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OUT OF HIS HEAD,

A ROMANCE.

There was something strange, people whispered. His grandfather was so before him. It runs in the family.—*Thackaray.*

EDITED BY

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

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NOTE.

The manuscript which comprises this volume was found among the papers of the late Paul Lynde, and placed in my hands, by the publishers, for revision.

It is usual to accompany a posthumous work with some account of its author: in the present instance, the friends of the writer object to this, and I am permitted only to say that Mr. Lynde, — personally a stranger to me, — was the victim of an hereditary peculiarity, which increasing with his years, at length forced him to retreat from the world, to one of those beneficent asylums established for such unfortunates. There he wrote, dreamed, and indulged in his vagaries to the end.

"And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less,
An old and strange affection of his house.
Himself, too, had wierd seizures, heaven knows what,
On a sudden, in the midst of men and day,
And while he walked and talked as heretofore
He seemed to move among a world of ghosts
And feel himself the shadow of a dream."

Of this Romance, produced under such unusual circumstances, it is not my province to speak. The reader himself will see, beneath the sombre surface of the writer's words, the particular humor of the man.

OUT OF HIS HEAD.

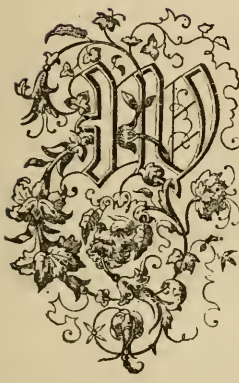
There lived an ancient legend in our house.
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt,
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should know
The shadow from the substance, and that one
Should come to fight with shadows, and to fall.

—*Tennyson.*

OUT OF HIS HEAD.

CHAPTER I.

Dr. Pendegrast.



"HAT is this, Lynde?"

Dr. Pendegrast had walked to the farther end of my room, and stood looking at a pale, unbloomed flower sealed in a glass globe. The globe rested on a slight Gothic pedestal, and was covered by a yard or two of gauze, thrown over it carelessly. The doctor had drawn aside the covering, and was regarding the flower with an air of interest.

"That," said I, closing one finger in my book, "is where I keep the soul of Cecil Roylstone — shut up in the calyx."

The doctor started.

"The soul — really! That is quite odd, now. You never told me of this, Lynde."

Dr. Pendegrast is a physician of considerable repute with whom I have recently become acquainted. A singular intimacy has sprung up between us. Dr. Pendegrast labors under the delusion that he is treating me professionally for some sort of mental disorder, and I, indulging the good-natured whim, throw his prescriptions out of the window, and in the meantime enjoy unrestrained intercourse with the doctor, who is not only a skillful practitioner, but a thinker, and — what is seldom the case with thinkers — a fine conversationalist.

He frequently drops in to spend an hour with me, and appears to derive much satisfaction in examining the microscopes, galvanic batteries, wooden models, and various knick-knacks in fluor spar — the accumulation of years — with which my apartment is crowded. The place has quite the air of a miniature museum.

Dr. Pendegrast stood looking at the imprisoned flower with fresh curiosity. I drew my chair nearer to the fire, and fell into a brown study. The doctor's question had indirectly suggested to me the expediency of writing out the odd experiences of my life.

There comes to every man, sooner or later, a time when he pauses and looks down on his Past, regarding it as an existence separate from himself. As one in a dream, stands beside his own coffin, gazing upon his own features. That moment of retrospection was mine.

Dr. Pendegrast placed the tip of his forefinger on the globe.

"And who is Cecil Roylstone?"

"The woman I loved, long ago."

"Dead?"

"Many years since."

The doctor mused.

"And her soul," you say — "

"Passed into that flower the day she was buried."

"But the flower," said Dr. Pendegrast, stooping down, "is as fresh as if it were plucked yesterday."

"True. By a process well known to chemists, I have preserved the lily in its original freshness; even the dew still glistens on it. See! Cecil's breath has clouded the glass. The flower is moving! Mute, mute, — if she would but speak to me!"

"And you really think this pretty world is inhabited by a spirit?"

"There's not the slightest doubt of it."

"Would it not be well," remarked Dr. Pendegrast, lifting his eyebrows speculatively, "to look into this? For our own satisfaction, you know, to say nothing of the spirit, which must be very uncomfortable in such snug quarters. Suppose, for instance, we take a peep in at the petals?"

"Not for worlds! Our grosser sense would fail to perceive the soul within. I have thought of it. The thin shell which separates us, has baffled my endeavor to reach her. Once I dared to dream it

possible to hold communication with Cecil — by means of a small magnetic telegraph, my own invention. But the experiment threatened to annihilate the flower. Since then, it has lain untouched, sealed hermetically from the air, in its transparent prison."

Dr. Pendegrast smiled.

"You are laughing at me, doctor," said I, sharply.

"Not I! It's the most interesting circumstance that ever came under my observation."

"No doubt it sounds strangely to you, doctor. I have, before now, encountered people who thought me a little out on the subject, and said so flatly."

"They were very injudicious."

"To be sure; but I always observed that they were persons of inferior intellect — believing only what they could comprehend, they were necessarily contracted. To metaphysicians, students of life and death, the facts which I could unfold relative

to this flower and other matters, would afford material for serious speculation."

"I believe you," said Dr. Pendegrast.

"And I am strongly inclined to give the scientific world the benefit of my memoirs. Indeed, it is a part of my destiny to do so."

"You delight me," said Dr. Pendegrast. "Do it at once. It will be a healthful relaxation. You are working too hard on that infernal machine of yours."

"You mean the MOON-APPARATUS."

"I beg your pardon, I meant the MOON-APPARATUS."

"I will commence my memoirs to-morrow."

"And I shall hold it a privilege," said the doctor courteously, drawing on his glove, "to follow the progress of your work."

"You shall do so."

Dr. Pendegrast took his leave.

"O, Lynde, Lynde!" I heard him exclaim as he went down stairs.

That man appreciates me.

A week has elapsed since this conversation occurred, and I still linger at the threshhold of my confessions. I half dread to ring up the curtain on such a sorrowful play as it is, for the dramatis personæ are the shades of men and women long since dead. Their graves lie scattered over the world, north, south, east, and west. It seems almost cruel to bring them together on the stage again. Who that has fretted his brief hour here would care to return? Yet I must summon these shadows, for a moment, from the dark.

CHAPTER II.

By the Seashore.

N the summer of 18— I occupied an old house near the seashore, in New England. The beach, a mile off, stretched along the indented coast, looking as if it were an immense mottled serpent that had been suddenly petrified in the midst of its writhings. On the right, a ruined fort stared at the ocean, over the chalky crags. At the back of the house were some two hundred acres of woodland, moistened here and there by ponds filled with marvellous white lilies. The weather-beaten roofs and steeples of the town glanced through the breezy elm trees on the left;

while far away, over lengths of pastures and sullen clumps of pines, Mount Agamenticus rose up like a purple mist.

The scenery has stamped itself into my brain — the desolate fort, staring with a blind, stunned look through rain and sunshine; the merciless coast; the ragged ledges, nurturing only a few acrid berries; the forest full of gloomy sounds; the antique spires in the distance; and, over all, the loose gray clouds.

I had come to the New Hampshire seaboard for the benefit of my failing health. Having spent the greater portion of my life in an inland manufacturing town, than which nothing could be more common-place, the wild panorama of the coast opened on me like an enchanted realm. A cold, gray realm, but enchanted. I avoided society. The sea and the shifting clouds were society enough. The solitude that would have driven most men to distraction, was pregnant with meaning. It left me free, for once, to breathe, and think, and feel.

At night I wandered along the beach, watching

the points of light that dipt and rose in the distance, and the sails that shimmered ghost-like, for a second, in the offing, and vanished. But more than all I brooded over the broken image of the moon floating on the water: *that* filled me like a picture by Claude; it led me into a region of new thought, and here I first conceived the project of of my Moon-Apparatus, which, when completed, will dissolve the misty theories that have deluded man for the past five centuries. I haunted the seashore. I lay on the rocks from sundown till midnight, shaping the vast Idea that had grown up within me.

My intercourse with the village, near by, was restricted to one family — the Roylstones. I might say restricted to one person; for Captain Roylstone was always at sea; his wife had long since been laid at rest in the rustic churchyard; and only Cecil, who lived with an elderly companion, a distant connection, I believe, represented the family.

How we met, or how Cecil's fate and mine

became irrevocably linked, seems so strange and vague to me, that I shall not attempt to speak of it. It was this woman's melancholy destiny to love me: it was mine to return the passion a hundred fold, and follow her to the very margin of that mysterious world wherein she eluded me. Wherein she still eludes me.

Alas! what right had I to love, knowing, as I have known from boyhood, the doom that hangs over my head, suspended by a tenure as slight as that which held the sword of Damocles?

To-morrow it may fall!

The arrogant retina of the eye sometimes refuses to give back the image it has received. Dissolution alone can break the charmed picture; and even after death, objects of terror and beauty have been seen to fade away reluctantly from this magical mirror. I have read, somewhere, of a German oculist, who traced the murderer of a lady in Göttingen, by discovering, at a post-mortem examination, the likeness of the assassin

photographed on those curious net-like membranes, the retinæ.

When I am dead, the face of a fair woman will be found indelibly engraved on my eyes — not in faint lines and curves, but sharply, as if the features had been cut out on steel by the burin of an artist. Yet I can but poorly describe the idyllic grace and beauty of Cecil Roylstone.

Her hair was dark brown, and, in its most becoming arrangement, drawn into one massive coil over the forehead, giving her brows a Greek-like stateliness. Her eyes were those unusual ojos verdes, large and lucent, which the Spanish poets mention as being the finest type. The mouth would have been perfect, but for a slight blemish, visible only at times, on the upper lip. Perhaps her face was a shade too pale, for perfection, may be too pensive, in repose — but how can I write of Cecil as a mere portrait, when she, herself, in her infinite sweetness, seems to pass before me!

Again she is walking, in her simple white dress, by the seaside. The moon drifts from cloud to

cloud, edging the gray with silver, and, far off, the sea sparkles. A plain gold cross on her bosom catches the moonlight. The salt breeze lifts the braids of her hair, and blows back the folds of her dress. I sit on the rocks watching her.

Again we are lounging along the sunny road, on our way to town. It is an afternoon in May; the trees are in full bloom, peach and apple. Cecil is laughing, with an accent like music. I see her lissome form in the checkered sunshine, her feet, tripping on in front of me, among the blossoms. I hardly know which are the blossoms. Now she is walking demurely at my side, her fingers locked in mine, and the sleepy sea-port with its brown roofs and whitewashed chimneys, comes out distinctly against the neutral tint of the sky, like a picture on a wizard's glass.

Again I am sitting on the porch of the old house, dreaming of her. I hear the sound of a horse's hoofs beating on the dusty road, and then Cecil — as if she had leaped out of my brain — dashes up to the garden-gate, on the alert black

mare which her father has sent home. In that sea-green riding-habit and feather, she is a picture, I take it, for Memory to press in his thumbed and dog's-eared volume. I pat the sleek neck of the mustang, as I speak with Cecil. I look up, and she is gone. I see her riding madly along the orchard walls, shaking down the blooms, in the sunset.

Riding away from me!

CHAPTER III.

The Estrangement.

E were unspeakably happy in that dream which follows the confessions of two hearts each all in all to the other. Our formal engagement was but delayed until Captain Roylstone, who was making an East Indian voyage, should return and sanction it. The future lay before us like a map on which each bright tint melts into one more brilliant. We were wildly happy; but not long.

The occult power that moulds my thought, speaks my words, and even times the pulsations of

my heart, glided in between us. We had been engaged but three weeks, when I became assured that Cecil had taken a sudden aversion to me. It was evident she sought to avoid our usual interviews; and when we met, was constrained and absent-minded. The color, what little she had, shrunk from her cheek; the touch of her fingers was chilly and nerveless. When I questioned Cecil, she looked at me wearily, and turned away. Sometimes with an impatient gesture, sometimes coldly.

One night — I never hear the monotonous wash of the waves, but I think of it, — we sat on the rocks. Cecil wrapt in her shawl. It was October, and the winds were growing frosty. One star, in a stormy cincture, struggled through the dark. The sea moaned, as it moans only in autumn. The clouds leaned down, hungry, tragic faces, listening. The landscape seemed cut in granite, sharp and gray. No color anywhere. There was something of an expression of human

despair in the half twilight that brooded over it. It was so hopeless.

Presently the moon rose to the surface of the water, like a drowned body, bleached and swollen. It distressed me; and when, at length, it lifted its full disc slowly up among the clouds, I felt a sense of relief: the cool clean light revived my spirits, like a draught of wine. I began speaking, rapidly, half to myself, partly to Cecil. I forget the train of reflection that led to it, but, at last, I touched on the invention of the Moon-Apparatus, to which I had recently given so much study.

Then Cecil, who had been sitting silent and motionless, abruptly bent forward, and took my face between her hands.

"Poor Paul!"

She drew back, then, one hand resting on her lap, inanimate, like a sculptured hand I had seen somewhere.

"Cecil!"

She turned away hastily.

"You are cruel, Cecil."

"No. Do not say that. I — I suffer."

And she uttered a low moan, like a child.

"Suffer?"

"Bitterly!"

"You are hiding some painful news from me. What is it?"

Cecil made no reply for a moment: then I heard her murmuring to herself,

"It was an evil day when we met. I wish it had never been."

"An evil day, Cecil? You kill me with your strangeness. Your very breath seems to freeze me."

"Let it! I think I am dying — it is so sudden and terrible — but you do not understand me — poor Paul!"

"What is sudden and terrible?'

"Nothing."

My fingers sunk into her arm until she gave a quick cry of pain.

"Why do you call me 'poor Paul?'"

"I — I cannot tell."

"For mercy's sake, Cecil, say one word that has sense in it — if you have any love left for me."

Cecil threw her arms around my neck, and locked her fingers, holding me so.

"How you tremble, child! What has happened to trouble you? Something, I know — your father? You have had letters from him, and he is sick? Tell me, little wife."

"No, no, no!" cried Cecil, recoiling.

For an instant the indistinct blemish on her lip glowed warmly, like an opal, and faded.

"No, no, no?" I repeated to myself. "How strange!"

Then the three monosyllables slipped from my mind, and, oddly enough, I commenced a mental construction of the Moon-Apparatus, forgetful of Cecil and our limited world of sorrows.

"The powerful glasses," said I half aloud, "shall draw the rays of the moon into the copper cylinders: the action of the chemicals, let in through the valves will congeal the atomic matter:

then comes the granulating process; and after the calcina— "

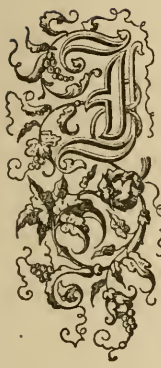
"Merciful heaven!" cried Cecil, breaking in on me, "is it so? I have waited, and hoped, and prayed. Paul, look at me; take me in your arms, once, and kiss me. Look at me long! Never any more! Poor, poor Paul. O misery! that I should so love a— "

With this, Cecil tore herself away from me, and, in spite of my cries, fled toward the town. She melted into the moonlight, past the churchyard, and was gone. What could it mean?

Then the terrible truth flashed upon me— Cecil had lost her mind!

CHAPTER IV.

A Catastrophe.



IT is well that providence keeps our destiny under lock and key, dealing it out only by morsels. The whole of it, at once, would kill us. Suppose a man, verging on the prime of life, should chance to come across his full-grown Biography? It would not be pleasant reading, to say it mildly.

I walked home that night, bewildered. The sky was blanched with incessant lightning, and dull peals of thunder broke in the far east, like the sound of distant artillery. There was a fearful gale, afterwards, I was told. A merchantman,

with all on board, went down at daybreak, on the shoals off Gosport Light.

Spiteful drops of rain whistled by me before I reached the door of my isolated abode. I hurried through the grape-arbor, and had entered the laboratory on the ground-floor, in the right wing of the building, when an accident occurred to which I cannot even now refer with composure.

When I reflect on the months of wasting toil and the lavish outlay, rendered futile by a moment's awkwardness, I am again plunged into despair.

A candle, with matches, always stood on the laboratory mantle-piece, for my convenience. In searching for these matches, which somebody had removed, I inadvertently came in contact with the Moon-Apparatus.

It tottered — and fell with a crash!

A sulphuric vapor immediately diffused itself throughout the apartment, followed by an explosion that shook the house from garret to basement. With the flash and concussion, a keen pain shot through my temples.

Then a darkness came over me.

This darkness must have covered a period of several months; for when I escaped from it, there was something in the singing of birds, and the brushing of foliage against the casement, that told of spring. I lay in my own chamber, and an old woman was killing flies with a silk apron.

"What is the time — of year?" I asked faintly.

The woman came to the bedside, and looked at me.

"Go to sleep."

I shrunk from her, and turning my face to the wall, tried to conjecture what had taken place.

I come home one October night from a walk with Cecil.

I fall over something in the laboratory.

It explodes.

My head aches.

I open my eyes, and it is June! the flowers growing, the robins singing, an old woman killing flies. I could make nothing out of it.

"Let what is broken, so remain.
The gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain."

When the Doctor came, — Dr. Molineux, of the village, — he attempted, in a hesitating way, to explain things. I had, he said, been taken unexpectedly ill in my work-shop, where I was discovered, one morning, by the person who brought me my meals. I was found doubled up among a confused mass of shattered cog-wheels, steel pistons, copper cylinders, alembics, and glass retorts. Somewhat battered and considerably senseless. It was supposed that I had been stunned by the explosion of some unknown machine, while engaged in scientific experiments.

Here the Doctor gave a short dry laugh. I am sure I don't know why. I had been long and dangerously ill, he said.

"Non compos ment—" the Doctor paused abruptly, and coughed. "But you are doing well now, and will soon be a new man," he added.

A new man? To be somebody else, the antithesis of myself, would indeed be a comfort.

The remembrance of all that had happened gradually dawned on me. Patience, patience. I could only lie and think of Cecil, while the long days, and the longer nights, dragged on.

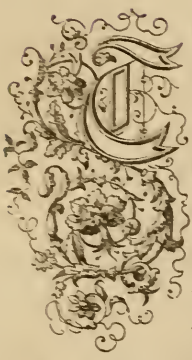
Finally the Doctor gave me permission to walk the length of our garden. I paced up and down several times under the arbor, unconcernedly; for the brownie nurse was on guard. My eyes roamed off to the town. I could see the square chimneys of Cecil's house, above the tree-tops, on the other side of the bridge.

Watching my chance, I unlatched the gate noiselessly, and stood in the open road.

The crisp grass scarcely bent under my tread, as I stole swiftly away from my chaperone, who, I am now convinced, was merely a harmless lunatic.

CHAPTER V.

The Flight.



THE day had opened sunnily, but one of those sudden fogs which blow from the sea, had drifted in, and hung over the town like a pall of smoke. It caught at the sharp spires and trailed along the flat roofs. At intervals, a gleam of light played through the funeral folds. I thought the place was burning: it had a disagreeable habit of catching on fire periodically. A history of the town would involve a series of conflagrations.

As I crossed the bridge, the cloud of fog grew darker and heavier, pressing down on the houses.

The boom of a large bell broke sullenly through the air. It was tolling.

Something in the sound arrested me, nor me alone, for a decrepit old man, driving a yoke of oxen, stopped in the middle of the bridge, and listened.

"Is it a fire?" I asked, walking at his side. "A fire in town?"

"Ay, ay," returned the man, vacantly, like a deaf person; "for old Mrs. Weston, or Capt'n Roylstone's child. I dunno which."

"Cecil Roylstone!"

"Ay; she's bin dyin' this six month."

"Dead?"

Dead, said the bell.

The bridge reeled under my feet.

"No, old man! you lie to me."

"Ay, ay," he said, musingly, "misfortune kind o' follows some families. Only last fall her father was wrecked right off Gosport Light here, in sight o' land."

I have a dim impression of intending to hurl

him into the mill-dam, among the slippery eel-grass; but as I glanced up I beheld Cecil quietly walking at the farther end of the bridge.

She turned and beckoned me.

Loosening the old man's arm, I hastened after Cecil, who moved leisurely down the hill, and took the road that made a détour by the house.

"Cecil!"

But she glided on with unaltered gait.

"She will stop at the porch," I thought; but no; Dr. Molineux was standing in the door-way. He hailed me as I hurried by.

"Well, where now, Mr. Lynde?"

"I'll return presently. I wish to speak with the lady who has just passed."

"Lady?" said the Doctor, eyeing me anxiously. "Nobody has passed here this half-hour — no lady, surely."

"What!" I exclaimed, halting with amazement at such a barefaced falsehood, "did not that lady" — pointing to Cecil, who had paused at a

bend in the road — "did not that lady just pass within two yards of you?"

And I looked at the Doctor severely.

"I see no one," replied the Doctor, following the direction of my finger.

It had been my opinion for sometime that my poor friend was deranged. This, coupled with the fact that I once caught him in his sanctum reading *Neville on Insanity*, was conclusive.

"I see no one," he repeated.

"Then you must be blind, or stupid."

I instantly repented of my brusqueness. Surely, his infirmity was no fault of his. So I approached him, and said kindly,

"My dear doctor, you should at once make your situation known to your friends. You really should."

With which words I left him.

Dr. Molineux stared at me.

There stood Cecil. The June air drew back the clustered coils of hair that fell over her shoulders, and I then first noticed the unearthly

pallor of her face. It was like a piece of pure Carrara marble.

Cecil seemed to smile upon me imploringly, as she turned into a briery path which branched off from the highway, and led to that tract of woodland which I mentioned in describing the location of my dwelling. I followed.

Her pace now became accelerated. It was with difficulty that I could keep the flying white dress in sight.

On the verge of the forest she paused, and faced me with a hectic light in her eyes. It was but for an instant, then she plunged into the dense wood.

An agonizing fancy occurred to me. I connected Cecil's wild look with the still deep ponds which lay within the shadow of the vast woodland. The thought gave wings to my feet; I darted after her like an arrow, tearing myself on the vines and briers that stretched forth a million wiry fingers to impede my progress.

We were nearing the largest pond in the wood.

Unless Cecil should alter her course, that would prevent farther flight.

This circular piece of water lay, as it were, in an immense green basin, the banks on every side sloping to the edge of the pond, where the cardinal-flowers bent in groups, staring at the reflection of their flushed faces. At the belt of maples enclosing the sheet of water, Cecil stopped irresolutely. I would have clasped her in my arms, but she escaped me, and ran swiftly toward the pond. Then I heard a splash not so loud as would be made by dropping a pebble into the water. I leaped half-way down the slope.

Cecil had disappeared.

Near the bank, a circle in the pond widened, and widened, and was lost in space. A single silver bubble floated among the tangled weeds that fringed the lip of the shore, and as I looked, this bubble opened, and out of it indolently rose a superb white Water-Lily.

It was no use to look for Cecil — there she was!

"You had better come home now," said Dr. Molineux, touching me on the shoulder.

When we reached the main-road, a funeral was passing along slowly, slowly.

People sometimes smile, half-incredulously, when I tell them these things: then I point to that white flower, there, in the glass globe.

CHAPTER VI.

Tired to Death.

NOW that I approach the second important epoch of my life — the second link in the chain I am forging — the joy and anguish which came to me with Cecil Roylstone, must be laid aside, like the fragments of a dream that lie perdu in the memory, until some odd moment.

I was residing in New Orleans, an invalid. A perusal of some of W—'s letters by a wood fire in the north, had drawn me southward in search of lost vitality. I am not sure it was the most efficacious move; but mine is a malady full of

surmises, and hopes, and disappointment. Why do I speak of myself? I am only the walking-gentleman in this particular act of the melodrame — the Scaramouch that glides in to darken things. The hero waits at the side-scenes for his cue.

Enter, A Shadow.

Mark Howland, at twenty-four, was tired to death. His psychological sickness was not occasioned by varied experience, like that of the cynic in the play, who had seen everything, done everything, and found nothing in it. He came to his weariness without that painful iteration.

There is a certain kind of woman who becomes physically perfect long before her heart is developed.

If she chance to have much beauty, she is dangerous beyond belief, and should not be left unchained to destroy people.

She goes about, seeking whom she may devour.

It is an uncertain leopardess: it kills with strokes softer than satin.

Mr. Howland, shortly after leaving college, was

so deserted by good fortune as to find himself, one day, at the instep of such a creature.

Celeste G—— was poor, in humble life, and lovely as an ideal. But, at eighteen, she had no more heart than there was an anatomical necessity for. She was attracted by Mark — swayed by her glamour over him, rather than by his influence over her. Imperious, eighteen, and unchained. What could be hoped of her?

Howland's family, rich and ever so many years old, (old enough to know better,) opposed the match with all that superfluous acrimony which characterizes a domestic quarrel.

This, for Mark was human, increased his passion. He only grew firm about the lips as Madam his mother protested.

"This person Celeste," remarked Madam, loftily, "is common and poor."

And poverty is the unpardonable sin from Dan to Beersheba.

Matters went wretchedly.

At length the contending forces agreed to an

armistice, and Howland, worn out by tears, consented to spend two years abroad, and then, at the expiration of that time, if his purpose remained unchanged and unchangeable, why, then, perhaps, it was more than likely, etc. etc. — the antique story.

The wilful went abroad. He travelled through Italy, and wintered at Florence; drifted on the Rhine, and summered at Schwalbach. The large, languishing eyes of his Andromache went with him. His thoughts were full of Celeste: he beheld her everywhere — in every saintly picture, in every faultless marble: every beautiful thing in nature and art was an inferior type of Celeste.

When the two years had elapsed, he returned home, brown and handsome, wondering, on the passage, why she had written him only two letters in twice as many months.

Now, one cannot get up one's trousseau, and write letters, at the same time. A week before his arrival, Celeste was married.

"This person Celeste," said Madam, mighty drily, "has stepped out!"

She had, indeed.

When Howland received the news, he bit his mustache, and looked steadily at nothing for twenty minutes. Then he threw a string of cameos into the grate, whistling an air from *Il Giuramento*.

As a piece of music, it was a failure.

He was cut to the heart.

For Celeste to wed an opera-singer. Basta!

He smoked uncounted segars that day, and came out of the clouds a different man. His chateau had toppled over in one night, and there was not an atom among the ruins worth picking up the next morning. In the rush and bubble of city life, he sought to wring out the remembrance of his wrong.

But grief is one of the quiet colors that wash.

At this time my health became impaired, and an immediate visit to some milder climate, was the only specific. In an evil hour, I urged Howland to accompany me to New Orleans.

We hired a small, furnished cottage, in a retired faubourg of the city, and set up our dii penates;

the household consisting of Cip, a negro gardener; Christina, a pretty quadroon girl, who kept our ménage as tidy as a snow-drift; and Agnes, Christina's child.

With the new surroundings, Howland for awhile left the past to bury its dead. But by degrees his former restlessness returned. Time pressed on him like lead. He grew haggard and careworn, and a dim scar, which he never liked spoken of, brightened on his lip; he played wildly, got into debt, and was going to the bad by a through-train.

Of course my remonstrances were thrown away. What is the use of advising a man who is tired to death?

In the meanwhile, my own life passed tranquilly enough, with the reading of books on metallurgy, and the drawing of plans for a more systematic construction of the Moon-Apparatus, which, I regret to say, had been all but demolished by the accident related.

CHAPTER VII.

An Arrival.

THE fire of my segar glowed in the dusk like a panther's eye. I sat in the verandah of our cottage-house in *Rue de* —— smoking a Manilla cheroot, and yielding myself up to the influences of one of those southern nights which make a man forget that he must die.

The stars were heavy and lustrous, and the clouds sailed through the sky, mere thistle-down. Every stir of air brought me the odors of orange-blossoms, and wafted the snaky smoke of my cheroot among the honeysuckle vines, which clambered erratically over the portico, shutting me out from the dense moonlight.

Three stone steps led from the porch into the garden, where a marble Naiad filled a cup of lapis lazuli from a slender urn of antique design. The jets of water, breaking on the rim of the goblet, and dripping down in shattered crystals on the gold-fish in the bowl of the fountain, made drowsy music. It was like the uneasy bubbling of a narghillé.

A sly, white pelican waded in the dank grass, and would have liked to split a gold-fish with its long bill.

What a fairy garden it was, with its shelly walks leading to nowhere in particular; its dwarfish fig-trees with their pointed leaves; its beds of mignonette; its house-pots of fragrant jonquelles and camelias; its one heavy magnolia, growing alone like Père Antoine's date-palm; and the picket of mulberries, just within the lattice-fence, marking the boundaries of our demesne.

It was not an extensive sweep of land, but the moonlight created interminable vistas, and destroyed one's idea of distance. It appeared as if

the whole earth were a tropical forest, stretching out from our door-step.

The only sounds that broke, or, rather, mingled with my reverie, were the gurglings of the fountain, the sleepy rustling of the leaves, and the inarticulate music of women's voices, blown to me from neighboring balconies.

The inhabitants of this arid land dwell out of doors after sundown. As you stroll through the streets, in the twilight, you see groups, assembled on the piazzas of the low-roofed French houses, or sauntering unceremoniously in front gardens; and many a creole brunette and many a rich southern blonde, bends tender eyes on you as you pass. You catch glimpses of charming domestic tableaux — Old Age in his arm-chair on the porch, and Youth and Beauty (with cherry-colored ribbons,) making love under the rose. I think life is an easy sort of inconvenience in warm latitudes.

The fountain gurgled, the leaves whispered, and my cheroot went out, a single spark flying upward — the soul of St. Nicotine! I sat watching a

lithe chameleon that undulated out of the dark, and clad itself in a suit of moonlight on the stone step. There it lay, moist, glimmering, dead with ecstacy. Whether it was the torpor of the animal that extended itself to me, or the effect of the opium, sometimes wrapt in cheroots, I am not able to state; but without warning, a drowsiness directly overpowered my senses. I slept, and dreamed.

I scarcely know how to tell the dream which came to me — if it were a dream.

An unnatural stillness fell upon the world; the liquid music of the fountain fainted in the distance; the leaves drooped in the sultry, motionless air, like velvet. The atmosphere became strangely oppressive, and the aromas from the pot-plants grew so penetrating that it was almost pain to inhale them.

Rising from my seat, I walked with difficulty to the open end of the verandah. The sky presented a startling appearance.

The clouds were opaque and stagnant, the stars

shrivelled with waning fires, and a sickly, saffron tinge around the edge of the moon, made it look as if it had commenced to decay.

I felt that these phenomena were not the prelude to one of those tornadoes which frequently burst upon the breathless quiet of tropical regions; for there was no electricity in the close air, no muttering of the elements; but a deep, brooding silence, infinitely more appalling than any tumult.

A vage apprehension of some awful calamity took possession of me. I shuddered at being alone.

The odors grew heavier and heavier, orange, heliotrope, magnolia — subtle and noxious, they were, like the exhalations from the poisoned flowers in Rappaccini's garden. I was faint with them.

Suddenly the street-gate swung to with a clang. I heard footfalls on the gravelled walks. Thank heaven! some one was coming to me.

Cip stumbled up the steps. He saw me, and paused, resting against the balustrade, his hat slouched over his face. I called to him.

"Tell me, Cip, do you see that dreadful sky, or am I still dreaming?"

The negro did not lift his head, but said, huskily,

"Marster, it has come, IT has come!"

"What has come?"

"Lord, look down an' help us," murmured the negro solemnly.

"Why don't you answer me! Where is Mr. Howland? Who has come? *What* has come?"

"The — the —"

"The — what?"

"The CHOL'RA, marster!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Dark Days.

THE cholera was upon us; but not without warning. Year after year it had pursued its lonely march through woodland and desert, as noiseless and implacable as Fate. For months and months, rumor had heralded its fell approach. Now it stole with the auras of morning into a populous town; now it glided with the shades of nightfall into some happy village.

Graves sprung up in its wake, like thistles.

The lank Arab, munching his few dates in the desert, looked up from the scanty meal, and

beheld those basilisk eyes. His camel wandered off without a master.

The be-nighted traveller by the Ganges, sunk exhausted on the banks of the muddy river; but the beasts of the jungle did not growl over him, for even the nameless birds flew, shrieking, away.

The English mother sat by the hamlet-door, singing to her babe. The tiny hand clutched at the air, and the soft white eyelids were ringed with violet.

Beauty saw a baleful visage in her mirror. No rouge, nor pearl-powder nor balm could make it comely again.

The miser hugged and kissed his money-bags; but where he went he could not take his idols.

Then Dives died in his palace, and the leper at the groined gate-way.

The fingers of lovers were unknitted.

The Cholera, the Scourge!

In a single night the Afreet spread his wings over the doomed city. A woman had been

stricken down while buying a bunch of flowers in St. Mary's Market. An unknown man fell headlong from his horse on the levee. Six persons lay at the point of death in a café on *Rue de Baronne*. The hospitals were already filling up; and the red flag wilted in the languid breeze at the quarantine. The streets were strewn with lime, and every precaution taken by the authorities to extirpate the plague. And then commenced that long procession of funerals which never ceased to trail by our door for so many weary months. It is a question in my mind, though, whether the cholera is contagious.

How hot, and dull, and dead the days were!

The roofs of the houses lay festering in the canescent heat; the flowers drooped, and died cankerous deaths; the outer leaves of the foliage changed to a livid green hue, and the timid grass crept up, and withered, in the interstices of the sidewalk. All day a tawny gold mist hung over the place. At night, the dews fell, and from

cypress swamps, on the skirts of the city, rose deadly miasma.

No joyous children played at the door-step in the twilight. The guttural voice of the strolling marchand was no longer heard crying his creams and comfits. The small fruit-booths along the street were tenantless. The St. Charles Theatre and The Varieties were closed — only the tragedy of death drew crowded houses. The glittering bar-rooms, with their fancy glasses, and mirrors, and snowy drinks, were almost deserted. Even rondo, roulette, faro, monte and lansquenet, lost their fascination. Mass was said morning and evening in the old cathedral at *Place d' Armes;* and many of the churches, catholic and protestant, were open throughout the day.

The wheel of social life was broken.

As to Howland and myself, we were not panic-stricken. The fine edge of my fear of death had been blunted by a similar experience, at Cuba, during a yellow-fever season; and Howland re-

garded the workings of chance with stolid indifference.

When the epidemic first broke out, he had proposed, for my sake only, a trip across Lake Ponchartrain, to Pass Christian, or Biloxi; but I would not listen to him. In overruling Howland's suggestion, I was simply a puppet, moving in accordance with my wires. It was predestined we should remain and face the sorrows of that year.

I am a fatalist, you see; and have reason to be one.

We changed our mode of living in no particular; but ate fruit, drank wine, (rank heresy,) walked, rode, and slept as usual. And even Cip, who had somewhat recovered from his first fright, would sit of an evening by the kitchen-door, and play plaintive negro melodies on his rickety violin.

"Cip," I used to say, "this Asiatic cholera is a countryman of yours."

"O Lord, marster!"

Still the work went on. People died and lay

for days unburied, in obscure garrets. Oftentimes one cart bore away an entire family — hurried them off. Lying in my bed, I have been kept awake by hearses rumbling by — at midnight. What I write I saw, and was a part of. I would it were fiction.

Near our house stood a large brick church, the Church of the Bleeding Heart, I think it was called. The exterior of the edifice was left in an elaborate state of unfinish, the costly interior decorations having, I suppose, exhausted the parochial funds. It was a habit of mine to pass an hour, every day, in wandering about the dimly-lighted aisles, or sitting by the altar and looking at a painting of the Crucifixion, which covered a Gothic window back of the dais. The sun, early in the forenoon, used to rest for five or ten minutes on the glass directly above the Savior's head, and, blending with the aureola which the artist had placed around the angelic brows, produced a striking effect.

The painting, and the soothing twilight of the spot, lifted me into holy atmospheres. Here I came and thought of life and the world — not this world, or this life; but the Life and the World beyond.

Out of my visits to the church grew an incident which I cannot resist recording. A story within a story, says Goethe, is a flaw in art. But life is made up of episodes — a story within a story.

One morning I was leaving the church when I heard somebody sound the keys of the organ in the loft. There is a rich, gloomy pathos about the instrument that always impresses me. I stood listening to the mellow, irregular notes, touched at random. Presently the musician lingered on an octave, as if to gather strength for a prolonged flight — then the splendid Wedding March of Mendelssohn broke along the aisles, and soared up to the shadowy dome.

How magically those unseen fingers wrung the meaning of the great maestro from the inanimate keys! with what power and delicacy of touch!

As I listened, the sacred candles were suddenly lighted, and in their lambent glare a thousand ghosts crowded into the carven pews, thronged the gallery; the priest stood in the chancel; and then the bridal pageant swept by, and then the grand music burst out beyond control, surging away among the resonant arches in tumultuous waves of sound; and then — as if to render the illusion perfect — the clock in the belfry struck twelve.

At the last stroke, the music ceased, the church was emptied of its ghostly audience, the scented candles flickered out, and I stood alone. I could have wept with an undefined, mysterious sorrow, — wept the loss of something I had never known, something that might have been!

Again the music rose, but more gently — a melody of Beethoven. It was left unfinished. The organ-lid closed abruptly; I heard the fine click of the key turning in the wards, and hastened to the vestibule of the church to catch a glimpse of the musician.

As I gained the door, a young girl, leading a

little boy by the hand, was slowly descending the broad oaken staircase.

"Were you playing the organ, a moment since?" I asked, doubtfully.

"Yes."

"Are you the organist here?"

"No, sir; but my father was."

"Was?"

"They took papa away last week," said the boy simply; "and this is Clara Dujardine, my sister, who loves him."

They passed on.

Every morning for several weeks the child-musician came to the choir. It was not hard to understand why the poor girl lingered there, day after day, playing the same glorious music always — the music which the old organist had loved.

Suddenly her visits ceased.

The sunshine rested on the head of the painted Christ, and lighted up the stained windows; the dreary sexton, and, now and then, a priest or two, found their way into the sanctuary: but I waited

in vain for the girl with her spiritual eyes and fragile hands.

In the ancient French burying-ground, is a humble mound which the delicate grass, I like to think, takes pleasures in making beautiful, before it touches the other graves. Spring-time had muffled it in flowers, the day I bent down and read the simple inscription:

CLARA DUJARDINE.
Aged 17.

Near the head-stone, with a wreath of immortelles in his shut hand, sat the little boy — asleep.

The sultry, dreadful days; the huge city in its swoon-like silence; the busy, busy death! — how these things stay with my thought. Here, in pleasant New England, sometimes in the twilight, invisible fingers play for me the sad strains of Beethoven, the Wedding March of Mendelssohn.

CHAPTER IX.

Agnes.

"FOR heaven's sake, Lynde," said Howland, one evening, "let us have our coffee aud segars on the back piazza. Human nature cannot stand ten funerals to one cup of Mocha."

The hearses crawled by the house day and night, an interminable train.

"Coffee on the back porch, Christina."

As Christina placed our bamboo chairs on the verandah, I saw by her swollen eyelids that she had been weeping.

"Christina?" said I, inquiringly.

"Little Agnes, sir — I'm afraid she is very sick."

Little Agnes! Christina's child, the only flower that blossomed for one poor life — the little pale bloom of love that sprung up in the crevice of a broken heart.

I do not know Christina's history; but I imagine it would not be impossible to guess. I think that a page of it was written on the face of the child.

Agnes was fairer than her mother; she had her mother's willowy form, the same ductile voice; but the light hair, thin lips, and sensitive nostrils, were not of Christina's race. The passions of two alien natures were welded in that diminutive frame.

Howland and I had made a pet of the girl, for she had a hundred pretty womanly ways, and a certain sadness older than herself — a sadness peculiar to such waifs.

The sick child lay up stairs, in Christina's sleeping-room. One glance at the serene face assured us there was no hope: the radiance of another world was dawning on the forehead.

That night little Agnes passed away. I was sorry for Christina, but not for little Agnes!

Christina, in her bereavement, was not noisy and absurd, like women I have seen. Servitude had been a hundred years taming the blood in her veins.

Her grief expressed itself in silent caresses. She sat by the bedside all day, dressing the child with flowers. Now she would lay a knot of pansies on the still heart, now she would smooth one of the pitiful little hands — yearning, dying for some faint sign of recognition. Then she picked off the flowers, one by one, and rearranged them. Fondly combed the long silk hair over her fingers, with a sad half-smile, and not a tear comforting her dry eyelids. There was pathos in that.

> "Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak,
> Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break."

The carriage which was to convey the child to the cemetery, drew up at our door early in the afternoon.

When Christina heard the wheels grate on the curb-stone, her lip quivered, and she reached out her arms, as if she would fold the babe forever on the bosom where it could never nestle again.

"Not yet, please — not *quite* yet!"

The sorrow and supplication of those words were not to be resisted.

It was almost dark when Cip raised the light coffin in his arms, and bore it, with a sort of rough kindness, to the carriage. His violin was mute, that night, and many a night afterwards.

As the gate shut to, Christina stood on the piazza, with that same sad half-smile on her lips.

"Good-bye, little Agnes!" she said, with touching tenderness.

Then Christina went into the house, and closed the door softly.

CHAPTER X.

The Red Domino.

OWLAND and myself sat on the back seat, and Cip outside with the driver. So we moved on.

Saving an occasional hearse, intersecting our way, the streets were silent and deserted as usual. The tall houses, here and there looming up against the increasing twilight, were like the ghosts of houses. The sweet human life in them had fled. Everything was spectral and unreal, we most of all, with that slim black box on the front seat. A phantom carriage, dragged by phantom horses to a graveyard!

We left Agnes in the leafy French cemetery; and, sending the negro home with the barouche, followed on leisurely, threading the narrow streets, arm in arm, as speechless as two statues.

We were in what is termed the French part of the city, one of the lower municipalities — a district as distinct from the American precincts as Paris is. Here, in dangerous times, long ago, a few brave men laid the foundation of the great and miserable city. The houses, to all appearances, were built immediately after the Deluge; and the streets, crowded with the odd-ends of architecture, branch off into each other in the most whimsical fashion.

As we wheeled round the angle of one of these wrinkled thoroughfares, our ears were saluted by an exclamation of deep satisfaction, and a merry peal of girlish laughter; at the same instant we found ourselves face to face with two persons who were apparently costumed for a bal masque — one, with a certain uncouth dignity, in the showy court-dress of the time of Louis Quatorze, and the

other, seemingly a young and pretty woman, dressed as a page. The faces of both were concealed by semi-masks, a short fringed curtain shielding the lower features.

A door at the right of us was thrown open, and a flood of light fell glitteringly on these two personages who occupied the confined sidewalk, and seemed disposed to dispute our passage.*

Howland attempted to push by when the page laid her small gloved hand on his shoulder.

"By your leave, messieurs," said the page, "this is Louis XIV! — is n't it, Charley?"

The man nodded.

"We were instructed by our queen," continued the mask, "to fill two vacant seats at her royal board. She gives a banquet to-night; plates were set for twenty favorites of the ermine. Eighteen came, and two did n't — they neglected even to

* This probably took place during that period of festivity which precedes Lent, it still being a custom, among the Franco-American population of New Orleans, to "keep the Carnival." — EDITOR.

send their regrets. Impolite in them — was n't it, Charley? "

"Confoundedly," said the monarch, curtly.

"But they had some slight excuse; they were quite dead; and we forgive 'em, don't we, Charley? "

"We forgive 'em."

"What does all this mummery mean? " said Howland, impatiently.

"There! don't be cross. It means that we crave your presence at the feast. O, you must come! Or we'll have the whole regal household buzzing at your ears in a pair of seconds! "

While the girl spoke, a dozen maskers — mandarins, satyrs, and outlandish figures, — crowded the doorway, and seemed waiting only for the word to seize us bodily. There was no chance for retreat.

"Let us go with these jesters," said Howland, in a whisper, "since we cannot help ourselves without trouble. We are among the Romans. This is a new edition of the *Decamerone*."

"How fortunately we met you," cried the girl. "Come!"

Her mask slipped aside, and for an instant I caught a profile view of a pretty, aquiline nose, one sunny eye, and a mouth like a moss-rose.

"Now, Mollie," said the man, thrusting his arm through mine. The page took coquettish possession of Howland.

We were conducted throught a bare, uncarpeted entry, at the end of which a green-baize door opened into a saloon. The masqueraders whom we had seen at the entrance, now seated themselves at the table, which extended nearly the entire length of the room.

Our appearance on the threshold was greeted with a shout of laughter.

A woman in a blood-red domino and scarlet satin mask, half rose from a fauteuil, as we entered, waved her hand to us graciously, and sunk back on the downy cushions with such unassumed grace and majesty, that I involuntarily

removed my hat. Howland bit his lip, and made a low bow.

"You are welcome, gentlemen," said the Red Domino.

The voice was low, and sweet, and tremulous, like the sound of a harp-string, lightly touched.

The page proceeded to introduce to us the motley people, half of whom were women, and all evidently citizens of Bohemia.

"This," began the girl, with mock gravity, "is our light-o'-foot, Zephyr, eating caramels; that dear creature, there, in blue, who is waiting for a chance to press Jacques' fingers under the table, is called Next-to-heaven, but she's only next to Jacques, which is much the same thing. The young lady with wings, who looks as if she were going to fly away, and never does, is L'Amour. Dear me! some of you have characters, and some of you have n't. This is Rose Bonbon, and this, Madam la Marquise with the snowiest shoulder in Louisiana. You should see them with their masks off — and be unhappy!"

"This," proceeded the speaker, turning to a slim harlequin, who resembled the small blade of a penknife, "is a sentimental gentleman who writes verses to eyebrows — he makes six copies of each sonetto, and so kills half a dozen birds with one stone. This is Robert le — what's-his name. This is Hamlet, you know him by his inky cloak: this is Petruchio, the woman-tamer tamed by a woman, (Mrs. P. lectures him!) and here is Friar Lawrence, who will confess you for a picayune, provided, always, you are young, handsome, and feminine — but you must be the last, he's so pious!"

"And you," said Howland, smiling in spite of himself, "you are — "

"Nobody in particular, very much at your service!"

And the girl walked archly away on the points of her toes, like a ballet-dancer.

While this outré introduction was being concluded, I glanced around the salon. A globed lamp, suspended by a silver chain, hung like a

full moon over the centre of the table. Projecting from the frescoed walls on either side were Chinese lanterns, covered with flat landscapes and hieroglyphics. Ancient, mediæval and modern furniture was piled about the room in grotesque confusion. It was like an antiquary's collection. No two pieces matching. One window was hung with blue brocade, alive with an Etruscan vine-work of gold thread; a second, unpleasantly green with a Venitian blind. The floor was muffled in a Turkish carpet, wrought so naturally with azaleas and ipomeas, that their perfumes seemed to fill the chamber.

But the lounges, the drapery, and the inlaid chairs, as I looked at them more closely, proved to be only clever imitations of the real thing — the painted and gilded paraphernalia of the stage. This room, I have since thought, was probably the green-room of the Italian Opera House, fitted up for the occasion, from "the properties."

We took our places at the table, and the wine went round; jests flew from lip to lip, like

mocking-birds, and "short swallow-flights of song" from the mouths of mysterious women; while a band of unseen musicians, somewhere behind a screen, now and then broke into a delirious waltz.

All this was so bizarre, so like an ingenious dream, that I expected every moment to wake up, and find myself sitting on our verandah, at home, a burnt-out segar at my feet, and the fountain laughing in the garden.

Howland alone was silent and distrait, emptying glass after glass with the mechanical air of an automaton.

Opposite him sat a bleak, attenuated man clad in black silk tights, the breast and hips of which were trimmed with strips of white cloth, in painful imitation of a skeleton. His hands were long and bony, and needed no artifice to make them seem as if they belonged to the pasteboard death's-head that screened his features.

After some minutes, I became aware that this singular person regulated his motions by those of

Howland, resting his head on one hand, and draining his glass at the same time Mark drank. I wondered if Howland noticed him.

"A toast!" cried the Harlequin, springing up in his chair, and resting one parti-colored foot on the edge of the table.

We all stood, excepting the Red Domino, with fresh glasses. I did not hear what the toast was, for clink! went a glass; and the sharp splinters sparkled on the cloth.

"The queen has dropt her goblet," said Rose Bonbon.

"Then she must sing us a song to take the sound out of our ears," cried the Friar.

"A penalty, a penalty!"

"A song!" shrieked a dozen voices.

The Red Domino rose slowly from the fauteuil, and the voice which I had longed to hear again, issued tremulously from beneath the chin-curtain of the mask. I watched her eyes as she sang:

"Dall' imo del mio core
Sorse una sol preoe,

Che l' idol mio ammiri,
Che io l' ammiri, e muoia."

Here the skeleton-man leaned heavily against the table, and Howland smiled — but such a bitter smile. He had won the drinking match!

Two maskers carried the mime, who had merely fainted, to an adjoining room.

"That was the cantatrice's husband," said the Blue Lady to me, in a whisper,

"Her husband? Good heavens! see how coolly she takes it!"

"Yes. La Reine does n't worship him."

"No?"

"The Cholera," said the Harlequin.

"The dark Death," said Hamlet, "'a little more than kin and less than kind!'"

"The song, give us the song!" cried a man, covered from head to feet with spangles, looking as if he had just been dipt into a bath of quicksilver.

"The song, the song!" shrieked the voices.

The Red Domino had not changed her position

during this scene, but stood there like a statue carved out of a boulder of red chalk-stone.

Howland, with his face deathly pale, bent forward to listen.

Again that sweet voice, lower and more tremulous than before, stole into the air.

It was not fancy this time, her eyes burned through the mask at Mark:

> "Alfin, com' alma peccatrice,
> Alle porte del ciel io giungo,
> Non per entrar cogli eletti,
> Oh! giammai . . , . soltanto per morir."

Howland rose wildly from his chair, and staggering toward the Red Domino, sunk down at her feet.

"I am dying," said Howland, "but I know that voice! My heart is breaking with it!"

With an air of love and remorse, she stooped over Mark, and folded him in her arms.

"Your face!" said Howland. "Your face, quick! Let me look on your face!"

Then Celeste tore off the mask and rested her head on his bosom. Then she sobbed and moaned — the soul that was within her.

So she comes to me out of the gray mists and shadows of the Past — the woman who found her heart when it was somewhat late.

This was years ago. But every Mardi Gras, it is said, a sorrowful queenly lady, robed from foot to forehead in deep crimson, glides in among the gayer maskers, and whenever she appears, the laugh dies on the lip.

CHAPTER XI.

The Danseuse.

THE ensuing summer I returned North depressed by the result of my sojourn in New Orleans. It was only by devoting myself, body and soul, to some intricate pursuit that I could dispel the gloom which threatened to seriously affect my health.

The Moon-Apparatus was insufficient to distract me. I turned my attention to mechanism, and was successful in producing several wonderful pieces of work, among which may be mentioned a brass butterfly, made to flit so naturally in the air as to deceive the most acute observers. The

motion of the toy, the soft down and gorgeous damask-stains on the pinions, were declared quite perfect. The thing is rusty and wont work now; I tried to set it going for Dr. Pendegrast, the other day.

A manikin musician, playing a few exquisite airs on a miniature piano, likewise excited much admiration. This figure bore such an absurd, unintentional resemblance to a gentleman who has since distinguished himself as a pianist, that I presented the trifle to a lady admirer of Gottschalk.

I also became a taxidermist, and stuffed a pet bird with springs and diminutive flutes, causing it to hop and carol, in its cage, with great glee. But my master-piece was a nimble white mouse, with pink eyes, that could scamper up the walls, and masticate bits of cheese in an extraordinary style. My chamber-maid shrieked, and jumped up on a chair, whenever I let the little fellow loose in her presence. One day, unhappily, the mouse, while nosing around after its favorite

aliment, got snapt in a rat-trap that yawned in the closet, and I was never able to readjust the machinery.

Engaged in these useful inventions, — useful, because no exercise of the human mind is ever in vain, — my existence for two or three years was so placid and uneventful, I began to hope that the shadows which had followed on my path from childhood, making me unlike other men, had returned to that unknown world where they properly belong; but the Fates were only taking breath to work out more surely the problem of my destiny. I must keep nothing back. I must extenuate nothing.

I am about to lift the vail of mystery which, for nearly seven years, has shrouded the story of Mary Ware; and though I lay bare my own weakness, or folly, or what you will, I do not shrink from the unvailing.

No hand but mine can now perform the task. There was, indeed, a man who might have done

this better than I. But he went his way in silence. I like a man who can hold his tongue.

On the corner of Clarke and Crandall streets, in New York, stands a dingy brown frame-house. It is a very old house, as its obsolete style of structure would tell you. It has a morose, unhappy look, though once it must have been a blythe mansion. I think that houses, like human beings, ultimately become dejected or cheerful, according to their experience. The very air of some front-doors tells their history.

This house, I repeat, has a morose, unhappy look, at present, and is tenanted by an incalculable number of Irish families, while a picturesque junk-shop is in full blast in the basement; but at the time of which I write, it was a second-rate boarding-place, of the more respectable sort, and rather largely patronized by poor, but honest, literary men, tragic-actors, members of the chorus, and such like gilt people.

My apartments on Crandall street, were opposite this building, to which my attention wa

directed soon after taking possession of the rooms, by the discovery of the following facts:

First, that a charming lady lodged on the second-floor front, and sang like a canary every morning.

Second, that her name was Mary Ware.

Third, that Mary Ware was a danseuse, and had two lovers — only two.

Fourth, that Mary Ware and the page, who, years before, had drawn Howland and myself into that fatal masquerade, were the same person.

This last discovery moved me strangely, aside from the fact that her presence opened an old wound. The power which guides all the actions of my life constrained me to watch this woman.

Mary Ware was the leading-lady at The Olympic. Night after night found me in the parquette. I can think of nothing with which to compare the airiness and utter abandon of her dancing. She seemed a part of the music. She was one of beauty's best thoughts, then. Her glossy gold hair reached down to her waist,

shading one of those mobile faces which remind you of Guido's picture of Beatrix Cenci — there was something so fresh and enchanting in the mouth. Her luminous, almond eyes, looking out winningly from under their drooping fringes, were at once the delight and misery of young men.

Ah! you were distracting in your nights of triumph, when the bouquets nestled about your elastic ankles, and the kissing of your castanets made the pulses leap; but I remember when you lay on your cheerless bed, in the blank daylight, with the glory faded from your brow, and "none so poor as to do you reverence."

Then I stooped down and kissed you — but not till then.

Mary Ware was to me a finer study than her lovers. She had two, as I have said. One of them was commonplace enough — well-made, well-dressed, shallow, flaccid. Nature, when she gets out of patience with her best works, throws off such things by the gross, instead of swearing.

He was a lieutenant, in the navy I think. The gilt button has charms to soothe the savage breast.

The other was a man of different mould, and interested me in a manner for which I could not then account. The first time I saw him did not seem like the first time. But this, perhaps, is an after-impression.

Every line of his countenance denoted character; a certain capability, I mean, but whether for good or evil was not so plain. I should have called him handsome, but for a noticeable scar which ran at right angles across his mouth, giving him a sardonic expression when he smiled.

His frame might have set an anatomist wild with delight — six feet two, deep-chested, knitted with tendons of steel. Not at all a fellow to amble on plush carpets.

"Some day," thought I, as I saw him stride by the house, "he will throw the little Lieutenant out of that second-story window."

I cannot tell, to this hour, which of those two men Mary Ware loved most — for I think she

loved them both. A woman's heart was the insolvable charade with which the Sphinx nipt the Egyptians. I was never good at puzzles.

The flirtation, however, was food enough for the whole neighborhood. But faintly did the gossips dream of the strange drama that was being shaped out, as compactly as a tragedy of Sophocles, under their noses.

They were very industrious in tearing Mary Ware's good name to pieces. Some laughed at the gay Lieutenant, and some at Julius Kenneth; but they all amiably united in condemning Mary Ware.

This, possibly, was strictly proper, for Mary Ware was a woman: the woman is always to blame in such cases; the man is hereditarily and constitutionally in the right; the woman is born in the wrong. That is the world's verdict, that is what Justice says; but we should weigh the opinion of Justice with care, since she is represented, by poets and sculptors, not satirically, I trust, as a blind Woman.

It was so from the beginning. Was not the first lady of the world the cause of all our woe? I feel safe in leaving it to a jury of gentle dames. But from all such judges, had I a sister on trial good Lord deliver her.

This state of affairs had continued for five or six months, when it was reported that Julius Kenneth and Mary Ware were affianced. The Lieutenant was less frequently seen in Crandall street, and Julius waited upon Mary's footsteps with the fidelity of a shadow.

Mrs. Grundy was somewhat appeased.

Yet — though Mary went to the Sunday concerts with Julius Kenneth, she still wore the Lieutenant's roses in her bosom.

Mrs. Grundy said that.

CHAPTER XII.

A Mystery.

NE drizzly November morning — how well I remember it! — I was awakened by a series of nervous raps on my bed-room door. The noise startled me from an unpleasant dream.

"O, sir!" cried the chamber-maid on the landing, "There's been a dreadful time across the street. They've gone and killed Mary Ware!"

"Ah!"

That was all I could say. Cold drops of perspiration stood on my forehead.

looked at my watch; it was eleven o'clock;

I had over-slept myself, having sat up late the previous night.

I dressed hastily, and, without waiting for breakfast, pushed my way through the murky crowd that had collected in front of the house opposite, and passed up stairs, unquestioned.

When I entered the room, there were six people present: a thick-set gentleman, in black, with a bland professional air, a physician; two policemen; Adelaide Woods, an actress; Mrs. Marston, the landlady; and Julius Kenneth.

In the centre of the chamber, on the bed, lay the body of Mary Ware — as pale as Seneca's wife.

I shall never forget it. The corse haunted me for years afterwards, the dark streaks under the eyes, and the wavy hair streaming over the pillow — the dead gold hair. I stood by her for moment, and turned down the counterpane, which was drawn up closely to the chin.

> "There was that across her throat
> Which you had hardly cared to see."

At the head of the bed sat Julius Kenneth, bending over the icy hand which he held in his own. He was kissing it.

The gentleman in black was conversing in undertones with Mrs. Marston, who every now and then glanced furtively toward Mary Ware.

The two policemen were examining the doors, closets and windows of the apartment with, obviously, little success.

There was no fire in the air-tight stove, but the place was suffocatingly close. I opened a window, and leaned against the casement to get a breath of fsesh air.

The physician approached me. I muttered something to him indistinctly, for I was partly sick with the peculiar mouldy smell that pervaded the room.

"Yes," he began, scrutinizing me, "the affair looks very perplexing, as you remark. Professional man, sir? No? Bless me! — beg pardon. Never in my life saw anything that looked so exceedingly like nothing. Thought, at first, 'twas

a clear case of suicide — door locked, key on the inside, place undisturbed; but then we find no instrument with which the subject could have inflicted that wound on the neck. Queer. Party must have escaped up chimney. But how? Don't know. The windows are at least thirty feet from the ground. It would be impossible for a person to jump that far, even if he could clear the iron railing below. Which he could'nt. Disagreeable things to jump on, those spikes, sir. Must have been done with a sharp knife. Queer, very. Party meant to make sure work of it. The carotid neatly severed, upon my word."

The medical gentleman went on in this monologuic style for fifteen minutes, during which time Kenneth did not raise his lips from Mary's fingers.

Approaching the bed, I spoke to him; but he only shook his head in reply.

I understood his grief.

After regaining my chamber, I sat listlessly for three or four hours, gazing into the grate. The twilight flitted in from the street; but I did not

heed it. A face among the coals fascinated me. It came and went and came. Now I saw a cavern hung with lurid stalactites; now a small Vesuvius vomiting smoke and flame; now a bridge spanning some tartarean gulf; then these crumbled, each in its turn, and from out the heated fragments peered the one inevitable face.

The *Evening Mirror*, of that day, gave the following detailed report of the inquest:

"This morning, at eight o'clock, Mary Ware, the celebrated danseuse, was found dead in her chamber, at her late residence on the corner of Clarke and Crandall streets. The perfect order of the room, and the fact that the door was locked on the inside, have induced many to believe that the poor girl was the victim of her own rashness. But we cannot think so. That the door was fastened on the inner side, proves nothing except, indeed, that the murderer was hidden in the apartment. That the room gave no evidence of a struggle having taken place, is also an insignificant

point. Two men, or even one, grappling suddenly with the deceased, who was a slight woman, would have prevented any great resistance. The deceased was dressed in a ballet-costume, and was, as we conjecture, murdered directly after her return from the theatre. On a chair near the bed, lay several fresh bouquets, and a water-proof cloak which she was in the habit of wearing over her dancing-dress, on coming home from the theatre at night. No weapon whatever was found on the premises. We give below all the material testimony elicited by the coroner. It explains little.

"*Josephine Marston* deposes: I keep a boarding house at No. 131 Crandall street. Miss Ware has boarded with me for the past two years. Has always borne a good character as far as I know. I do not think she had many visitors; certainly no male visitors, excepting a Lieutenant King, and Mr. Kenneth to whom she was engaged. I do not know when King was last at the house; not within three days, I am confident. Deceased told

me that he had gone away. I did not see her last night when she came home. The hall-door is never locked; each of the boarders has a latch-key. The last time I saw Miss Ware was just before she went to the theatre, when she asked me to call her at eight o'clock (this morning) as she had promised to walk with 'Jules,' meaning Mr. Kenneth. I knocked at the door nine or ten times, but received no answer. Then I grew frightened and called one of the lady boarders, Miss Woods, who helped me to force the lock. The key fell on the floor inside as we pushed against the door. Mary Ware was lying on the bed, dressed. Some matches were scattered under the gas-burner by the bureau. The room presented the same appearance it does now.

"*Adelaide Woods* deposes: I am an actress by profession. I occupy the room next to that of the deceased. Have known her twelve months. It was half-past eleven when she came home; she stopped in my chamber for perhaps three-quarters of an hour. The call-boy of The Olympic usually

accompanies her home from the theatre when she is alone. I let her in. Deceased had misplaced her night-key. The partition between our rooms is of brick; but I do not sleep soundly, and should have heard any unusual noise. Two weeks ago, Miss Ware told me she was to be married to Mr. Kenneth in January next. The last time I saw them together was the day before yesterday. I assisted Mrs Marston in breaking open the door. [Describes the position of the body, etc., etc.]

"Here the call-boy was summoned, and testified to accompanying the deceased home the night before. He came as far as the steps with her. The door was opened by a woman; could not swear it was Miss Woods, though he knows her by sight. The night was dark, and there was no lamp burning in the entry.

"*Julius Kenneth* deposes: I am a master-machinist. Reside at No. — Forsythe street. Miss Ware was my cousin. We were engaged to be married next — [Here the witness' voice failed him.] The last time I saw her was on

Wednesday morning, on which occasion we walked out together. I did not leave my room last evening: was confined by a severe cold. A Lieutenant King used to visit my cousin frequently; it created considerable talk in the neighborhood: I did not like it, and requested her to break the acquaintance. She informed me, Wednesday, that King had been ordered to some foreign station, and would trouble me no more Was excited at the time, hinted at being tired of living; then laughed, and was gayer than she had been for weeks. Deceased was subject to fits of depression. She had engaged to walk with me this morning at eight. When I reached Clark street I learned that she — [Here the witness, overcome by emotion, was allowed to retire.]

"*Dr. Wren* deposes: [This gentleman was very learned and voluble, and had to be suppressed several times by the coroner. We furnish a brief synopsis of his testimony.] I was called in to view the body of the deceased. A deep incision on the throat, two inches below the left

ear, severing the left common carotid and the internal jugular vein, had been inflicted with some sharp instrument. Such a wound would, in my opinion, produce death almost instantaneously. The body bore no other signs of violence. A slight mark, almost indistinguishable, in fact, extended from the upper lip toward the right nostril — some hurt, I suppose, received in infancy. Deceased must have been dead a number of hours, the rigor mortis having already supervened, etc., etc.

"*Dr. Ceccarini* corroborated the above testimony.

"The night-watchman and seven other persons were then placed on the stand; but their statements threw no fresh light on the case.

"The situation of Julius Kenneth, the lover of the ill-fated girl, draws forth the deepest commiseration. Miss Ware was twenty-four years of age.

"Who the criminal is, and what could have led to the perpetration of the cruel act, are ques-

tions which, at present, threaten to baffle the sagacity of the police. If such deeds can be committed with impunity in a crowded city, like this, who is safe from the assassin's steel?"

CHAPTER XIII.

Thou art the Man.

I COULD but smile on reading all this serious nonsense.

After breakfast, the next morning, I made my toilet with extreme care, and presented myself at the sheriff's office.

Two gentlemen who were sitting at a table, busy with papers, started nervously to their feet, as I announced myself. I bowed very calmly to the sheriff, and said,

"*I am the person who murdered Mary Ware!*"

Of course I was instantly arrested; and that evening, in jail, I had the equivocal pleasure of reading these paragraphs among the police items of the *Mirror:*

"The individual who murdered the ballet-girl, in the night of the third inst., in a house on Crandall street, surrendered himself to the sheriff this forenoon.

"He gave his name as Paul Lynde, and resides opposite the place where the tragedy was enacted. He is a man of medium stature, has restless gray eyes, chestnust hair, and a supernaturally pale countenance. He seems a person of excellent address, is said to be wealthy, and nearly connected with an influential New England family. Notwithstanding his gentlemanly manner, there is that about him which would lead one to select him from out a thousand, as a man of cool and desperate character.

"Mr. Lynde's voluntary surrender is not the least astonishing feature of this affair; for, had he preserved silence he would, beyond a doubt, have escaped even suspicion. The murder was planned and executed with such deliberate skill, that there is little or no evidence to complicate him. In truth, there is *no* evidence against him, excepting

his own confession, which is meagre and confusing enough. He freely acknowledges the crime, but stubbornly refuses to enter into any details. He expresses a desire to be hanged immediately ! !

"How Mr. Lynde entered the chamber, and by what means he left it, after committing the deed, and why he cruelly killed a lady with whom he had had (as we gather from the testimony,) no previous acquaintance, — are enigmas which still perplex the public mind, and will not let curiosity sleep. These facts, however, will probably be brought to light during the impending trial. In the meantime, we await the dénouement with interest."

CHAPTER XIV.

Paul's Confession.

N the afternoon following this disclosure, the door of my cell turned on its hinges, and Julius Kenneth entered.

In *his* presence I ought to have trembled; but I was calm and collected. He, feverish and dangerous.

"You received my note?"

"Yes; and have come here, as you requested."

I waved him to a chair, which he refused to take. Stood leaning on the back of it.

"You of course know, Mr. Kenneth, that I have refused to reveal the circumstances connected

with the death of Mary Ware? I wished to make the confession to you alone."

He regarded me for a moment from beneath his shaggy eyebrows.

"Well?"

"But even to you I will assign no reason for the course I pursued. It was necessary that Mary Ware should die."

"Well?"

"I decided that she should die in her chamber, and to that end I purloined her night-key.

Julius Kenneth looked through and through me, as I spoke.

"On Friday night after she had gone to the theatre, I entered the hall-door by means of the key, and stole unobserved to her room, where I secreted myself under the bed, or in that small clothes-press near the stove — I forget which. Sometime between eleven and twelve o'clock, Mary Ware returned. While she was in the act of lighting the gas, I pressed a handkerchief, saturated with chloroform, over her mouth. You

know the effect of chloroform? I will, at this point spare you further detail, merely remarking that I threw my gloves and the handkerchief in the stove; but I'm afraid there was not fire enough to consume them."

Kenneth walked up and down the cell greatly agitated; then seated himself on the foot of the bed

"Curse you!"

"Are you listening to me, Mr. Kenneth?"

"Yes!"

"I extinguished the light, and proceeded to make my escape from the room, which I did in a manner so simple that the detectives, through their desire to ferret out wonderful things, will never discover it, unless, indeed, *you* betray me. The night, you will recollect, was foggy; it was impossible to discern an object at four yards distance — this was fortunate for me. I raised the window-sash and let myself out cautiously, holding on by the sill, until my feet touched on the moulding which caps the window below. I then

drew down the sash. By standing on the extreme left of the cornice, I was able to reach the tin water-spout of the adjacent building, and by that I descended to the sidewalk."

The man glowered at me like a tiger, his eyes green and golden with excitement: I have since wondered that he did not tear me to pieces.

"On gaining the street," I continued coolly, "I found that I had brought the knife with me. It should have been left in the chamber — it would have given the whole thing the aspect of suicide. It was too late to repair the blunder, so I threw the knife —" .

"Into the river!" exclaimed Kenneth, involuntarily.

And then I smiled.

"How did you know it was I!" he shrieked.

"Hush! they will overhear you in the corridor. It was as plain as day. I knew it before I had been five minutes in the room. First, because you shrank instinctively from the corpse, though you seemed to be caressing it. Secondly, when I

looked into the stove, I saw a glove and handkerchief, partly consumed; and then I instantly accounted for the faint close smell which had affected me before the room was ventilated. It was chloroform. Thirdly, when I went to open the window, I noticed that the paint was scraped off the brackets which held the spout to the next house. This conduit had been newly painted two days previously — I watched the man at work; the paint on the brackets was thicker than anywhere else, and had not dried. On looking at your feet, which I did critically, while speaking to you, I saw that the leather on the inner side of each boot was slightly chafed, paint-marked. It is a way of mine to put this and that together!"

"If you intend to betray me — "

"O, no, but I don't, or I should not be here — alone with you. I am, as you may allow, not quite a fool."

"Indeed, sir, you are as subtle as — "

"Yes, I would n't mention him."

"Who?"

"The devil."

Kenneth mused.

"May I ask, Mr. Lynde, what you intend to do?"

"Certainly — remain here."

"I don't understand you," said Kenneth with an air of perplexity.

"If you will listen patiently, you shall learn why *I* have acknowledged this deed, why *I* would bear the penalty. I believe there are vast, intense sensations from which we are excluded, by the conventional fear of a certain kind of death. Now, this pleasure, this ecstacy, this something, I don't know what, which I have striven for all my days, is known only to a privileged few — innocent men, who, through some oversight of the law, are *hanged by the neck!* How rich is Nature in compensations! Some men are born to be hung, some have hanging thrust upon them, and some (as I hope to do,) achieve hanging. It appears ages since I commenced watching for an opportunity like this. Worlds could not tempt

me to divulge your guilt, nor could worlds have tempted me to commit your crime, for a man's conscience should be at ease to enjoy, to the utmost, this delicious death! Our interview is at at end, Mr. Kenneth. I held it my duty to say this much to you."

And I turned my back on him.

"One word, Mr. Lynde."

Kenneth came to my side, and laid a heavy hand on my shoulder, that red right hand, which all the tears of the angels cannot make white again.

As he stood there, his face suddenly grew so familiar to me — yet so vaguely familiar — that I started. It seemed as if I had seen such a face, somewhere, in my dreams, hundreds of years ago. The face in the grate.

"Did you send this to me last month?" asked Kenneth, holding up a slip of paper on which was scrawled, *Watch them* — in my handwriting.

"Yes," I answered.

Then it struck me that these few thoughtless

words, which some sinister spirit had impelled me to write, were the indirect cause of the whole catastrophe.

"Thank you," he said hurriedly. "I watched them!" Then, after a pause, "I shall go far from here. I can not, I *will* not die yet. Mary was to have been my wife, so she would have hidden her shame — O cruel! she, my own cousin, and we the last two of our race! Life is not sweet to me, it is bitter, bitter; but I shall live until I stand front to front with *him*. And you? They will not harm you — *you* are a madman!"

Julius Kenneth was gone before I could reply. The cell door shut him out forever — shut him out in the flesh. His spirit was not so easily exorcised.

After all, it was a wretched fiasco. Two officious friends of mine, who had played chess with me, at my lodgings, on the night of the 3rd, proved an alibi; and I was literally turned out of the Tombs; for I insisted on being executed.

Then it was maddening to have the newspapers call me a monomaniac.

I a monomaniac?

What was Pythagoras, Newton, Fulton? Have not the great original lights of every age, been regarded as madmen? Science, like religion, has its martyrs.

Recent surgical discoveries have, I believe, sustained me in my theory; or, if not, they ought to have done so. There is said to be a pleasure in drowning. Why not in strangulation?

In another field of science, I shall probably have full justice awarded me — I now allude to the Moon-Apparatus, which is still in an unfinished state, but progressing.

CHAPTER XV.

A Long Journey.

JULIUS KENNETH disappeared from the city. If his sudden departure was noticed, it excited no comment. No one suspected the important rôle he had played in the tragedy; and the public ceased to be interested, as new events crowded it off the stage. If anybody recalled the circumstance, it was only to wonder, and be lost in the impenetrable darkness which wrapt the story of Mary Ware.

I think that twelve months, or more, had passed when I first got tidings of Julius Kenneth — he had sailed out of New Bedford, or Marblehead, or somewhere, in a whaling ship.

For two years I lost all trace of him. Then he abruptly turned up at Panama, on the way to California.

Then I heard of him in a small town on the coast of South America.

Then in India.

Then in Switzerland.

Afterwards in Egypt, and Syria.

Always wandering.

Travellers, when they came home, spoke of a tall gaunt man that went stalking about the ends of the earth.

And I pictured him to myself — roaming moodily from place to place, incessant, tireless, urged on; and ever before him flew a frightened little Shape that was ready to drop dead, whenever it paused to look back, and saw this perpetual man at its heels.

And the man, too, I fancied, sometimes looked back — and then he pressed on more rapidly. Always wandering.

Whether Julius Kenneth ever caught up with

this Shape, or even if he were ever searching for any one in these weary journeys, I never knew: but I know that the chief trouble of my life, at that time, was the thought of this man coming and going, so ceaselessly.

Always wandering. No resting spot. No tranquil fireside. But on through snow-storms.

Whipped by the sleet.

Burnt by the sun.

Blinded by the bronzed dust of the desert.

I used to lie in bed, and think of him, — prowling about the Pyramids, in the gray dawn; or standing alone in the Arctic midnight; or gazing up at the crags of Ben Nevis; or among the Caffre huts; or sitting by the camp-fires of the Bedouins — as fine an Arab as any of them. Then he drifted down reedy rivers in more boats, and tossed on the ocean in more ships than were ever built in the world.

I was unable, even for an hour, to rid myself of the magnetic influence he exerted over me. I always knew where he was, or thought I knew.

If I took up a volume of Travels, this man went with me from beginning to end — always the hero of every perilous adventure, always doing everything but stopping.

If, by any chance, I looked in at Matelli's shop-window, where there used to be an Alpine landscape, composed of confectionary, Julius Kenneth, in chocolate, was always sure to be scaling sugar precipices, setting my hair on end with terror.

He became an irrepressible torment to me, an incubus day and night. I am not clear as to how many years this lasted.

But one summer morning, I woke up refreshed from a dream in which he did not intrude. A weight seemed lifted off my mind; a cloud gone; and I knew that Julius Kenneth, somewhere and somehow, had ended his wanderings — or, rather, that he had started on a very long pilgrimage!

CHAPTER XVI.

Out of His Head.

THE thought that I shall be insane, some day, that I shall be taken from the restless world outside, to some quiet inner retreat where I can complete the Moon-Apparatus, and fold my arms, like a man who has fulfilled his mission; the thought of this, my probable destiny, is rather pleasant to me than otherwise.

I say probable destiny, because a certain trivial aberration of mind has been handed down in our family from generation to generation, with the dented silver bowl in which Miles Standish brewed many a punch in the olden time. This

punch, I fancy, must have somehow got into the heads of our family, and put us out. Dr. Pendegrast thinks so.

At all events, *I* am to be insane. I have made up my mind to that.

But not yet.

I am as reasonable and matter-of-fact as a man may well be. This house in which I pass my days and nights, writing, is not an asylum: this mullioned window, I grant you, is substantially barred; but that is to keep mad folks out. I sit here, by the grating, and watch them — princes and beggars, going up and down. Am I to become mellow in the head like these?

Ay; but not yet.

The man who brings me food three times a day, is not my keeper; the refined and cheerful gentlemen with whom I converse in our high-walled garden, are not monomaniacs.

There is Sir Philip Sidney, who occupies an elegant suit of drawing-rooms on my left — the pathetic dandy! I like him, though. When he

takes off his kids, he has pluck. There is the learned Magliabechi, on my right, busy with his rare folios. There is the moon-painter, Claude Lorraine (fifth floor, back,) who talks in pigments, as if he had swallowed a spear of the northern lights. And there is young John Keats, down stairs, pondering over a vellum-bound missal, illumined by some monk of the middle ages. (Keats informs me that he seriously thinks of finishing that fragment of Hyperion.)

They are not idiots, as the times go; they are glorious poets and philanthropists whose thoughts are the blood of the world.

The shadow of the church-steeple has slanted across the street. It is twilight. The air is full of uncertain shapes and sounds; the houses over the way, look as if they were done in sepia; people are walking dreamily through the hushed streets, like apparitions; and the agile apothecary, on the corner, has fired up the amber and emerald jars in his show-case.

The girl in the tailor's shop, opposite, leans out of the window, brown in the dusk, a mere crayon outline of a girl; she fastens back the blind, showing me how prettily she is made. Now the lamps are lighted. The grocery-man's boy lounges, looking up at her window. I wonder if he is watching the plump little figure that comes and goes on the curtain?

It is twilight. Everything is comforted and subdued: a gentle spirit lays its finger on the lips of care .... even on my lips ...

Here comes that genial man, with the wire-covered candle, and my supper.

"How do you find yourself, sir?" says the man, smiling benignantly at the ceiling.

"Extremely well, thank you, what's-your-name," I reply. "By the way, I wish you'd tell Magliabechi that I'd like to have a word with him."

"Now, could n't you be so kind as to wait till morning?" says the man, pleasantly.

I look upon this as very considerate in him, and conclude to wait.

I wonder who he is?

He certainly takes great interest in me. I will do something for him, when the Moon-Apparatus is completed. He deserves it. Dr. Pendegrast must know him. If I should ever get out of my head, and I shall, some day, I know, it would be pleasant to have such a well-bred, affable fellow for my —

Alas! how can I speak thus confidently of the future, when — if my calculations are correct, and everything assures they are — the long-expected crisis is at hand? How can I pen these worse than idle words, when I have barely time to conclude the task which I dare not leave undone or slighted?

What people are these hovering silently in the shadow of my bookcases? Who is the slight girl that looks upon me with such serious eyes? and who is she that seems so woe-begone in her

tinselled dress? There are two men in the group — a pale, sad man, like one I knew long ago: a tall, brawny man, stained with travel, his face scorched by the sun, and his feet red with desert sand. The end must be near since these have come to me.

Hasten back, wayworn pilgrims, to the dim confines of the world we are to share together.

"Stay for me there! I shall not fail
To meet thee in that hollow vale."

CHAPTER XVI

Burning a Witch.

THE incongruous events of my life will no longer appear inexplicable, when read by the light of the revelation which I am on the point of copying from this creased and yellowed manuscript — this manuscript which I have worn in my bosom, and read a thousand times, since the fatal morning when a boyish curiosity — ah, it was something more than that! — tempted me to seek for hidden treasures among my father's papers, in the chest, where they had lain mouldering years after his death.

That day I became possessed of the secret which has tinctured all my life. That day I read my doom, written out by his own hand — the hand that was no more lifted up in battle against the world.

The words are half obliterated, the tattered pages are falling to pieces. Quick! let me copy them.

Matthew Lynde's Legend of the Jocelyn House.

"On the seventeenth of August, in the year 16—, the morning sun, resting obliquely on the gables and roof-tops of Portsmouth, lighted up one of those grim spectacles not unusual in New England at that period.

"A woman was to be burnt for witchcraft.

"Goodwife Walforde, who lived with her son Reuben in a lonely, tumble-down shanty, on the edge of the village, had been seen at various times, and in divers places, to wring her hands, and cry out aloud, without any perceptible cause.

"This was not to be permitted.

"Witchcraft was then spreading like a pestilence over the country. Several persons, possessed of unnatural and un-Godly powers, had already undergone martyrdom at Salem; and as the woman Walforde had the doubtful reputation of telling fortunes, making love-charms, and the like, the cry of witchery flew like wild-fire from door to door; and a thousand vagaries, sometimes coined out of nothing, perhaps, passed current as truth.

"One woman, by the name of Langdon, declared that she had repeatedly seen Goodwife Walforde careering through the mist, on a broomstick, over Piscataqua river; another had caught her mumbling to six brindled cats in a wood; while more than a dozen had frequently noticed curious puffs of smoke issuing from her nostrils.

"So, of course, she was a Witch.

"The executive authorities took heat at these facts, and the freckled crone was brought up before the Court of Assistants, and condemned to be publicly burnt, "accordinge toe ye ryghteous

decision of ye Elders of ye Churche — all God-fearinge menne."

"Just as the sunlight struck across the spire of the village meeting-house, a bell commenced tolling with mournful dissonance; and groups of men and women, from different streets, moved thoughtfully toward the Court House.

"The crowd here assembled was composed of formal-looking men with long pointed beards and sugar-loaf hats; children, serious for the moment; old men who seemed like children; and not a few of the gentle sex, arrayed in the voluminous gray hoods which, at that time, were worn by the lower classes.

"Here and there, under the shadow of the trees, standing aloof from the common herd, were knots of the more wealthy and influential citizens. No one spoke, save in suppressed whispers, and a hum as of innumerable bees rose up from the multitude.

"This murmuring suddenly ceased, as Reuben

Walforde came rushing, like a man demented, into the Court-yard.

"'Desist in your unholy purpose!' he cried, flinging his arms aloft. 'Are ye heathen, that ye would burn a harmless woman, in mid-day, here, in New England?'

"'That's the witch's whelp,' remarked a lean, straight-haired Puritan to a neighbor beside him.

"'What d'ye say?' cried Reuben Walforde, fiercely, turning on the speaker, 'Shall I strangle ye!'

"He clutched the man's collar, and shook him so stoutly that the Puritan's crucible-shaped hat flew several feet into the air; and then the by-standers laughed.

"At this moment, two persons on horseback joined the throng.

"The elder of the two was dressed in a handsome suit of black cut velvet, and wore high knee-boots of Spanish leather, the tops elaborately laced with silk cord. The housing of his horse proclaimed him a man of rank. Behind

him rode a young gentleman of somewhat foppish bearing, in a coat of fine maroon-colored cloth and white satin vest sprinkled with embroidered tulips. Waves of Mechlin lace broke into foam at his wrists. His hat was looped up on one side with an expensive brooch, from which dangled a fleecy black plume.

"'The worshipful John Jocelyn,' passed quickly from mouth to mouth.

"Reuben Walforde released the terrified Puritan, and stood scowling at him. The worshipful John Jocelyn, who rode a few paces in advance of his son Arthur, pressed through the rabble, never drawing rein until he confronted the disputants.

"'It ill-behoves thee, Reuben Walforde,' he said sternly, 'to be quarrelling like a drunken Indian on such a day as this. Thou hadst better thank Heaven,' he added, in a lower tone, 'that the Evil One hath not laid his claw on thee, as he hath on thy stricken mother.'

"'Go thy way, worshipful John Jocelyn,'

returned the young man, scornfully. 'Is it becoming in thee, or any meaner man, to taunt misfortune? Go thy way, before I am tempted to lay hold on thy person, and make thee to bite the dust!'

"At this violent and rebellious speech, spoken in a loud, angry voice, the crowd swayed to and fro.

"The brow of the magistrate threatened a storm; but the darkness flitted by, and he said softly,

"'I know not, Reuben Walforde, if I have ever injured thee. I see how thou art beside thyself, this day, and pity thy plight, or else I would have thee exhibited in the Market-Place for four-and-twenty-hours.'

"And the kind-hearted John Jocelyn would have ridden on, but Reuben Walforde laid his powerful hand on the check-rein, and brought the horse to its haunches.

"A moment, worshipful John Jocelyn! Let me lead thy horse from these impudent gossips.

There, now, they cannot hear us. Thou hast two wives in the church-yard — one whom I never saw, the mother of thy Arthur, yonder; but the other was as comely a maiden as there is in all New England, and her I loved as a man loves who loves but once. Thou didst win her from me, and she died. Thou art death to me and mine. In this trial of my mother, thou hast shown thyself wonderfully officious, giving willing credence to all the unseemly lies of the village. Thy malice, or whatever it is, is her ruin; for the people look up to thee as a ruler."

"'Verily, young man,' responded the magistrate gently, 'thou art blasphemous to name thy weird mother with that fair saint whom on earth we called Hepzibah. Of thy love for her who was Hepzibah Jocelyn, I know naught. As to thy mother, I acted as became a Christian and a Magistrate in the sight of Heaven. Let go the bridle, Reuben Walforde; for my presence must sanction the ceremony about to take place. Even

now the procession issueth from the prison-yard. Release thy hold, I warn thee!'

"Reuben Walforde threw a hurried glance toward the train, which uncoiled itself from the prison-door, like a slender ebony adder, and took a zig-zag course in the direction of the Court-House. Then he gave a howl, and sprang upon the worshipful John Jocelyn.

"'Ho! good folk! Seize the fellow!' cried John Jocelyn lustily; then he grew purple in the face, for the fingers at his throat had well nigh pressed out his breath.

"Arthur Jocelyn put spurs to the flanks of his mare, and dealt Walforde a blow on the wrist with the loaded butt of his riding-whip.

"The magistrate and his assailant were speedily separated: the former, after arranging his frill and sleeve-ruffles, rode forward to the Court-House; and the latter was confined in the Cage, from which he was liberated at sunset, by the magistrate's own order, for he harbored no enmity against the unfortunate youth.

"That Reuben Walforde had dared to lift his thoughts so high as Hepzibah's love, was strange intelligence to John Jocelyn. His prosecution of Dame Walforde had been actuated by nothing but a sober desire to burn out the evil power which had recently displayed itself in many of the neighboring townships, filling the community with direst consternation.

"That malignant spirits walked the earth then, as now, who can doubt?

"The sun went down on Portsmouth, and the event of the day became a matter to be canvassed by toothless gossips in the chimney-corner. Then it was gradually forgotten.

"But mysterious sounds hung in the air for months afterward — lingered near lonely places on the river, and in the dismal December woods. And sometimes, in autumn, in this nineteenth century, it is said that a voice of supplication and complaint is heard in the wind and rain at night!

"In those days the old Jocelyn House — which has been so patched and altered that not an

original shingle or clapboard remains — stood somewhat back from the principal thoroughfare, in the shade of two gigantic elms.

"To-day a brick sidewalk runs by the modernish door-stoop. The curtailed eaves, the gambrel roof, and the few quaint devices left on the quoins and over the dormer-windows, give one no idea of that imposing pile of architecture as it appeared in its glory.

"The room with the bay-windows facing westward, was John Jocelyn's study. His ponderous sword hung over the wide fire-place in company with a steel casque and hauberk, dinted and rusty — once the property of some Spanish caballero who had served, perchance, under the gallant Pedro de Alvarado or, maybe, under Cortes himself.

"On a venerable book-stand were a few evangelical volumes, brought over in the May Flower.

"The chairs, and all the scanty furniture of the apartment, had an air of solemnity in keeping with a full-length portrait of Sir Godfrey Jocelyn,

in a plum-colored coat trimmed with tarnished gold-braid, which frowned abstractedly between the casements from a filigraned frame.

"In summer, the modest tea-roses looked in at the window. In winter, a fire of hemlock logs simmered and sneezed with impish merriment, throwing a hundred fantastic shapes on the walls, till the polished oak wainscoting seemed like mirrors wherein eccentric goblins viewed themselves.

Here, since the death of his young wife, sat the worshipful magistrate alone, late at night, reading, cogitating on his official duties, or writing courtly letters to his kinsmen in England.

"One night very late — for the village watchman had just cried "twelve, and all's well" — as Arthur Jocelyn neared the domicile, having passed the evening at the Green Mermaid, he saw, or thought he saw the form of a man gliding stealthily away from under the window of his father's study.

"Young Jocelyn, who had been drinking

deeply of something besides the nut-brown ale, so famous in those days, stopped short in the middle of a careless tavern-snatch he was singing, and cried out,

"'Hullo! Sir Shadow! What! art thou a ghost? Then the fiend catch thee, and all grave-yard people who cannot sleep decently o' nights.'

"A coarse laugh startled the echoes in the village street. Then all was still as death.

"On reaching the house, Arthur hastened with uneven steps to the study. There he beheld a scene that drove the vapors of the wine from his brain.

"John Jocelyn, with a sword-wound in his left breast, lay motionless across the lounge.

"Papers were scattered over the floor; a chair broken; a glass timepiece splintered on the hearth; the prints of fingers on the window-sill; the blinds gaping wide open.

"Arthur took in all at a glance.

"'Murdered!'

"The ejaculation had barely escaped him,

when he heard a dry rustling at the further end of the library.

"His sword leaped out of its sheath like a flash of lightning.

"The sound proceeded from the portrait of Sir Godfrey Jocelyn. The crackled canvas had commenced bulging and warping. Presently the form of Sir Godfrey impatiently disengaged itself from the gloomy background of the picture, and stepped majestically out of the frame.

"Arthur's sword, of its own volition, performed a military salute: Arthur himself was simply turned to stone with astonishment and awe.

"'Arthur Jocelyn!' said Sir Godfrey, in a tone that seemed to reverberate in the family vault, 'mine eyes have gazed upon a most foul deed. It is a sorry fate that I, though dead, am forced through the agency of an impious painter, to still behold the deviltries of this world. I have broken out of these vile oil-colors with indignation. Such a sight! — thy poor father, boy! By St. George, if my hilt had not tangled in my

baldric, the same as it did at the battle of Guignegaste, I would have slain the clown Walforde myself!'

"'Walforde! That witch's foal hath done this, then?'

'Even so,' returned Sir Godfrey laconically; then his ashen eyes crinkled with sudden heat — 'but the knave hath carried away such a sword-cut on his lip as will mar his family to the last generation. Now listen: This mad deed which hath ended the career of a righteous and exemplary man, hath given thee a long lease of life. The Elders, Arthur, will hang thee for thy father's death; but be of good cheer — the end is not yet.'

"Arthur's head sunk on his bosom.

"'When a hundred and fifty years have fled, thou shalt live again: thou shalt wear the face and form of to-night — and woe then to the descendants of the Walforde that cross thy path! Thou shalt see them suffer. Thou shalt sweep them from the face of the earth; thou shalt

utterly blot out the race — nay, not by violence, not even with thine own free will, perchance. Yet shalt thou lead them directly or indirectly, to the death. And when the clock is on the stroke of twelve, a hundred and seventy-five years from this night, I will appear before thee, Arthur, though thou wert among the savages of Hindostan, and lead thee back to the grave, where thou shalt slumber quietly for all time!'

"Then the sepulchral voice of Sir Godfrey died away.

"Arthur started with a shock, like one who wakens from a nightmare at the dead of night.

"The old portrait hung in its accustomed place on the wall, as flat and burred and crackled as in Arthur's childhood.

"A wild vibrating cry came from the Jocelyn House.

"The grim Puritans turned in their beds; the beadle yawned, and the village undertaker, in his sleep, dug an imaginary grave.

"'Help! help!' cried the voice.

"'Help' said the echoes, spitefully, retreating to the woods; and there, among the crags, they repeated the cry.

"Sick men heard it and shuddered; and wakeful mothers held their babes nearer to their bosoms. The town-sentinels discharged their matchlocks at shadows, then myriads of lanterns twinkled in the dusky streets, the church-bell began ringing, and armed men hurried to and fro.

"'Are the Indians upon us again?' asked one.

"'No, but a murder has been done in our midst.'

"Now, when the good people found Arthur Jocelyn standing by the casement with a naked sword in his grasp, and saw the worshipful magistrate lying amort on the lounge, threatening brows were bent on the young man, and Suspicion pointed a black finger at him.

"So, in due time, the Elders hanged Arthur Jocelyn. And that he may slumber softly in the mould, and rise not until the Angel of the Resurrection call him, let all good souls pray.

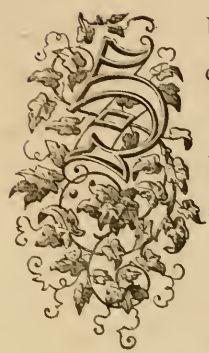
"—— Such is the Legend of the Jocelyn House — an old nurse-wife's tale which I have preserved simply because my father used to amuse us children with it, on winter evenings, when the family were gathered at the hearth-side. He was a graphic raconteur; and I remember how I listened and trembled as Sir Godfrey Jocelyn stepped out of the picture. I cannot explain to myself why the story, now that I write it down, affects me so strongly. Curiously enough, if such a silly old legend could be true, my son Paul is the descendant who, according to the prophecy of Sir Godfrey — but, pshaw! this is madness. I would like for Paul to read this narrative some time. I dare not trust him with it now, for the boy is excitable to a degree that often alarms me. I pray heaven he may be spared the affliction that obscured his grandfather's last days, and which, I sometimes think, threatens to darken mine.

MATTHEW LYNDE.

November, 1837."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Two Hundred Years Old.



UCH is the key to the meaning of this sombre chronicle.

In new shapes old spirits are breathed into the world, and I am that pale Arthur Jocelyn whom the Elders persecuted centuries ago, when bigotry and superstition fell like a blight on the Colony — I, Paul Lynde.

Bitterly has the prophecy been fulfilled. Without my own will, and unconsciously, I have woven the black threads of my life with the fate of those who came of a generation that hated me and mine.

Cecil is dead. Mark Howland sleeps in an ill-starred city. Mary Ware is dead; and Kenneth — the last of his race. Kenneth? Kenneth? I think it was Reuben Walforde that went stalking about the ends of the earth!

They are gone — the white spirits and the gray. And the time draws near, ah, so near! when my grim ancestor shall appear, and take me into that darkness which awaits us all.

Again I shall behold Sir Godfrey, clad in the garb of a by-gone age, as I beheld him that memorable night in John Jocelyn's library.

I shall hear his echoing voice, feel the humid touch of his hand!

* * * * * *

Listen! — no, the wind brushes the elm-tree against the house, and the stair-case creaks with the frost.

Heaven, how the moments whirl by!

People are dancing to dulcet music in fragrant rooms: lovers are whispering together in shadowy alcoves: mothers are caressing their children:

there are millions of happy souls in the world, and I —

Listen! — I wish the wind would 'nt groan so in the flue. I wish the elm-tree would n't stand out there, in the night, frantically tossing up its arms like an old witch at the stake.

Only an hour, now. Only sixty minutes! I would they were so many centuries: for life is still sweet, still youth clings to it, and I am young, though I am Two Hundred Years Old —

Hark! — the clock is striking!

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Mr. Lynde, like the author of *The Anatomy*, seems to have predicted the time of his own demise; but his prediction, unlike that of the melancholy Burton, proved inaccurate.

Two years after the preceding chapter was penned, I find Mr. Lynde besieging the Patent Office at Washington, with a Nautical Self-Speaking Trumpet, which, on being inflated by an air-pump, would deliver all the orders necessary for working a ship, allowing the skipper, in the meanwhile, to stow himself snugly away in his bunk below. This, as Mr. Lynde modestly remarked in his letter to the Department, would be very convenient, especially in "nasty weather." As the walls of that respectable institution, the Patent Office, enclose the skeletons of numerous inventions nearly as rational, I fail to see why Mr. Lynde's Trumpet

was denied a niche in the collection. The Department refused to listen to it.

The precise date of this unfortunate gentleman's death is unknown to me, his relatives, with strange reticence, having declined to furnish me with the slightest information concerning his last hours. Dr. Pendegrast, also, when I applied to him, dealt in such ambiguous and unsatisfactory assertions, that I left the Asylum more than half convinced that Mr. Lynde had not died at all; but was still living and ready to smile, perhaps, over his own obituary. That he was alive as late as 1861 is proved by one of the papers in his *Sketch-Book*, — a collection of MS placed at my disposal since this romance went to press. I print the papers here. As an illustration of a different phase of Mr. Lynde's mind, I trust they will not prove uninteresting.

PAUL LYNDE'S SKETCH BOOK.

PERE ANTOINE'S DATE PALM.

A Legend of New Orleans.

IT is useless to disguise the fact: Miss Badeau is a rebel.

Mr. Beauregard's cannon had not done battering the walls of Sumter, when Miss Badeau was packed up, labelled, and sent North, where she has remained ever since in a sort of aromatic, rose-colored state of rebellion.

She is not one of your sanguinary rebels, you know; she has the good sense to shrink with horror from the bare mention of those heathen who, at Manassas and elsewhere, wreaked their unmanly spite on the bodies of our dead heroes: still she

is a bitter little rebel, with blond hair, superb eyelashes, and two brothers in the Confederate service — if I may be allowed to club the statements. When I look across the narrow strait of our boarding-house table, and observe what a handsome wretch she is, I begin to think that if Mr. Seward doesn't presently take her in charge, *I* shall.

The preceding paragraphs have little or nothing to do with what I am going to relate: they merely illustrate how wildly a fellow will write, when the eyelashes of a pretty woman get tangled with his pen. So I let them stand — as a warning.

My exordium should have taken this shape: —

"I hope and trust," remarked Miss Badeau, in that remarkably scathing tone which she assumes in alluding to the United States Volunteers, "I hope and trust, that, when your five hundred thousand, more or less, men capture my New Orleans, they will have the good taste not to injure Père Antoine's Date-Palm."

"Not a hair of its head shall be touched," I re-

plied, without having the faintest idea of what I was talking about.

"Ah! I hope not," she said.

There was a certain tenderness in her voice which struck me.

"Who is Père Antoine?" I ventured to ask.

"And what is this tree that seems to interest you so?"

"I will tell you."

Then Miss Badeau told me the following legend, which I think worth writing down. If it should appear tame to the reader, it will be because I haven't a black ribbed-silk dress, and a strip of point-lace around my throat, like Miss Badeau; it will be because I haven't her eyes and lips and music to tell it with, confound me!

Near the levee, and not far from the old French cathedral, in New Orleans, stands a fine date-palm, some thirty feet high, growing out in the open air as sturdily as if its roots were sucking sap from their native earth.

Sir Charles Lyell, in his "second visit to the

United States," mentions this exotic: — "The tree is seventy or eighty years old; for Père Antoine, a Roman Catholic priest, who died about twenty years ago, told Mr. Bringier that he planted it himself, when he was young. In his will he provided that they who succeeded to this lot of ground should forfeit it, if they cut down the palm."

Wishing to learn something of Père Antoine's history, Sir Charles Lyell made inquiries among the ancient creole inhabitants of the faubourg. That the old priest, in his last days, became very much emaciated, that he walked about the streets like a mummy, that he gradually dried up, and finally blew away, was the meagre result of the tourist's investigations.

This is all that is generally known of Père Antoine. Miss Badeau's story clothes these bare facts.

When Père Antoine was a very young man, he had a friend whom he loved as he loved his eyes. Emile Jardin returned his passion, and the two, on account of their friendship, became the marvel

of the city where they dwelt. One was never seen without the other; for they studied, walked, ate, and slept together.

Antoine and Emile were preparing to enter the Church; indeed, they had taken the preliminary steps, when a circumstance occurred which changed the color of their lives.

A foreign lady, from some far-off island in the Pacific, had a few months before moved into their neighborhood. The lady died suddenly, leaving a girl of sixteen or seventeen entirely friendless and unprovided for. The young men had been kind to the woman during her illness, and at her death, melting with pity at the forlorn situation of Anglice, the daughter, swore between themselves to love and watch over her as if she were their sister.

Now Anglice had a wild, strange beauty, that made other women seem tame beside her; and in the course of time the young men found themselves regarding their ward not so much like brothers as at first.

They struggled with their destiny manfully, for the holy orders which they were about to assume precluded the idea of love and marriage.

But every day taught them to be more fond of her. Even priests are human. So they drifted on. The weak like to temporize.

One night Emile Jardin and Anglice were not to be found.

They had flown — but whither, nobody knew, and nobody, save Antoine, cared.

It was a heavy blow to Antoine — for he had half made up his mind to run away with her himself.

A strip of paper slipped from a volume on Antoine's desk, and fluttered to his feet.

"*Do not be angry*," said the bit of paper, piteously; "*forgive us, for we love.*"

Three years went by wearily enough.

Antoine had entered the Church, and was already looked upon as a rising man; but his face was pale and his heart leaden, for there was no sweetness in life for him.

Four years had elapsed, when a letter, covered with outlandish stamps, was brought to the young priest — a letter from Anglice. She was dying; — would he forgive her? Emile, the year previous, had fallen a victim to the fever that raged on the island; and their child, little Anglice, was likely to follow him. In pitiful terms she begged Antoine to take charge of the child until she was old enough to enter a convent. The epistle was finished by another hand, informing Antoine of Madame Jardin's death; it also told him that Anglice had been placed on board a vessel shortly to leave the island for some Western port.

The letter was hardly read and wept over, when little Anglice arrived.

On beholding her, Antoine uttered a cry of joy and surprise — she was so like the woman he had worshipped.

As a man's tears are more pathetic than a woman's, so is his love more intense — not more enduring, or half so subtle, but intenser.

The passion that had been crowded down in his

heart broke out and lavished its richness on this child, who was to him, not only the Anglice of years ago, but his friend Emile Jardin also. Anglice possessed the wild, strange beauty of her mother — the bending, willowy form, the rich tint of skin, the large tropical eyes, that had almost made Antoine's sacred robes a mockery to him.

For a month or two Anglice was wildly unhappy in her new home. She talked continually of the bright country where she was born, the fruits and flowers and blue skies — the tall fan-like trees, and the streams that went murmuring through them to the sea. Antoine could not pacify her.

By and by she ceased to weep, and went about the cottage with a dreary, disconsolate air that cut Antoine to the heart. A long-tailed paroquet, which she had brought with her in the ship, walked solemnly behind her from room to room, mutely pining, it seemed, for those heavy orient airs that used to ruffle its brilliant plumage.

Before the year ended, he noticed that the rud-

dy tinge had fled from her cheek, that her eyes had grown languid, and her slight figure more willowy than ever.

A physician was consulted. He could discover nothing wrong with the child, except this fading and drooping. He failed to account for that. It was some vague disease of the mind, he said, beyond his skill.

So Anglice faded day after day. She seldom left the room now. Antoine could not shut out the fact that the child was passing away. He had learned to love her so!

"Dear heart," he said once, "what is't that ails thee?"

"Nothing, mon père," for so she called him.

The winter passed, the balmy spring air had come, and Anglice seemed to revive. In her little bamboo chair, on the porch, she swayed to and fro in the fragrant breeze, with a peculiar undulating motion, like a graceful tree.

At times something seemed to weigh upon her mind. Antoine noticed it, and waited.

At length she spoke.

"Near our house," said little Anglice — "near our house, on the island, the palm-trees are waving under the blue sky. Oh, how beautiful! I seem to lie beneath them all day long. I am very, very happy. I yearned for them so much that I grew sick — dont you think it was so, mon père?"

"Mon Dieu, yes!" exclaimed Antoine, suddenly. "Let us hasten to those pleasant islands where the palms are waving."

Anglice smiled.

"I am going there, mon père!"

Ay, indeed. A week from that evening the wax candles burned at her feet and forehead, lighting her on her journey.

All was over. Now was Antoine's heart empty. Death, like another Emile, had stolen his new Anglice. He had nothing to do but to lay the blighted flower away.

Père Antoine made a shallow grave in his garden, and heaped the fresh brown mould over his idol.

In the genial spring evenings the priest was seen sitting by the mound, his finger closed in the unread prayer-book.

The summer broke on that sunny land; and in the cool morning twilight and after nightfall Antoine lingered by the grave. He could never be with it enough.

One morning he observed a delicate stem, with two curiously shaped emerald leaves, springing up from the centre of the mound. At first he merely noticed it casually: but at length the plant grew so tall, and was so strangely unlike anything he had ever seen before, that he examined it with care.

How straight and graceful and exquisite it was! When it swung to and fro with the summer wind, in the twilight, it seemed to Antoine as if little Anglice were standing there in the garden!

The days stole by, and Antoine tended the fragile shoot, wondering what sort of blossom it would unfold, white, or scarlet, or golden. One Sunday, a stranger, with a bronzed, weather-beaten face

like a sailor's, leaned over the garden rail, and said to him :

"What a fine young date-palm you have there, sir!"

"Mon Dieu!" cried Père Antoine, "and is it a palm?"

"Yes, indeed," returned the man. "I had no idea the tree would flourish in this climate."

"Mon Dieu!" was all the priest could say.

If Père Antoine loved the tree before, he worshipped it now. He watered it, and nurtured it, and could have clasped it in his arms. Here were Emile and Anglice and the child, all in one!

The years flew by, and the date palm and the priest grew together — only one became vigorous and the other feeble. Père Antoine had long passed the meridian of life. The tree was in its youth. It no longer stood in an isolated garden; for homely brick and wooden houses had clustered about Antoine's cottage. They looked down scowling on the humble thatched roof. The city was edging up, trying to crowd him off his land. But he clung to it, and refused to sell.

Speculators piled gold on his doorsteps, and he laughed at them. Sometimes he was hungry, but he laughed none the less.

"Get thee behind me, Satan!" said the old priest's smile.

Père Antoine was very old now, scarcely able to walk; but he could sit under the pliant, caressing leaves of his tree, and there he sat till the grimmest of speculators came to him. But even in death Père Antoine was faithful to his trust. The owner of that land loses it, if he harm the date-tree.

And there it stands in the narrow, dingy street, a beautiful, dreamy stranger, an exquisite foreign lady whose grace is a joy to the eye, the incense of whose breath makes the air enamored. A precious boon is she to the wretched city; and when loyal men again walk those streets, may the hand wither that touches her ungently.

"Because it grew from the heart of little Anglice," said Miss Badeau, tenderly.

A WORD FOR THE TOWN.

A City Idyl.

CORYDON may neglect his flock, if he will, and burst an oaten pipe for Phillida, if he wants to; Amyntas may lie on a sunny hill-side in Arcady if such is his pleasure, and bake himself as brown as a bun; but as for me, I will have none of the country.

The country is rainy and muddy in spring, hot and dusty in summer, and unendurable in winter. It is true, there is a bit of Indian summer, run in parenthetically, at the close of the year. And this is is pleasant, providing you have bright com-

pany, picturesque scenery, and the prospect of returning to town before Nature begins her annual world-cleaning and whitewashing.

But when the autumnal pageant has passed; when the ochre and crimson, and chocolate-colored leaves are rotting under foot; when the trees about the house shiver and moan in the twilight, like rheumatic old ladies; when the wind whistles down the chimney, and up your coat-sleeves; when you can no longer walk with Mademoiselle Sylvia in the moonlight; when, in short, the Indian summer has gone off in a whiff, then it is time for you to be out of the country. You should not linger there for winter to tuck you up under its white coverlid.

But the Town!

Ay, that is the place not for a day, but for all time. That we have rain and mud in spring, and wretched snow in winter, is not to be denied; but then we have sidewalks, and Amaryllis is particularly tempting during these periods. The grace, care, and coquettishness with which she keeps her

snowy drapery immaculate, are wonderful. A single glimpse of Amaryllis, as she crosses over to Stewart's, more than pays one for the moist inconveniences of bad weather.

Spring in the city! You get such delicate hints of spring! The dried up old crone of a geranium, on your window-sill, has put forth a tiny green leaf. It hesitates, as if it would fold itself up again, it is such a modest, non-committal little leaf. Is it not one of Nature's diminutive prodigies? You discover a single blade of grass shooting sharply up from between two bricks in your backyard. Would a dozen acres of meadow-land delight you more?

Amaryllis has hung her canaries at the window. What shrill music they make! They wake you early in the morning, and you see Amaryllis in a distracting robe de chambre. It has sky-blue rosettes up and down in front, and is tightened at the waist with a silk girdle.

> "What monarch but would give his crown
> His arms might do what this has done?"

You see the five cunning, white birds of Amaryllis's right-hand feeding the noisy yellow idiots, in the villa-like cages. The air is full of sweet messages from the south. You select a neck-tie of gorgeous colors. You go down town without your overcoat. You smile genially on Jones. You don't generally smile on Jones, for he lives next door to Amaryllis. You are good natured; you cannot tell why. You kick a strip of lemon peel off the curbstone, You are philanthropic, also, but you don't know why. It is spring!

After several weeks of torturing suspense, you conclude that Amaryllis must have gone to Nahant or Newport. She has. The fair Capulet does not take her "cue" now, and the window-scene is a failure. Biddy feeds the canaries. You are not entirely miserable, though.

It is midsummer.

There is a shady side to the street; there are parks and fountains pro bono publico; there are Roman punches and strawberry ices at Maillard's, and a promenade concert at the Academy. You

like music, and you spend your evenings, when you are not somewhere else, at the Academy. You hear Agnes Robertson sing. She captivates you with her woman's eyes and her boy's costume. You immediately hate her husband. You do more — you forget Amaryllis. There is a maritime view from the battery, and a salt-sea breeze at Coney island, and certain leafy nooks over the river, where you can sip maraschino, or discuss omlette rouflée within hearing of the rich bass voice of the city hall bell. You can hire a boat at Whitehall and float down the Narrows, or you can sweep by the Palisades in the Thomas Powell, and catch a glimpse of the wrong side of Fred. Cozzen's house, at Yonkers; and, little farther up, the cocked-hat gables of Washington Irving's "Sunnyside." You can drink lager-beer, and devour schweizer kese and pretzeln at Hoboken. You can also purchase a knot of flowers at the Sybil's cave.

What an epitome of sweet things is a bouquet! You have the grace and the goodness,

the perfumes and the tints of summer-time, for a shilling. You have the delights of meadow and woodland bound together by an ell of claret-colored ribbon. You have a fragment of the sky, and a tangle of grass with merry red buds, such as Coleman and Shattuck like to paint; you have dews, and stars, and sunset things! You have a portable flower-garden. You can put it into your waistcoat pocket. You can give it to Chloe, who hasn't gone to Nahant. Or, better still, keep it, though it fade, for Amaryllis.

The summer solstice is over, and the temptation has returned to town. She does not, indeed, hang her canaries at the open window, and your eyes are seldom ravished by a sight of that morning robe with the blue rosettes in front; but, now and then, when you come home rather late at night you see the shadow of Amaryllis on the buff window-curtain, and you are not wholly unhappy. Your existence becomes worth cultivating. You lounge in your lazy easy-chair, you fill your meerschaum with fragrant Oranoko or May-Blossom,

and picture to yourself the paradise that lies just the other side of that provoking curtain. Amaryllis has been to the Opera, and is robbing her heavy black tresses of their burning ornaments. You can see the shadow on the curtain lifting its arms. It appears and disappears, and tantalizes you. It is unlacing something, you dont know what — but you mustn't look any more. You remember Keat's description of Madeline, as she disrobes on St. Agnes' eve? Ten to one you repeat the lines half aloud:

> "Of all its wreathéd pearls her hair she frees;
> Unclasps her warmed jewels, one by one;
> Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
> Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
> Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
> Pensive awhile she dreams."

You will paint some such picture. Of course you should not. But the probability is you will.

The time has come when you have to examine the thermometer to ascertain how cold you are. You are very cold when you find the quicksilver some ten degrees below zero; in fact, just twice as cold as you were before you obtained that know-

ledge. Your pitcher of water says *click* in the middle of the night, and you are tempted to throw your boot at it. It is something mysterious and awful to have your pitcher of water express its opinion of the weather. When you get up in the morning, you discover some very bizarre pictures on your window-panes. They are chiefly representations of polar scenery — weird, terrible, Icelandic pictures. You look at them as you dress yourself, and think of Dr. Kane.

It is Christmas time. Merry Christmas? Ah, but it used to be some twenty years syne. It was fine, then, to loiter through the crowded streets, gazing into the shop windows — El Dorados of fancy articles, Australian lands of bon-bons and rock-candy. What visions you had of St. Nick., with his reindeer equipage on the house-top. You could hear the pawing of the silver hoofs.

Something of the old pleasure in Christmas, something of the old faith in Santa Claus, warms in your heart as you stroll down Broadway with the chilly stars sparkling over head and the white spangles under your feet.

The street is illuminated with lights of a hundred colors. It is one long bazaar where you may feast your eyes with the riches of all nations.

Turkish looms have been busy for you.

Quarries have been opened and streams searched that you might look on clusters of precious jewels.

The patient Chinaman has carved his dreamy fantasies in ivory, and the oily Esquimau has fashioned seal-skin snow-shoes for you.

Here you have curious instruments, of brass and wood, and pearl, within whose tubes and under whose keys lurk passionate music — the spirits of joy and woe.

There you have fantastic pipes from Tuscany, wines from Germany, sweetmeats from the Indies, and confections from Paris; Malaga grapes and creamy bananas, and oranges that turned to gold in the warm air of Cuba.

Your slaves in the East have sent you attars, and gums, and scented woods. What is there in all the climes, from

"Lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon,"

to a marble mosque or a Chinese pagoda, that does not lie within your reach?

You are Haroun al Raschid in Bagdad, you are Haitalnefous, you are anybody you please, with the world's wealth heaped about you.

Have the kindness to help yourself!

You wander through the street in a midwinter night's dream. What do you care for the bleak wind, or the snow-flakes, or the people who jostle you? You stare at the brilliant shops; you do not know which to enter, for each one is more beautiful than the other, like the Khaleef's forty wives. You pause at Tiffany's. Tiffany's windows are on fire with diamonds.

All the water in the underground pipes, which, like huge arteries, traverse the city, could not quench the fire that burns in those stones.

You flatten your nose on the plate-glass; you see a necklace which you would like to clasp on Amaryllis's perfect throat; you would also like to manacle her white wrists with those turquoise bracelets; you would like ——

Listen! High up in the belfry, in the rain, and the sleet, and the dark night, there is a nest of merry birds. They have quiet, airy hymns which they chirp on summer evenings. But how clamorous and jubilant they are this winter night! Why are their happiest, wildest songs kept for the snow and the sleet? Why are they so joyous when

> "The sedge is withered from the lake,
> And no birds sing?"

Why, indeed, let us think of that.

If I should ever move into the country it will be on one condition — that I take the Town with me.

MISS HEPZIBAH'S LOVER.

A Seaside Sketch.

NO one looking at Miss Hepzibah, in this year of our Lord, 18—, would suppose that Miss Hepzibah ever had a lover. Until last summer, it would have been true to say that she never had.

There is, indeed, a vague story concerning a certain old young gentleman who, some ten years subsequent to the war of 1812, was imagined to have entertained a tender and pathetic feeling for Miss Hepzibah; but as he never told his love, and as concealment never appeared to have become apoplectic by feeding on his damask

cheek, I am strongly inclined to doubt the tradition.

Miss Hepzibah was born an old maid.

She was born with the intention of never sacrificing her independence on the altar of matrimony, unless she should happen to meet with what she called her Beau Ideal. Until this miraculous and winning creature should make his advent, Miss Hepzibah refrained from fanning any minor spark into a flame.

Miss Hepzibah vestalized.

Now it came to pass that her Beau Ideal, (owing to various causes, among which may be placed the laws of gravitation) never turned up: for Miss Hepzibah's Ideal involved the possession of such an impossible catalogue of angelicisms and such a plentiful lack of human weaknesses, as to entirely shut out the whole race of Man.

Miss Hepzibah's youth glided decorously away; her prime came and went with the utmost propriety; epoch faded into epoch; until, at last, there was a sarcastic yellow on the page of the family

Bible, wherein was recorded, in large round characters, the date of her birth.

She put on her spectacles one day, and found that the golden girls of her childhood had passed on. Little faces, with strangely familiar eyes and lips, grew up about her, and cold white head-stones whereon were engraved names familiar to her youth.

She had become the last leaf on her ancestral tree; she had also become the last leaf anybody would think of gathering. Not that Miss Hepzibah had lost any of her beauty, for it may be truthfully said that she never lost an atom.

But she had lost the charm of her teens, the magnetism of her twenties, the splendor of her thirties, and, it must be confessed, of her forties also. But while time had left inviolate the peculiar points of her person, which was all points, it had seen proper to work a remarkable change in her mind, and had led her to indulge in several illusions, to the supreme astonishment and consternation of her friends.

She had ceased to regard the animal, Man, with bitterness!

Indeed, she had grown to regard him, as a race, with such tenderness, that it seemed as if she intended, with the warmth of later days, to make the amende honorable for the coldness of her teens.

To such an extent she carried her reparation, that Mr. Higgins, her second cousin, with whom she resided, felt it his duty, as a human being, to remove his Milesian gardener from the Vivian-like witchery of her presence. But Miss Hepzibah directed her attention to the colored coachman (a gentleman of a migrative turn of mind, who abruptly graduated from Virginia one day,) and it was through her affability that he was ultimately induced to fall in love and elope with — the family plate.

Miss Hepzibah now labored under the impression that a very ornate and juvenile style of costume became her figure and complexion.

She dawned upon the world in light shotted silks and blossomy barége.

She also assumed, with the gorgeousness of apparel, the artless gaiety of a sea-side belle in her bloom. Her naivete and freshness were perfectly startling.

"Cousin says I'm *so* giddy," she remarked to Clarence Adolphus, as they walked on the piazza of the hotel at Nahant.

Clarence Adolphus was heard to reply:

"Ye — yes, I think you are, werry."

The affair with the colored coachman was the feather that broke Miss Hepzibah's second cousin's back. They had some low words in a high tone, and parted. Miss Hepzibah retired from the inhospitable roof, and tacked a codicil to her will, leaving the bulk of her personal property to the "Seaman's Disabled Home Association."

Miss Hepzibah resided in the enchanted city of Manhattan during the Winter months; but the Summer solstice was passed on the New Hampshire coast, in a cottage Gothique of her own, contiguous to a fashionable hotel.

It was during the height of the watering-place

fever, one year ago, that what happened did happen.

Miss Hepzibah had a lover!

After waiting for nearly half a century, the Coming Man came — not her Beau Ideal, to be sure; she had long ceased to dream of him; but a real flesh and blood lover, with faults and virtues, to whom Miss Hepzibah sometimes grimly alludes as "that person."

The Atlantic House was crowded with all sorts of people — fops and belles, tinsel and gold: the broken merchant with his three thin daughters looking out, in smiling despair, for an itinerant Rothschild: the everlasting family from the South with a great deal of jewelry: the rich, obese old gentleman, who always reminds you of Pickwick, talks to everybody, loves fishing, is a favorite with the young ladies, and calls the young gentlemen "sad dogs," slapping them heartily on the back, just like the merry heavy father in a genteel comedy: there was the small city clerk, putting on airs:

the peripatetic artist, a veritable Bohemian, in a sensible slouched hat, making studies for studio-manipulation: the pale gentleman who corresponds with a metropolitan newspaper, and is said to have once had a joke in *London Punch:* the retired catholicon-maker, and several nondescript persons, with a happy sprinkling of pretty girls in racy basquines and distracting Godenskis.

Among this motley crowd were two persons who figure in this chronicle.

Mr. Philip Winter was a young lawyer, aged 24, with no end of money, and not the slightest ghost of a client. Mr. Winter was a gentleman of a good deal of "personal appearance," and seemed to be on very off-hand amiable terms with himself, and a Miss Kate Brandon, of Brandon Fork, a blithe Kentucky girl (what pretty women they do get up in Kentucky,) who cultivated a blush-rose in either cheek, guarding the same with a pair of rather splendid eyes, which, when they looked at you, seemed to run up and down the

gamut of your character, ascertaining just how many octaves you were.

I should not omit to mention Brandon senior — Brandon padre — a courteous old gentleman and very slim, who read the papers all day on the porch, and looked as if he had tried to extinguish himself with his hat, nothing but two ears preventing it from resting on his shoulders.

It has been intimated that Mr. Winter and the Kentucky beauty were on amiable terms. A chance overhearing of the following fragment of dialogue led me to that conclusion:

Scene: The sea-shore: the sun, shorn of all its rays, attempting to balance itself, like an acrobat, on the thin line of the horizon; the Atlantic, with a languid lip, lapping long miles of snowy beach; Mr. Philip Winter and Miss Kate Brandon lounging by the bath-houses, in one of which is the subscriber, getting himself up regardless of expense.

Philip. — but I love you, Kate.

Kate (*looking out to sea*) — Isn't that a fishing smack?

Philip. — Hang the fishing smack! Won't you be kind once?

Kate (*opening those eyes*) — Kind? how?

Philip. — By being serious with me.

Kate. — Nonsense; don't bother me. I declare that's a fishing boat.

Philip. — Miss Kate Brandon!

Kate. — Mr. Philip Winter!

Philip. — Kate, I'm going back to New York.

Kate (*dryly*) — Good-by!

Philip. — How you torment me! Was there ever such a Kate? Yes, one other, Petruchio's. *She* got tame, at last. But I know you love me. Haven't you told me so? Did you not rest your lips, once, for a blissful half moment, on my forehead!

Kate (*trying to remember.*) — I really forget. It must have been last week. (*With sudden conviction.*) Now, *wasn't* it last week?

Philip. (*wanting to eat her.*) — I shall go quite

mad some day! Come, Kate, be good; and let me kiss the cruelty from those ——

Here the voices melted away, Miss Kate's musical laugh sounded a fairy chime, now and then, faintly in the distance.

I immediately made up my mind with regard to the ultimate destiny of that precious pair. Youth and beauty, and the currency of the realm — what could be pleasanter?

Three nights after this gay glimpse into the affairs of Miss Kate and her special pleader, I was the luckless witness of another interview of a different character, which was instrumental in forcing upon my understanding the baseness and duplicity of the human race.

The room I tenanted was in an L of the hotel, and my one window, with its twelve square eyes, looked plump into Miss Hepzibah's front garden, with the intention, I think, of staring Miss Hepzibah's Gothic cottage out of countenance.

It must have been sometime near midnight. The intolerable heat had driven me to the open

window, where I filled a pipe with Latakia, and blew rings of smoke out into the moonlight. I was engaged in this intellectual enjoyment when I heard Miss Hepzibah's cane rocking-chair creaking on the porch opposite. There, in the silvery shadow, sat Miss Hepzibah, like a festive old apparition, bobbing to and fro, and cooling herself with a large palm-leaf fan.

At that moment I saw Mr. Philip Winter walking somewhat stiffly down the road. He paused at the gate, it grated on its hinges, and the young gentleman, passing through the arbor, stood before Miss Hepzibah. And this is what I saw and heard.

Miss Hepzibah gives a little scream.

Mr. Winter speaks to her in low musical tones.

Miss Hepzibah listens to the same.

Mr. Winter takes her hand with an air of infinite tenderness.

Miss Hepzibah smirks.

Mr. Winter raises the hand to his lips.

Miss Hepzibah purrs.

Mr. Winter whispers something in her ear, and then walks leisurely through the grape-arbor out into the road, Miss Hepzibah looking after him, fondly, like a Maltese cat.

Could I believe my eyes! I pinched myself, and said the multiplication-table (as far as I knew,) backwards and forwards: then tumbled into bed, thinking how the light-hearted and bonny Kate was dreaming a dream that would end in bitter tears; and shaking my fist at the old wretch in the Gothic cottage, I fell asleep.

The next morning the anger flew into my fingers' ends at beholding Miss Brandon leaning cozily on Philip Winter's arm, and caressing him with her large brown eyes.

As the pair walked up from the beach, they met Miss Hepzibah, robed in ridiculous splendor.

I watched the encounter without drawing a breath.

Miss Brandon was making a bracelet of sea-kelp, and did not observe her rival: Miss Hepzibah gave a galvanic start; and Philip Winter lounged by

her unconcernedly, as if she were a part of the landscape.

I never saw anything more neatly done.

That night the same pantomime and whispers were repeated on Miss Hepzibah's piazza, Miss Hepzibah seeming even more pleased than previously with Mr. Winter's dramatic adoration.

Now heaven knows that, though I seldom mind my own business, I never meddle with any body else's. But here was an aggravated case.

I took Mr. Brandon by the button hole one afternoon, and disclosed to him the perfidy of his intended son-in-law.

I never did a more injudicious thing.

When I had concluded, Mr. Brandon bowed icily, and informed me that what I had told him was simply impossible; Mr. Philip Winter was the son of his dearest friend, a friend of forty years' standing; he loved Philip himself as if he were his own son; and then intimated the pain it gave him (Mr. Brandon) to see a young man (obliquely me) dulling his faculties and blighting

his prospects in life, by a too devoted adherence to Still Catawba, and other spiritous liquors.

Miss Brandon, with a priceless tear hesitating on either eyelash, hinted with charming candor that there was, of course, one liar in the world who was greater than any other liar, and that that particular liar was at present an occupant of No. 97, — my apartment.

Mr. Philip Winter, after denying point-blank, that he had ever laid eyes on Miss Hepzibah, assured me confidentially that if I and my traps (he alluded to my trunks) were not out of the Atlantic House within the brief space of two days, he should take the liberty of pulling somebody's ears in a manner more violent than might, perhaps, be agreeable.

I was wild with mortification.

I thought of appealing to Miss Hepzibah herself; but Miss Hepzibah was evidently Mr. Winter's ac-accomplice; I could hope for no justice in that quarter.

Here, through mere kindliness of heart, I had

placed myself in an unamiable light, and probably inaugurated a deadly quarrel with a reckless man of the world.

I sat in my chamber, the victim of the darkest melancholy. My pipe went out, and the moon wrapped itself up in a cloud. Everybody had gone to bed, the house was as silent as a tomb, and and there I sat, face to face with my own dark thoughts.

I began to imagine that may be I was insane; that the midnight interview on the porch, the whisper, the kiss, Miss Hepzibah, and everything else, were only the vagaries of a disordered intellect.

Presently — as I sat there, falling out of one depth of gloom into another — I heard Miss Hepzibah's garden gate creak cautiously. I stole to the window, hardly daring to hope what I hoped.

I gave but one glance, and then rushed to Mr. Brandon's room on the opposite side of the hall. I seized that gentleman half asleep, and dragged him to my window.

Mr. Philip Winter was kneeling gracefully at Miss Hepzibah's feet, in the act of kissing her very venerable right hand.

There they were in the damaging white moonlight.

"Now sir," I whispered, tremulous with triumph, "there 's some still and very sly Catawba for you!"

I considered that a neat thing at the time.

There was not a drop of blood in Mr. Brandon's face as he rested his hands on the window-sill, with two fierce hazel eyes fixed upon Miss Hepzibah and her lover.

"Sir," he said, in a fearfully calm voice, wheeling round on one heel, "allow me to bring a witness to this."

"Certainly."

He left the room and presently returned, accompanied by an elderly gentleman, an aged fac simile of young Winter. I remembered being struck by the likeness, when he alighted from the stage-coach that evening.

"This," said Mr. Brandon in the same unnaturally calm voice, "this is Mr. Joseph Winter. I wish to call his attention to those two persons on the porch."

With this he pushed the elderly gentleman to the window.

Mr. Winter somewhat perplexed, looked, started, and finally rubbed his nose with an impatient forefinger.

"Why," he cried, "that's my Phil! Gracious me! what is the boy doing? What, kissin — good Lord, Phil is in one of his walking-fits! *He's subject to spells of somnambulism*, you know, and goes walking about on ridge-poles and mill-wheels, and things like that fool-woman in the opera. "You Phil!" thundered Mr. Winter. "You Phil!"

I heard Miss Hepzibah give a scream like the shrill whistle of a steam engine. It broke the charm of young Winter's slumber. He stood, bewildered, leaning against the garden-gate, while

his father from my window above was affectionately inquiring of him if he intended to be a born fool all the days of his life.

As to myself, my existence became a burden to me.

"I'm sure" said bonny Kate, the next morning, one cheek burning like the under side of a peony petal, "I'm sure I can't think of marrying a man who doesn't know when he's asleep!"

But she did, nevertheless; for the following autumn, in the small whitewashed church that sanctifies the primeval village of Rye, I heard these two people say the life-long words together. I then and there forgave Miss Kate's allusion to No. 97, and promised to wear her name like a rose in my memory, holding myself fortunate moreover, in having a loyal friend in Miss Hepzibah's lover.

As to Miss Hepzibah herself, she is, I believe, still open to sealed proposals. Here's a chance for you, young gentlemen! It would compensate a

man for many of the petty miseries of life to hear her talk about Philip Winter.

She thinks he was not so fast asleep as he appeared to be!

THE LADY WITH THE BALMORAL.

The Impressible Man's Story.

IF you will, for the sake of dramatic propriety, imagine that I am not myself, but my friend Mr. Tibbs, I will tell you his story precisely as that facetious gentleman related it to me. Mr. Tibbs began and went on as follows.

"By Jove!" cried Mr. Frederick Markem, throwing back my chamber door with such violence that the knob went into the wall about two inches.

I immediately upset my inkstand, for I am a nervous man. The least noise startles me.

"O by Jove!" continued Mr. Markem, stretching himself out in the arm-chair.

"Jove," I remarked, "was a very estimable person, in his way."

"I have seen women," said Mr. Markem, quietly ignoring me, "I should think I had; handsome women, too, by the streetful; but never in my life did I ever lay eyes on such a glorious, superb, magnificent, divine out-and-out ring-tailed snorter, if I may be permitted to use the expression."

I objected. I did not consider "ring-tailed snorter," whatever it might be, the proper phrase under the circumstances; I did not know what the circumstances were; it did not make any difference what they were — there could *be* no circumstances that would sanction such infelicity of language. No, I objected.

Still Mr. Markem went on in an extravagant manner, describing a lady whom he had met some twenty minutes previously on the corner of Broadway and Thirteenth street.

Juno, Hebe and Eurydice (so far as Mr. Mark-

em knew them through Keightley's Mythology,) paled their ineffectual fires beside this later-day divinity; and, as to the Venus de Medici — I quote Mr. Markem — she knocked *her* higher than a kite!

I myself am not aware of the height which kites are popularly supposed to attain; but, accepting his rodomontade at its proper value, I pictured in my mind's eye the airy situation of the Venus de Medici, and made no comment.

The lady whose beauty had robbed Mr. Markem of what nature had not lavishly endowed him with, had, it seems rendered his destruction complete by sporting a red-and-black balmoral skirt, conveniently short enough to make a modest display of the prettiest feet and ankles in the world.

"You should have seen those feet," said Mr. Markem.

Mr. Markem then launched into a dissertation on pedal extremities, drawing a comparison between the feet of a Hong-kong belle and those of the unknown, much in the manner of the cele-

brated comparison between Pope and Dryden. Thus:

If the foot of Tai-ping-wang was small, that of the unknown was diminutive: if one was arched like an eyebrow, the other was bent like a crescent; one was faultless and the other perfection.

I was vastly relieved when Mr. Markem at length retired to his own room to drown his restless soul, as he intimated, in the intoxicating bowl. The inebriating vessel so tragically alluded to was the bowl of his meerschaum pipe. In a few minutes such volumes of smoke came pouring through the key-hole of the door which separated our apartments that I rushed frantically into his chamber with the vague apprehension of finding him a mass of fire and cinder, bearing no distant resemblance to a half-consumed balmoral.

"Pleasant, this!" said Mr. Markem, emitting from his mouth a cloud of smoke that would have done infinite credit to a moderately ambitious crater. "It eases the soul so!"

I am an impressible man — nervous men always

are; and although Mr. Markem's description of the fair one with the golden locks was entirely too preposterous for a moment's thought, I lay wide awake half the night thinking about it. Then I sunk into a troubled sleep, only to dream that I and the lady with the balmoral were being smoked in an immense meerschaum pipe by a gigantic Mr. Markem.

To disport with such trifles will the most vigorous minds sometimes condescend!

The next day, in spite of myself, I thought of Mr. Markem's adventure — if it is an adventure to meet a pretty woman. In fact, I did nothing but think of her and the tortuous dream of the previous night. The hot aromatic meerschaum, the lady with the balmoral, and the brobdignagic Mr. Markem, flitted through my vision all day; and in the evening when I went to see Clementina — we had been engaged two weeks — I was meditative and unhappy.

I felt that I was wronging Clementina.

Two days after this Mr. Markem again rushed

into my room. He had seen her — had ridden in the same stage with her — her dress had brushed against him — *her* dress! Eastern perfumes had saluted his nostrils — the perfumes *she* used! He had touched her exquisite finger-tips in passing the change; and language was as milk-and-water to express his emotions. The Venus de Medici was again placed in an elevated position; and several uncomplimentary remarks made relative to Mesdames Juno, Hebe, and Eurydice.

"By Jove, Sir," said Mr. Markem, "see what I have done!"

And he jerked his watch out so violently that I expected to see the brass brains of that domestic animal scattered over the floor.

"By Jove, Sir! when she passed me her fare, two three-cent pieces, what did I do with 'em but drop 'em into my vest pocket, and hand the whip two gold dollars instead, by Jove! Look at 'em!"

And Mr. Markem opened the watch-case and spilled the two bits of silver into the palm of his

hand. Mere money — mere gold dollars, piled up as high as the top of Trinity steeple — could not buy those sacred souvenirs. No, Sir! He would have 'em put on a silk cord, and his children, in future generations, should wear 'em around their necks, and cut their teeth on 'em, by Jove! Part with them! Would I accept his heart's blood as a slight testimonial of his affectionate regards?

With this friendly offer Mr. Markem shut up the three-cent pieces in his watch, and restored it to his pocket.

"When the lady got out," said I, hesitatingly, "did you follow her?"

"Follow her? No, Sir! Could I imagine for an instant that so ineffable a creature resided any where? She's an inhabitant of the air — a denizen of the milky-way! Follow her? I was entranced — petrified — knocked higher than a kite!"

I could not help asking Mr. Markem if he met the Venus de Medici coming down on his way up? But this show of pleasantry on my part was the merest counterfeit of jocularity.

The second meeting, and Mr. Markem's consequent enthusiasm, worked like madness in my brain. I went to bed to lie awake for hours; and on falling asleep to dream that I was crushed to death by an avalanche of three-cent pieces which slid from the roof of a palatial mansion in Fifth Avenue.

Then I was cast, heels over head, on an uninhabited South Sea island, where the bananas and cocoa-nuts were stuffed with the same scarce metal; and, being on the verge of starvation, I devoured a large quantity, and was about to die of indigestion when the breakfast-bell rescued me from that unpleasant alternative.

I was miserable and feverish, and a cup of strong coffee at breakfast only made me more feverish and more miserable.

I felt that I was doing Clementina an egregious wrong by continuing our present relations; she had ceased to hold that place in my heart which only Mrs. Tibbs elect should occupy, and I had ceased to give her that constant adoration which only Mrs. Tibbs elect should receive. I determin-

ed to see her once more, and break the painful intelligence to her as gently as possible. I dreaded the interview, for, as I have remarked I am a nervous man, and I hate scenes. But it was an imperative duty.

Still, I delayed the heart-rending moment; and every evening found me sitting with Clementina, who was all modesty and fondness, and gave me such intoxicating little kisses in the library that, at times, I was not quite so certain that I did not love her.

Indeed I did, while I was with her; but when I returned to my room, and was no longer in the entrancing atmosphere which always surrounds a refined woman, I felt that we could never be happy together.

Clementina, I argued, is not so *very* superior to fifty other ladies of my acquaintance. It is true she has beautiful hair, fine eyes and teeth, a stylish figure, and a voice like Cordelia's,

——"ever soft,
Gentle, and low: an excellent thing in woman!"

She is bright, too, and can shoot off a repartee that snaps like an enthusiastic fire-craker. But then these qualities are not peculiar to Clementina. There is the sarcastic Miss Badinage, and the fascinating Miss Bonton.

To be honest, I was trying to convince myself that I wasn't a knave. But I was.

In the mean time Mr. Markem had twice seen the ineffable creature of the milky-way — once on the street, and once taking lunch at Thompson's.

I do not dare to remember how wretched I was. I gave my best razors to our old book-keeper at the office, and never ventured to trust myself within two blocks of the North River. I was irrevocably in love with Mr. Markem's sweet stranger; and Clementina ——

I nerved myself for a final interview with my victim. One afternoon, in calm despair, I dressed myself for that purpose. I had brushed my hat for the four hundred and seventh time, growing calmer and more despairing at each stroke, when Mr. Markem sailed into my room.

I am aware that "sailed" is not a happy expression, but no other word will describe the easy, swan-like grace with which Mr. Markem entered my apartment. He was gotten up without any regard to expense. Lord Dundreary was never so nobbily ganté. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like Mr. Markem.

He was going to air his magnificence on Broadway, with the hope of meeting the ineffable.

"Tibbs," said Mr. Markem, familiarly, "behold! — "the glass of fashion and the mould of form.' By Jove! if this sort of thing doesn't take her!"

"By-the-by, Markem, I am going down Broadway. I'll walk a block or so with you."

Mr. Markem hesitated.

"O you are?"

"Yes."

"By Jove! now, I don't know about that. I'm a trifle tender on this subject — tender for you also. If you should see her and become unhappy, it would be no use for *you* to — to —"

And Mr. Markem picked out the ends of his cherry-colored neck-ribbon with a noli-me-tangere air quite delightful.

"Oh! of course not," said I.

"Honest?"

"Honest."

"Then, by Jove! I'll trust you. But, honor bright, Tibbs! honor bright!"

We sauntered out of Clinton place into Broadway.

I was very ill at ease, not only from the fact of walking with so gorgeous a person, but at the thought of meeting that woman, the mere description of whose exceeding loveliness had filled my brain with visions like so much hasheesh. I was, moreover, somewhat ashamed of myself for having taken advantage of Mr. Markem's confiding nature; and could not wring the smallest drop of consolation from the accepted assertion that all is fair in war and love.

It was rather too early in the afternoon, as Mr. Markem poetically remarked, for the flowers of

beauty to blossom in the garden of fashion; so we dropped into Delmonico's, to flirt with a thimbleful of Maderia and eat an omelette souflée, which, to my idea, is nothing but a heavenly kind of soapsuds.

When we again sallied forth the fashionable side of Broadway was a perfect parterre of human lilies and roses. We walked slowly up town, looking earnestly among the eddying throng, for that divine perfection of a woman who had unconsciously made me the most miserable of men.

We had reached Bleecker street.

An omnibus on the crossing and an apple-stand on the corner hemmed us in.

Mr. Markem suddenly grasped my arm.

"There! there she is!" he whispered.

"Where?"

"There!"

"I dont see her."

"Why there, Tibbs."

"Oh," said I, with bitter disappointment, "that is only Miss Bonton!"

"No, no — not she, but the one behind her on the crossing — the lady with the balmoral!"

"Why, you villain!" I shrieked, "that's my Clementina!"

At the same time I gracefully upset the apple-stand.

Mr. Frederick Markem drew his hat over his brows and rushed down Bleecker street.

That evening he and his Coblentz pipes, his French lithographs, and his Florentine vases disappeared abruptly in a hackney-coach, in search of a new boarding-place.

Clementina — now the blossoming Mrs. Tibbs — leans over my shoulder, and protests against my airing all this nonsense about "that odious Mr. Markem;" but I have promised the article for the Æsthetic Monthly, and I am going to print it, in spite of the Lady with the Balmoral.

THE CUP AND THE LIP.

A Christmas Story.

LONG before General Washington snubbed a senile king, and set up a coat-of-arms on his own account, there stood near the mouth of the Piscataqua river, a large square wooden building, that seemed seriously proud of having violated every known rule of architecture. It being just the sort of structure that would not admit of a cupola, it sported a very massive one, from which might have been seen the garrison-house at Portsmouth, and beyond, the white caps of the Atlantic, breaking in silver and azure on Newcastle Light.

Something like two hundred years ago, there dwelt between the walls of this eccentric habitation the following more or less interesting personages.

Mr. Jeffrey Langdon (the Heavy Father of our drama.)

Mrs. Mehitable Langdon (the Mercenary Mother.)

And Miss Gervase Langdon (the Heroine coming to grief.)

Mr. Langdon had once been a man of great wealth; but a series of disasters, including a scalping frolic on the part of the neighboring Womponsags, a playful tribe, had reduced his fortune to about forty acres of good land, the Langdon mansion, and the Langdon family. In the last was his greatest wealth — Gervase Langdon.

I shall spare her the martyrdom of heroines. I shall not describe her. Never, since gentlemen were invented; never, since the first author wet the first goosequill in the first ink-horn, preparatory to dashing off his first chapter, was there ever a he-

roine so hard to describe as this same Gervase. I might, indeed, tell you something about the trimmest figure, and the sauciest blue eyes, that ever fell to the lot of a Puritan maiden; but then you would have no more idea of her than if I had done her in wax.

The lads of the village were distracted about Gervase; the old men looked at her sunny face, and immediately remembered their courting-days; and even her rivals forgave her beauty, she was such a warm-hearted little buccaneer.

It would take me all day to draw up merely a list of the hearts which this playful Lamb split in two, at divers times, from the moment she put on long dresses until her seventeenth year. So I shall not do it. But at last Gervase herself came to grief, and it is at this momentous epoch that our curtain rises.

It was snowing, as it can snow only in New England. Great white feathers came floating down from the blank clouds, darkening the whole atmosphere. Stone-walls, and roads, and barns, and fat

comfortable farmhouses, appeared to sink gradually into the earth, threatening to leave everything level.

At one of the diamond-shaped windows of the Langdon house, stood Gervase, looking out at the snow. She was weeping and trying not to weep. The instant a tear came, she brushed it aside with a handkerchief small enough to be the personal property of a fairy; but scarcely was one tear wiped away when another sprung up to take its place. Now, as a general thing I am not fond of Niobe. Women are not pretty when they cry. But please imagine Gervase. Imagine one of Eytinge's clear-eyed women looking out of a Gothic window by Vaux, upon one of George Boughton's winter landscapes.

In the same room with Gervase Langdon was her mother, an oldish lady with sharp features, who sat by the wide-mouthed fireplace, toasting her feet in the face and eyes of two grotesque andirons. While we stood outside, admiring the troubled face at the window, there had been a

lengthy and stormy conversation going on between these two. We are just in time to catch the last of it.

Gervase has laid her hot cheek against the cool window-glass, over which the frost has woven a curtain, shutting out the bleak snowscape; old Mrs. Langdon sits with her hands folded on her lap. It is truce between them.

Presently Mrs. Langdon looks up.

"Davie Howe's grandfather came over in the Mayflower. A proper good family is Davie Howe's, and very, very old."

"So is he," said the Lamb at the window.

There are none so deaf as those who won't hear.

"He owns the new wheat-houses. He is a man of mark. He is as rich as ——"

As he can be, Mrs. Langdon was going to say.

As he is ugly, Gervase was going to say.

But neither finished the sentence. It was cut short by an interruption, and the interruption proceeded from Gervase herself.

While Madam Langdon was exploiting Davie Howe's pedigree, Gervase had been unconsciously tracing something on the window-pane with one of her taper fingers. When Gervase's tearful eyes fell upon her handiwork, she broke out in a silvery ringing laugh, and pointed to the window.

"What's that, child?" cried Madam Langdon startled.

"Only see!" said Gervase laughing through her tears. [I shall not afflict the reader with a venerable allusion to April.] "Only see! it is for all the world just like it!"

"Like what?"

And this is what the Lamb's pearl of a nail had traced in the frosty glass:

"Why, Davie Howe's NOSE!" shrieked Gervase.

The enemy held up her hands in horror.

At this moment Jeffry Langdon come in from the barn. As he shook the snow off his long peruke, he looked at his wife, and the following silent diologue ensued:

His eyes. Have you told her?

Her eyes. Yes.

His eyes. What does she say?

Her eyes. No!

This is what was the matter.

Next to the Langdon estate was Squire Howe's farm — the best tilled and most valuable tract of land in the township. This fact had frequently impressed itself on old Langdon's mind, but never so forcibly as when Davie Howe's son, who had been educated by his father's relatives in England, returned to the homestead to assist Davie in managing the establishment, and ultimately, to be its sole proprietor. Mr. Langdon looked at Gervase, and then at Richard Howe, and said,

"They were made for each other."

And when the old gentleman saw his roguish

daughter flirting just a little with his rich neighbor's son, his heart was glad within him. But at the very moment when his hopes were brightest, and his heart was lightest, an event took place which rather interfered with his plans.

Richard Howe died.

Gervase was sorry, as anybody is when anybody dies.

Then old Langdon, like the philosopher he was, said to himself:

"If Gervase can't wed Davie Howe's son — and she can't, he being dead — she can wed Richard Howe's father."

It was a brilliant idea.

But Gervase failed to see it.

In fact, at that time Gervase did not see much of anything, save Walter Brandt. It was not quite plain to me how this came about; but one day as young Brandt stood looking at her with all his eyes, there was a tumult among the rose-leaves on Gervase's cheek; and Gervase's heart went beating against Gervase's corsets in a manner mar-

vellous to think of. It was all over with the Lamb as quick as that.

The Lamb flirted no more.

The village lads and lassies knew what that meant.

So it came to pass that she did not weep so much for Richard Howe as she might have done under different circumstances.

When Mr. Langdon was informed of these things by an observant neighbor, that gentleman was wroth overmuch.

"Walter Brandt," he said, "hath not land enough for a crow to stand on. I'll hear no more of it!"

Then there was trouble in the family. The doors of the Langdon house were closed against Walter, and the Buccaneer was forbidden to hold converse with the Outcast.

"I cannot get rich here," said Walter Brandt. "I'll seek fortune elsewhere. Will you be true to me? Will you marry me, if I come back in three years, Gervase?"

"Ay, if you come back within fifty years!" said the brave hearted little Buccaneer.

So they kissed, and cried, and parted, as many a pair has done before and since and will again.

Walter had been gone over two years. Only one letter — which Gervase wore right next to her warm heart — was all the tidings that had reached her from the wanderer. In those days, however, people seldom got more than three or four letters during their entire lives. She made the most of one, and waited patiently for the happy day; and would not have been inconsolable if Davie Howe's name had not become a familiar word in her family. Then Davie Howe himself, under favor of Mr. Langdon's sanction, pressed his suit and made himself very disagreeable. In the meanwhile Gervase had been treated with great tenderness by her parents, who used all their gentle eloquence to persuade the Lamb to drink at the same stream with the old wolf. But she wouldn't.

One day things took an unpleasant color.

"Widow Brandt's son is coming back to the

settlement," said neighbor Goodman to neighbor Langdon.

Mr. Langdon wheeled about on one heel.

"Coming back?"

"Yes."

"How d'ye know?" he asked, sharply.

"My brother has writ it to me from Holland," said neighbor Goodman proudly. And he drew out the letter.

"Have you told this to any one?"

"Nay, I have this moment received the document."

"John, you shall have that strip of hay-land at your offer."

"Thank you, neighbor Langdon heartily."

And Mr. Langdon made a feint of hurrying off; he walked two paces, paused, and said, in a nervous manner:

"And, John, you'll not need to mention — that affair — the letter — you know. And, John, how long would it take to go to Holland?"

He meant how long would it take to come from there.

"Three months or more," said John.

Mr. Langdon went home.

"Gervase shall marry Davie Howe this Christmas," said he.

"But I wont!" said that young lady, when Madam Langdon broke the subject to her; and then ensued that combat which ended in headache and inglorious tears.

As the old folks sat by the fire that night, and as the coffin-like clock on the staircase doled out eight, Mr. Langdon started and looked up at his wife.

"Four years ago to-night ——"

Then she too remembered.

Four years ago that day, their son Will was lost off Newcastle Light. Four years ago that night, the waves threw his body, scornfully, on the rocks.

It was a sorry anniversary for the Langdon family.

Hitherto Mr. Langdon had tried by dint of pa-

tient argument to convince Gervase that she loved Davie Howe; but when he found that Walter Brandt would probably come to the relief of the distressed garrison before many months, he changed his tactics. One day he would expostulate with her solemnly, then he would take no notice of the poor child for a week. This was hard to bear. It was cruel not to be spoken to; it made Gervase feel like a poor relation at her father's table. But even that was not so heartbreaking as to have him coax her, and plead with his eyes — the eyes which used to look so lovingly on her. That was bitter almonds.

"I wish I were lying in the churchyard!" said Gervase white as death.

"You must marry Davie Howe!" cried Mr. Langdon, out of patience.

In the meantime the color went out of her cheeks; her eyes wore a lack-lustre look; she went about the house like somebody's unhappy shadow; and the lips that used to bud and blossom into laughter, had forgotten how to smile. Heart-

ache was "the grim chamberlain that lighted her to bed."

Gervase had not a soul to help her in this unequal bombarding. Now and then she scattered the old people with a gun loaded to the muzzle with feminine grape and canister, but not often. The enemy saw that she was weakened, and plied their shot unmercifully. Her guns hung fire now. The small sarcastic shells which she threw at the allies' outworks broke weakly in the air, and did no damage. She had parted company with Hope, and the enemy's lines came down on her. What could Gervase do? She tried to die; but I have observed that people never die when they want to. At last she threw herself on her mother's bosom, and said:

"I dont care what becomes of me — sell me if you will. But," she added, with a show of her old spirit, "isn't there anybody who will give more for me than Davie Howe offers? I seem to be going very cheap!"

This rather dashed the old folks.

But they sent for Davie Howe. Davie Howe leered, and kissed her hand, and Gervase shrunk back, as if an asp had stung her.

It was Christmas Eve. It was freezing cold; the snow had commenced falling shortly after twilight; flake after flake lighted on the ragged trees and the stiff fences, like millions of magical white birds.

It was Christmas Eve. There were bright lights in the Langdon mansion; the windows glared out on the darkness like great sinister eyes: Gervase was to be married.

The peparations for this event were on an extensive scale. There was to be music; and young ladies in powder, and crimson farthingales, and high-heeled shoes, were to float languidly through monotonous minuets; there was to be a feast, and a charade, and a puppet-show, and heaven knows what not.

The ceremony was to take place at eight. At seven o'clock the rooms were already crowded.

Garmented and garlanded for the sacrifice, Ger-

vase Langdon sat up stairs surrounded by a bevy of fair young girls, who, for the first time in their lives, did not envy the belle of the settlement. Her pallid face and faded lips told rather a terrible story. But she looked enchantingly, from the highest wave of her blonde tresses down to the diamond-studded buckles on the white satin slippers.

Her costume, ladies?

Silk, and things.

As she sat in the large, heavy-carven oak chair, two pretty feet were just visible underneath her tremendous hoop — two supple ankles crossed coquettishly. The young men of the village, passing by the half-opened door, beheld them, and grieved.

It was a quarter after seven, and expectation was on tiptoe for the arrival of the bridegroom.

For several days prior to the time appointed for the ceremony that ancient gentleman, Davie Howe, was in a fever with regard to his bridal costume, which was intended to go a trifle beyond anything that had been seen in the Colonies.

It was to be a gorgeous affair, gotten up without regard to expense, or anything else. The village under —— I mean tailor, sent it home piecemeal. First, the coat, blazing scarlet, richly trimmed with gold braid, and faced with watered-silk. Next, the long-waisted waistcoat of maroon cloth. Then the white silk hose. Then the faint-blue satin choker.

But the small-clothes, the grand, elaborate, black velvet knee-breeches, that marvel of human art, — there had been some mistake in them.

First they were too tight, and a seam was let out.

Then they were too large, and a seam was taken in.

And then they didn't fit at all.

In the mean time, the happy day had dawned, and Davie Howe's small-clothes were not finished. Twenty times that morning did Davie send a messenger to the distracted artist; and twenty times was the messenger sent back with the assurance that the garment should be ready in season.

Six o'clock arrived, and the knee-breeches did

not. In a fit of phrenzy, Davie Howe mounted his horse, and dashed over the glaring ice to the village, three miles off, with the unalterable determination to scalp the luckless tailor.

Half-past seven came, and the elder Langdon grew uneasy. What could have occurred? And then a quarter of eight dropped in naturally enough, like a bore to dinner. The guests looked perplexed and amused; eight o'clock struck satirically, and a half-suppressed titter went round the room. There was an awful pause.

Mrs. Langdon smiled upon the people in a helpless, ghastly manner.

The bride's maids, up stairs, lounged in groups, whispering: Gervase sat staring vacantly at the carpet, the fingers of one hand unconsciously playing with the carved oak-leaves and acorns on the arm of the chair.

A measured step was heard on the stairway. The women ceased whispering, and glanced toward the door. Gervase lifted her eyes.

Walter Brandt stood looking at her.

That this was his ghost, come to reproach her on her bridal-night, was the idea that flashed across Gervase. She shrunk back in the chair.

Walter Brandt stood beside her, and, without speaking a word, drew from his finger a well-worn gold ring, which Gervase had given him three years before. This he dropped in her lap, and walked wearily away.

Then Gervase sprung from the chair, and caught him in her arms, and — I know it was terribly unmaidenly of her, but she kissed him directly on the mouth.

That instant, Miss Langdon, down stairs, gave a scream.

"Davie Howe hath slipped up on the ice, and broken his leg," was the intelligence conveyed to Mrs. Langdon from the village.

"Poor Gervase!" said somebody.

But there were some ill-natured persons there who thought, may be, that Gervase would n't weep herself to death.

Mr. and Mrs. Langdon, with two or three more

intimate guests hastened up stairs to break the news to the bride. They found that bereaved young creature quietly leaning her head on Walter Brandt's shoulder!

"Monster!" shrieked Mrs. Langdon.

Her meaning remained a profound mystery. Whether she alluded to Walter, or Gervase, or poor Davie Howe himself, never transpired.

Don't be a fool, my dear," said Mr. Langdon in persuasive tones to his wife. "It is clear that Providence hath been against us in this matter. I have nothing to say. The girl may wed whom she likes."

I trust this remark was disinterested on Mr. Langdon's part, but suspect that neighbor Goodman had something to do with it.

"He 's made a mint o' money," remarked Goodman, sotto voce, to Mr. Langdon.

There was no wedding that night in the Langdon mansion; but as there was a bride waiting, a banquet spread, a charade to be solved, and a min-

uet to be danced, the affair was not long delayed. So was Davie Howe left out in the cold.

A stitch in time saves nine. This is true of wedding garments and all terrestrial things.

It would be an anachronism for me to wish Gervase a merry Christmas at this late day; for the Lamb was taken tenderly to the fold ages and ages ago. It would be superfluous, too; for I believe that Gervase and Walter, and all true lovers who have died, are enjoying eternal Christmas, somewhere.

THE END.

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