out of the house. What business had he to interfere?’

‘But about the trial, Sophia?’

‘That will go on. There's no doubt about that. But they all say that it's the most unjust thing in the world, and that she must be proved innocent. I heard the judge say so myself.’

‘But why are they allowed to try her then?’

‘Oh, papa will tell you that.’

‘I never like to bother your papa about law business.’ Particu-

larly not, Mrs. Furnival, when he has a pretty woman for his client!

‘My wonder is that she should make herself so unhappy about it,’ continued Sophia. ‘It seems that she is quite broken down.’

‘But won’t she have to go and sit in the court,—with all the people staring at her?’

‘That won’t kill her,’ said Sophia, who felt that she herself would not perish under any such process. ‘If I was sure that I was in the right, I think that I could hold up my head against all that. But they say that she is crushed to the earth.’

‘Poor thing!’ said Lady Mason. ‘I wish that I could do anything for her.’ And in this way they talked the matter over very comfortably.

Two or three days after this Sophia Furnival was sitting alone in the drawing-room in Harley Street, when Spooner answered a double knock at the door, and Lucius Mason was shown upstairs. Mrs. Furnival had gone to make her peace in Red Lion Square, and there may perhaps be ground for supposing that Lucius had cause to expect that Miss Furnival might be seen at this hour without interruption. Be that as it may, she was found alone, and he was permitted to declare his purpose unmolested by father, mother, or family friends.

‘You remember how we parted at Noningsby,’ said he, when their first greetings were well over.

‘Oh, yes; I remember it very well. I do not easily forget words such as were spoken then.’

‘You said that you would never turn away from me.’

‘Nor will I;—that is with reference to the matter as to which we were speaking.’

‘Is our friendship then to be confined to one subject?’

‘By no means. Friendship cannot be so confined, Mr. Mason. Friendship between true friends must extend to all the affairs of life. What I meant to say was this—— But I am quite sure that you understand me without any explanation.’

He did understand her. She meant to say that she had promised to him her sympathy and friendship, but nothing more. But then he had asked for nothing more. The matter of doubt within his own heart was this. Should he or should he not ask for more; and if he resolved on answering this question in the affirmative, should he ask for it now? He had determined that morning that he would come to some fixed purpose on this matter before he reached Harley Street. As he crossed out of Oxford Street from the omnibus he had determined that the present was no time for love-making;—walking up Regent Street, he had told himself that if he had one faithful heart to bear him company he could bear his troubles better;—as he made his way along the north side of Cavendish

Square he pictured to himself what would be the wound to his pride if he were rejected;—and in passing the ten or twelve houses which intervened in Harley Street between the corner of the square and the abode of his mistress, he told himself that the question must be answered by circumstances.

‘Yes, I understand you,’ he said. ‘And believe me in this—I would not for worlds encroach on your kindness. I knew that when I pressed your hand that night, I pressed the hand of a friend,—and nothing more.’

‘Quite so,’ said Sophia. Sophia’s wit was usually ready enough, but at that moment she could not resolve with what words she might make the most appropriate reply to her—friend. What she did say was rather lame, but it was not dangerous.

‘Since that I have suffered a great deal,’ said Lucius. ‘Of course you know that my mother has been staying at The Cleeve?’

‘Oh yes. I believe she left it only a day or two since.’

‘And you heard perhaps of her—. I hardly know how to tell you, if you have not heard it.’

‘If you mean about Sir Peregrine, I have heard of that.’

‘Of course you have. All the world has heard of it.’ And Lucius Mason got up and walked about the room holding his hand to his brow. ‘All the world are talking about it. Miss Furnival, you have never known what it is to blush for a parent.’

Miss Furnival at the moment felt a sincere hope that Mr. Mason might never hear of Mrs. Furnival’s visit to the neighbourhood of Orange Street and of the causes which led to it, and by no means thought it necessary to ask for her friend’s sympathy on that subject. ‘No,’ said she, ‘I never have; nor need you do so for yours. Why should not Lady Mason have married Sir Peregrine Orme, if they both thought such a marriage fitting?’

‘What; at such a time as this; with these dreadful accusations running in her ears? Surely this was no time for marrying! And what has come of it? People now say that he has rejected her and sent her away.’

‘Oh no. They cannot say that.’

‘But they do. It is reported that Sir Peregrine has sent her away because he thinks her to be guilty. That I do not believe. No honest man, no gentleman, could think her guilty. But is it not dreadful that such things should be said?’

‘Will not the trial take place very shortly now? When that is once over all these troubles will be at an end.’

‘Miss Furnival, I sometimes think that my mother will hardly have strength to sustain the trial. She is so depressed that I almost fear her mind will give way; and the worst of it is that I am altogether unable to comfort her.’

‘Surely that at present should specially be your task

'I cannot do it. What should I say to her? I think that she is wrong in what she is doing; thoroughly, absolutely wrong. She has got about her a parcel of lawyers. I beg your pardon, Miss Furnival, but you know I do not mean such as your father.'

'But has not he advised it?'

'If so I cannot but think he is wrong. They are the very scum of the gaols; men who live by rescuing felons from the punishment they deserve. What can my mother require of such services as theirs? It is they that frighten her and make her dread all manner of evils. Why should a woman who knows herself to be good and just fear anything that the law can do to her?'

'I can easily understand that such a position as hers must be very dreadful. You must not be hard upon her, Mr. Mason, because she is not as strong as you might be.'

'Hard upon her! Ah, Miss Furnival, you do not know me. If she would only accept my love I would wait upon her as a mother does upon her infant. No labour would be too much for me; no care would be too close. But her desire is that this affair should never be mentioned between us. We are living now in the same house, and though I see that this is killing her yet I may not speak of it.' Then he got up from his chair, and as he walked about the room he took his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his eyes.

'I wish I could comfort you,' said she. And in saying so she spoke the truth. By nature she was not tender hearted, but now she did sympathize with him. By nature, too, she was not given to any deep affection, but she did feel some spark of love for Lucius Mason. 'I wish I could comfort you.' And as she spoke she also got up from her chair.

'And you can,' said he, suddenly stopping himself and coming close to her. 'You can comfort me,—in some degree. You and you only can do so. I know this is no time for declarations of love. Were it not that we are already so much to each other, I would not indulge myself at such a moment with such a wish. But I have no one whom I can love; and—it is very hard to bear.' And then he stood, waiting for her answer, as though he conceived that he had offered her his hand.

But Miss Furnival well knew that she had received no offer. 'If my warmest sympathy can be of service to you——'

'It is your love I want,' he said, taking her hand as he spoke. 'Your love, so that I may look on you as my wife;—your acceptance of my love, so that we may be all in all to each other. There is my hand. I stand before you now as sad a man as there is in all London. But there is my hand—will you take it and give me yours in pledge of your love.'

I should be unjust to Lucius Mason were I to omit to say that he played his part with a becoming air. Unhappiness and a melancholy

mood suited him perhaps better than the world's ordinary good-humour. He was a man who looked his best when under a cloud, and shone the brightest when everything about him was dark. And Sophia also was not unequal to the occasion. There was, however, this difference between them. Lucius was quite honest in all that he said and did upon the occasion; whereas Miss Furnival was only half honest. Perhaps she was not capable of a higher pitch of honesty than that.

'There is my hand,' said she; and they stood holding each other, palm to palm.

'And with it your heart?' said Lucius.

'And with it my heart,' answered Sophia. Nor as she spoke did she hesitate for a moment, or become embarrassed, or lose her command of feature. Had Augustus Staveley gone through the same ceremony at Noningsby in the same way I am inclined to think that she would have made the same answer. Had neither done so, she would not on that account have been unhappy. What a blessed woman would Lady Staveley have been had she known what was being done in Harley Street at this moment!

In some short rhapsody of love it may be presumed that Lucius indulged himself when he found that the affair which he had in hand had so far satisfactorily arranged itself. But he was in truth too wretched at heart for any true enjoyment of the delights of a favoured suitor. They were soon engaged again on that terrible subject, seated side by side indeed and somewhat close, but the tone of their voices and their very words were hardly different from what they might have been had no troth been plighted between them. His present plan was that Sophia should visit Orley Farm for a time, and take that place of dear and bosom friend which a woman circumstanced as was his mother must so urgently need. We, my readers, know well who was now that loving friend, and we know also which was best fitted for such a task, Sophia Furnival or Mrs. Orme. But we have had, I trust, better means of reading the characters of those ladies than had fallen to the lot of Lucius Mason, and should not be angry with him because his eyes were dark.

Sophia hesitated a moment before she answered this proposition,—not as though she were slack in her love, or begrudged her services to his mother; but it behoved her to look carefully at the circumstances before she would pledge herself to such an arrangement as that. If she went to Orley Farm on such a mission would it not be necessary to tell her father and mother,—nay, to tell all the world that she was engaged to Lucius Mason; and would it be wise to make such a communication at the present moment? Lucius said a word to her of going into court with his mother, and sitting with her, hand in hand, while that ordeal was passing by.

In the publicity of such sympathy there was something that suited the bearings of Miss Furnival's mind. The idea that Lady Mason was guilty had never entered her head, and therefore, on this she thought there could be no disgrace in such a proceeding. But nevertheless—might it not be prudent to wait till that trial were over?

‘If you are my wife you must be her daughter; and how can you better take a daughter's part?’ pleaded Lucius.

‘No, no; and I would do it with my whole heart. But, Lucius, does she know me well enough? It is of her that we must think. After all that you have told me, can we think that she would wish me to be there?’

It was his desire that his mother should learn to have such a wish, and this he explained to her. He himself could do but little at home because he could not yield his opinion on those matters of importance as to which he and his mother differed so vitally; but if she had a woman with her in the house,—such a woman as his own Sophia—then he thought her heart would be softened and part of her sorrow might be assuaged.

Sophia at last said that she would think about it. It would be improper, she said, to pledge herself to anything rashly. It might be that as her father was to defend Lady Mason, he might on that account object to his daughter being in the court. Lucius declared that this would be unreasonable,—unless indeed Mr. Furnival should object to his daughter's engagement. And might he not do so? Sophia thought it very probable that he might. It would make no difference in her, she said. Her engagement would be equally binding,—as permanently binding, let who would object to it. And as she made this declaration, there was of course a little love scene. But, for the present, it might be best that in this matter she should obey her father. And then she pointed out how fatal it might be to avert her father from the cause while the trial was still pending. Upon the whole she acted her part very prudently, and when Lucius left her she was pledged to nothing but that one simple fact of a marriage engagement.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### HOW SIR PEREGRINE DID BUSINESS WITH MR. ROUND.

In the mean time Sir Peregrine was sitting at home trying to determine in what way he should act under the present emergency, actuated as he was on one side by friendship and on the other by duty. For the first day or two—nay for the first week after the confession had been made to him,—he had been so astounded, had been so knocked to the earth, and had remained in such a state of bewilderment, that it had been impossible for him to form for himself any line of conduct. His only counsellor had been Mrs. Orme; and, though he could not analyze the matter, he felt that her woman's ideas of honour and honesty were in some way different from his ideas as a man. To her the sorrows and utter misery of Lady Mason seemed of greater weight than her guilt. At least such was the impression which her words left. Mrs. Orme's chief anxiety in the matter still was that Lady Mason should be acquitted;—as strongly so now as when they both believed her to be as guiltless as themselves. But Sir Peregrine could not look at it in this light. He did not say that he wished that she might be found guilty;—nor did he wish it. But he did announce his opinion to his daughter-in-law that the ends of justice would so be best promoted, and that if the matter were driven to a trial it would not be for the honour of the court that a false verdict should be given. Nor would he believe that such a false verdict could be obtained. An English judge and an English jury were to him the Palladium of discerning truth. In an English court of law such a matter could not remain dark;—nor ought it, let whatever misery betide. It was strange how that old man should have lived so near the world for seventy years, should have taken his place in Parliament and on the bench, should have rubbed his shoulders so constantly against those of his neighbours, and yet have retained so strong a reliance on the purity of the world in general. Here and there such a man may still be found, but the number is becoming very few.

As for the property, that must of necessity be abandoned. Lady Mason had signified her agreement to this; and therefore he was so far willing that she should be saved from further outward punishment, if that were still possible. His plan was this; and to his thinking it was the only plan that was feasible. Let the estate be



at once given up to the proper owner,—even now, before the day of trial should come; and then let them trust, not to Joseph Mason, but to Joseph Mason's advisers to abstain from prosecuting the offender. Even this course he knew to be surrounded by a thousand difficulties; but it might be possible. Of Mr. Round, old Mr. Round, he had heard a good report. He was a kind man, and even in this very matter had behaved in a way that had shamed his client. Might it not be possible that Mr. Round would engage to drop the prosecution if the immediate return of the property were secured? But to effect this must he not tell Mr. Round of the woman's guilt? And could he manage it himself? Must he not tell Mr. Furnival? And by so doing, would he not rob Lady Mason of her sole remaining tower of strength?—for if Mr. Furnival knew that she was guilty, Mr. Furnival must of course abandon her cause. And then Sir Peregrine did not know how to turn himself, as he thus argued the matter within his own bosom.

And then too his own disgrace sat very heavy on him. Whether or no the law might pronounce Lady Mason to have been guilty, all the world would know her guilt. When that property should be abandoned, and her wretched son turned out to earn his bread, it would be well understood that she had been guilty. And this was the woman, this midnight forger, whom he had taken to his bosom, and asked to be his wife! He had asked her, and she had consented, and then he had proclaimed the triumph of his love to all the world. When he stood there holding her to his breast he had been proud of her affection. When Lord Alston had come to him with his caution he had scorned his old friend and almost driven him from his door. When his grandson had spoken a word, not to him but to another, he had been full of wrath. He had let it be known widely that he would feel no shame in showing her to the world as Lady Orme. And now she was a forger, and a perjurer, and a thief;—a thief who for long years had lived on the proceeds of her dexterous theft. And yet was he not under a deep obligation to her—under the very deepest? Had she not saved him from a worse disgrace;—saved him at the cost of all that was left to herself? Was he not still bound to stand by her? And did he not still love her?

Poor Sir Peregrine! May we not say that it would have been well for him if the world and all its trouble could have now been ended so that he might have done with it?

Mrs. Orme was his only counsellor, and though she could not be brought to agree with him in all his feelings, yet she was of infinite comfort to him. Had she not shared with him this terrible secret his mind would have given way beneath the burden. On the day after Lady Mason's departure from The Cleeve, he sat for an hour in the library considering what he would do, and then he sent for

his daughter-in-law. If it behoved him to take any step to stay the trial, he must take it at once. The matter had been pressed on by each side, and now the days might be counted up to that day on which the judges would arrive in Alston. That trial would be very terrible to him in every way. He had promised, during those pleasant hours of his love and sympathy in which he had felt no doubt as to his friend's acquittal, that he would stand by her when she was arraigned. That was now impossible, and though he had not dared to mention it to Lady Mason, he knew that she would not expect that he should do so. But to Mrs. Orme he had spoken on the matter, and she had declared her purpose of taking the place which it would not now become him to fill! Sir Peregrine had started from his chair when she had so spoken. What! his daughter! She, the purest of the pure, to whom the very air of a court of law would be a contamination;—she, whose whiteness had never been sullied by contact with the world's dust; she set by the side of that terrible criminal, hand in hand with her, present to all the world as her bosom friend! There had been but few words between them on the matter; but Sir Peregrine had felt strongly that that might not be permitted. Far better than that it would be that he should humble his gray hairs and sit there to be gazed at by the crowd. But on all accounts how much was it to be desired that there should be no trial!

'Sit down, Edith,' he said, as with her soft step she came up to him. 'I find that the assizes will be here, in Alston, at the end of next month.'

'So soon as that, father?'

'Yes; look here: the judges will come in on the 25th of March.'

'Ah me—that is very sudden. But, father, will it not be best for her that it should be over?'

Mrs. Orme still thought, had always thought that the trial itself was unavoidable. Indeed she had thought and she did think that it afforded to Lady Mason the only possible means of escape. Her mind on the subject, if it could have been analyzed, would probably have been this. As to the property, that question must for the present stand in abeyance. It is quite right that it should go to its detestable owners,—that it should be made over to them at some day not very distant. But for the present, the trial for that old, long-distant crime was the subject for them to consider. Could it be wrong to wish for an acquittal for the sinner,—an acquittal before this world's bar, seeing that a true verdict had undoubtedly been given before another bar? Mrs. Orme trusted that no jury would convict her friend. Let Lady Mason go through that ordeal; and then, when the law had declared her innocent, let restitution be made.

'It will be very terrible to all if she be condemned,' said Sir Peregrine.

‘Very terrible! But Mr. Furnival——’

‘Edith, if it comes to that, she will be condemned. Mr. Furnival is a lawyer and will not say so; but from his countenance, when he speaks of her, I know that he expects it!’

‘Oh, father, do not say so.’

‘But if it is so——. My love, what is the purport of these courts of law if it be not to discover the truth, and make it plain to the light of day?’ Poor Sir Peregrine! His innocence in this respect was perhaps beautiful, but it was very simple. Mr. Aram, could he have been induced to speak out his mind plainly, would have expressed, probably, a different opinion.

‘But she escaped before,’ said Mrs. Orme, who was clearly at present on the same side with Mr. Aram.

‘Yes; she did;—by perjury, Edith. And now the penalty of that further crime awaits her. There was an old poet who said that the wicked man rarely escapes at last. I believe in my heart that he spoke the truth.’

‘Father, that old poet knew nothing of our faith.’

Sir Peregrine could not stop to explain, even if he knew how to do so, that the old poet spoke of punishment in this world, whereas the faith on which his daughter relied is efficacious for pardon beyond the grave. It would be much, ay, in one sense everything, if Lady Mason could be brought to repent of the sin she had committed; but no such repentance would stay the bitterness of Joseph Mason or of Samuel Dockwraith. If the property were at once restored, then repentance might commence. If the property were at once restored, then the trial might be stayed. It might be possible that Mr. Round might so act. He felt all this, but he could not argue on it. ‘I think, my dear,’ he said, ‘that I had better see Mr. Round.’

‘But you will not tell him?’ said Mrs. Orme, sharply.

‘No; I am not authorized to do that.’

‘But he will entice it from you! He is a lawyer, and he will wind anything out from a plain, chivalrous man of truth and honour.’

‘My dear, Mr. Round I believe is a good man.’

‘But if he asks you the question, what will you say?’

‘I will tell him to ask me no such question.’

‘Oh, father, be careful. For her sake be careful. How is it that you know the truth;—or that I know it? She told it here because in that way only could she save you from that marriage. Father, she has sacrificed herself for—for us.’

Sir Peregrine when this was said to him got up from his chair and walked away to the window. He was not angry with her that she so spoke to him. Nay; he acknowledged inwardly the truth of her words, and loved her for her constancy. But nevertheless

they were very bitter. How had it come to pass that he was thus indebted to so deep a criminal? What had he done for her but good?

'Do not go from me,' she said, following him. 'Do not think me unkind.'

'No, no, no,' he answered, striving almost ineffectually to repress a sob. 'You are not unkind.'

For two days after that not a word was spoken between them on the subject, and then he did go to Mr. Round. Not a word on the subject was spoken between Sir Peregrine and Mrs. Orme; but she was twice at Orley Farm during the time, and told Lady Mason of the steps which her father-in-law was taking. 'He won't betray me!' Lady Mason had said. Mrs. Orme had answered this with what best assurance she should give; but in her heart of hearts she feared that Sir Peregrine would betray the secret.

It was not a pleasant journey for Sir Peregrine. Indeed it may be said that no journeys could any longer be pleasant for him. He was old and worn and feeble; very much older and much more worn than he had been at the period spoken of in the commencement of this story, though but a few months had passed over his head since that time. For him now it would have been preferable to remain in the arm-chair by the fireside in his own library, receiving such comfort in his old age as might come to him from the affection of his daughter-in-law and grandson. But he thought that it behoved him to do this work; and therefore, old and feeble as he was, he set himself to his task. He reached the station in London, had himself driven to Bedford Row in a cab, and soon found himself in the presence of Mr. Round.

There was much ceremonial talk between them before Sir Peregrine could bring himself to declare the purport which had brought him there. Mr. Round of course protested that he was very sorry for all this affair. The case was not in his hands personally. He had hoped many years since that the matter was closed. His client, Mr. Mason of Groby Park, had insisted that it should be reopened; and now he, Mr. Round, really hardly knew what to say about it.

'But, Mr. Round, do you think it is quite impossible that the trial should even now be abandoned?' asked Sir Peregrine very carefully.

'Well, I fear it is. Mason thinks that the property is his, and is determined to make another struggle for it. I am imputing nothing wrong to the lady. I really am not in a position to have any opinion of my own—'

'No, no, no; I understand. Of course your firm is bound to do the best it can for its client. But, Mr. Round;—I know I am quite safe with you.'

'Well; safe in one way I hope you are. But, Sir Peregrine, you must of course remember that I am the attorney for the other side, —for the side to which you are opposed.'

‘But still;—all that you can want is your client’s interest.’

‘Of course we desire to serve his interest.’

‘And with that view, Mr. Round, is it not possible that we might come to some compromise?’

‘What;—by giving up part of the property?’

‘By giving up all the property,’ said Sir Peregrine, with considerable emphasis.

‘Whew—w—w.’ Mr. Round at the moment made no other answer than this, which terminated in a low whistle.

‘Better that, at once, than that she should die broken-hearted,’ said Sir Peregrine.

There was then silence between them for a minute or two, after which Mr. Round, turning himself round in his chair so as to face his visitor more fully, spoke as follows. ‘I told you just now, Sir Peregrine, that I was Mr. Mason’s attorney, and I must now tell you, that as regards this interview between you and me, I will not hold myself as being in that position. What you have said shall be as though it had not been said; and as I am not, myself, taking any part in the proceedings, this may with absolute strictness be the case. But—’

‘If I have said anything that I ought not to have said—’ began Sir Peregrine.

‘Allow me for one moment,’ continued Mr. Round. ‘The fault is mine, if there be a fault, as I should have explained to you that the matter could hardly be discussed with propriety between us.’

‘Mr. Round, I offer you my apology from the bottom of my heart.’

‘No, Sir Peregrine. You shall offer me no apology, nor will I accept any. I know no words strong enough to convey to you my esteem and respect for your character.’

‘Sir!’

‘But I will ask you to listen to me for a moment. If any compromise be contemplated, it should be arranged by the advice of Mr. Furnival and of Mr. Chaffanbrass, and the terms should be settled between Mr. Aram and my son. But I cannot myself say that I see any possibility of such a result. It is not however for me to advise. If on that matter you wish for advice, I think that you had better see Mr. Furnival.’

‘Ah!’ said Sir Peregrine, telling more and more of the story by every utterance he made.

‘And now it only remains for me to assure you once more that the words which have been spoken in this room shall be as though they had not been spoken.’ And then Mr. Round made it very clear that there was nothing more to be said between them on the subject of Lady Mason. Sir Peregrine repeated his apology, collected his hat and gloves, and with slow step made his way down

to his cab, while Mr. Round absolutely waited upon him till he saw him seated within the vehicle.

‘So Mat is right after all,’ said the old attorney to himself as he stood alone with his back to his own fire, thrusting his hands into his trousers-pockets. ‘So Mat is right after all!’ The meaning of this exclamation will be plain to my readers. Mat had declared to his father his conviction that Lady Mason had forged the codicil in question, and the father was now also convinced that she had done so. ‘Unfortunate woman!’ he said; ‘poor, wretched woman!’ And then he began to calculate what might yet be her chances of escape. On the whole he thought that she would escape. ‘Twenty years of possession,’ he said to himself; ‘and so excellent a character!’ But, nevertheless, he repeated to himself over and over again that she was a wretched, miserable woman.

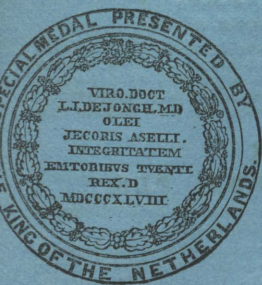
We may say that all the persons most concerned were convinced, or nearly convinced, of Lady Mason’s guilt. Among her own friends Mr. Furnival had no doubt of it, and Mr. Chaffanbrass and Mr. Aram but very little; whereas Sir Peregrine and Mrs. Orme of course had none. On the other side Mr. Mason and Mr. Dockwrath were both fully sure of the truth, and the two Rounds, father and son, were quite of the same mind. And yet, except with Dockwrath and Sir Peregrine, the most honest and the most dishonest of the lot, the opinion was that she would escape. These were five lawyers concerned, not one of whom gave to the course of justice credit that it would ascertain the truth, and not one of whom wished that the truth should be ascertained. Surely had they been honest-minded in their profession they would all have so wished;—have so wished, or else have abstained from all professional intercourse in the matter. I cannot understand how any gentleman can be willing to use his intellect for the propagation of untruth, and to be paid for so using it. As to Mr. Chaffanbrass and Mr. Solomon Aram,—to them the escape of a criminal under their auspices would of course be a matter of triumph. To such work for many years had they applied their sharp intellects and legal knowledge. But of Mr. Furnival;—what shall we say of him?

Sir Peregrine went home very sad at heart, and crept silently back into his own library. In the evening, when he was alone with Mrs. Orme, he spoke one word to her. ‘Edith,’ he said, ‘I have seen Mr. Round. We can do nothing for her there.’

‘I feared not,’ said she.

‘No; we can do nothing for her there.’

After that Sir Peregrine took no step in the matter. What step could he take? But he sat over his fire in his library, day after day, thinking over it all, and waiting till those terrible assizes should have come.



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## SELECTIONS FROM TESTIMONIAL DOCUMENTS.

### THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR OF HOLLAND.

[Translated from the Dutch original.]

The Hague, Feb. 1, 1848.

I have the honour of bringing to your knowledge that it has pleased the King to grant you, by his decree of the 20th of January, 1848, No. 101, a silver medal, with an appropriate honorary inscription, as a testimony of his Majesty's high approbation of your efforts in securing to this country a supply of the most efficacious Cod Liver Oil from Norway. I have given the necessary orders for the execution of this medal.

The Minister of the Interior,

(Signed) VAN DER HEIM.

To Dr. de Jongh, at the Hague.

### THE INTENDANT OF THE CIVIL LIST OF BELGIUM.

[Translated from the French original.]

Brussels, Oct. 6, 1847.

The King has charged me to return to you his very particular thanks for the homage done to him by the presentation of your most valuable researches concerning the Cod Liver Oil. As an expression of his utmost satisfaction, his Majesty has given me the order of presenting you with the accompanying large gold medal.

I remain, with the highest regard, &c.,

The Intendant of the Civil List,

(Signed) CONWAY.

To Dr. de Jongh, at the Hague.

### THE ROYAL SANITARY POLICE OF PRUSSIA.

[Translated from the German original.]

KÖNIGLICHES-POLIZEI-PRAESIDIUM  
1<sup>o</sup> Abtheilung.

LÜDEMANN.

In answer to your letter of the 2nd ult., requesting permission to sell Dr. de Jongh's Cod Liver Oil in bottles, accompanied by his stamp and signature, the Royal Police of Prussia (Königliches-polizei-praesidium) have the honour of informing you that they have caused the Oil to be submitted to an official investigation, and that the result of such investigation has proved it to be not only the genuine Cod Liver Oil, but, still further, that it is of a kind which distinguishes itself from the Cod Liver Oil in ordinary use, alike by its taste and chemical composition. Considering, moreover, that it has come to their knowledge that physicians generally recommend Dr. de Jongh's Oil in preference to the Cod Liver Oil in ordinary use, the Royal Police accede to your request,

To A. M. Blume, Chemist, Berlin

(Signed)

### SIR HENRY MARSH, Bart., M.D., T.C.D.,

Physician in Ordinary to the Queen in Ireland, Ex-President of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland, Visiting Physician to Stevens' Hospital, Consulting Physician to the City of Dublin, St. Vincent, and Rotunda Hospitals, &c., &c.

I have frequently prescribed Dr. de Jongh's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil. I consider it to be a very pure Oil, not likely to create disgust, and a therapeutic agent of great value.

Merrion-square, Dublin, Sept. 6, 1860.

### SIR JOSEPH FRANCIS OLLIFFE, M.D., F.R.C.P.L.,

Officer of the Legion of Honour, Physician to the British Embassy at Paris, Member of the Anatomical Society of Paris, late President of the Paris Medical Society, &c., &c.

I have frequently prescribed Dr. de Jongh's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil, and I have every reason to be satisfied with its beneficial and salutary effects.

Paris, July 12, 1861.

[TURN OVER.]

**JONATHAN PERRERA, M.D., F.R.S., F.L.S.,**

*Professor at the University of London, Physician to the London Hospital, &c., &c.*

It was fitting that the author of the best analysis and investigations into the properties of this Oil should himself be the purveyor of this important medicine. I know that no one can be better, and few so well, acquainted with the physical and chemical properties of this medicine as yourself, whom I regard as the highest authority on the subject. The Oil which you gave me was of the very finest quality, whether considered with reference to its colour, flavour, or chemical properties; and I am satisfied that for medicinal purposes no finer Oil can be procured.

Finsbury Square, April 16th, 1851.

**EDWIN LANKESTER, Esq., M.D., LL.D., F.R.S., F.L.S.,**

*Late Lecturer on the Practice of Physic at St. George's Medical School, Superintendent of the Food Collection at the South Kensington Museum, Medical Officer of Health, St. James's, &c., &c.*

I consider that the purity and genuineness of this Oil are secured in its preparation by the personal attention of so good a Chemist and intelligent a Physician as Dr. de Jongh, who has also written the best medical treatise on the Oil with which I am acquainted. Hence, I deem the Cod Liver Oil sold under his guarantee to be preferable to any other kind as regards genuineness and medicinal efficacy.

8, Savile Row, W., August 1, 1850.

**A. B. GRANVILLE, Esq., M.D., L.R.C.P., F.R.S.,**

*Author of "THE SPAS OF GERMANY," "THE SPAS OF ENGLAND," "ON SUDDEN DEATH," &c., &c.*

Dr. Granville considers this Oil to be preferable in many respects to Oils sold without the guarantee of such an authority as de Jongh. Dr. Granville has found that this particular kind produces the desired effect in a shorter time than others, and that it does not cause the nausea and indigestion too often consequent on the administration of the Pale Oils. The Oil being, moreover, much more palatable, Dr. Granville's patients have themselves expressed a preference for Dr. de Jongh's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil.

1, Curzon Street, May Fair, January 7, 1856.

**HENRY LETHEBY, Esq., M.B., F.L.S.,**

*Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology in the Medical College of the London Hospital, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Analyst to the City of London, &c., &c.*

I have frequently had occasion to analyse the Cod Liver Oil which is sold at your establishment. I mean that variety which is prepared for medicinal use in the Loffoden Isles, Norway, and sent into commerce with the sanction of Dr. de Jongh, of the Hague.

In all cases I have found it possessing the same set of properties, among which the presence of cholalic compounds and of iodine in a state of organic combination are the most remarkable; in fact, the Oil corresponds in all its characters with that named "*Huile brune*," and described as the best variety in the masterly treatise of Dr. de Jongh.

It is, I believe, universally acknowledged that this description of Oil has great therapeutical power; and, from my investigations, I have no doubt of its being a pure and unadulterated article.

College Laboratory, London Hospital, September 24th, 1855.

**G. H. BARLOW, Esq., M.D., F.R.C.P.,**

*Physician to Guy's Hospital, Author of "A Manual of the Practice of Medicine," "Phthisis," "Diseases of Early Youth," &c., &c.*

I have frequently recommended persons consulting me to make use of Dr. de Jongh's Cod Liver Oil. I have been well satisfied with its effects, and believe it to be a very pure Oil, well fitted for those cases in which the use of that substance is indicated.

6 Union-street, Southwark, August 23rd, 1858.

**J. T. BANKS, Esq., M.D., M.B., Hon. F.K.Q.C.P.,**

*King's Professor of the Practice of Physic at the University of Dublin, Clinical Professor at Sir P. Dun's Hospital, Physician to the Richmond, Whitworth, and Hardwicke Hospitals, &c., &c.*

I have in the course of my practice extensively employed Dr. de Jongh's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil, and I have no hesitation in stating, that I consider it the best of all the specimens of Oil which have ever come under my notice. The fact of so able and accurate an observer as Dr. de Jongh subjecting the Oil to careful analysis previous to its exposure for sale, is a sufficient guarantee of its purity and excellence.

Merrion-square, Dublin, August 30th, 1860.

**RICHARD MOORE LAWRENCE, Esq., M.D., L.R.C.P.,**

*Physician to H.R.H. the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, Ophthalmic Surgeon to the Great Northern Hospital, Author of "ON GOUT AND RHEUMATISM," &c., &c.*

I have frequently tested your Cod Liver Oil, and so impressed am I with its superiority, that I invariably prescribe it in preference to any other, feeling assured that I am recommending a genuine article, and not a manufactured compound in which the efficacy of this invaluable medicine is destroyed.

21, Connaught-square, Hyde-park, Jan. 26, 1856.

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