

PEERS AND PARVENUS,

A NOVEL.

BY

MRS GORE,

AUTHOR OF "MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS," "STORY
OF A ROYAL FAVOURITE," &c.

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"Ce gros Suisse ayant apporté, dans sa cabane un panier rempli de grenouilles, dont il comptait me régaler, mes valets de bouche lui montrèrent qu'il s'y trouvait mêlés des crapauds."

"'Ma foi,' répondit-il,—'tant pis pour eux.'"

MEMOIRES DE MONTLUC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PEERS AND PARVENUS.

CHAPTER I.

Quant è bella giovinezza,
Che si fugge tutta via!—
Chi vorrà esser lieto, sia,
Di doman non è certezza!—

LORENZO DI MEDICI.

“Is Lord John Howard *really* riding to-day?” inquired Cleve of Fairfax, as they were returning late in the afternoon, or rather early in the evening, a few days after the foregoing conversation, from an archæological expedition to the islands of Torcello and Mazorbo.

“Certainly!—The duke called for him before I set out. As the Clevelands are staying at the same hotel with him, they

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usually come together to fetch Lord John, on their way to the Lido."

"Yet I could almost swear," persisted Jervis, "that I caught a glimpse of his face, just now, in the gondola that passed us at such speed."

"The gondola with the ragged boatmen?—Impossible, my dear Cleve!—the duke uses the gondola of the hotel di Grande Bretagne, whose boatmen we should know by their badge. The gondola we are in, is the one belonging to our Palazzo."

"Still, I think it was Lord John!"—persisted Jervis.

"What an idea!" cried Fairfax,—with a laugh. "He would have seen us, and pulled up. And what on earth should he be doing in a hack gondola, at this hour of the evening?"

"Returning, perhaps, from some visit."

"Lord John is the shyest fellow in the world! I have great difficulty in forcing him to pay the visits he *ought* to pay."

“He may be more tractable about those he ought *not* to pay!” retorted Cleve, carelessly, and by no means intending a sarcasm.

But Fairfax, fancying his young friend might have obtained a deeper insight than himself into the habits of his charge, began to feel anxious. Too proud to avow his mistrust or pry into secrets not spontaneously confided to him, he fell into an uneasy fit of musing.

“I suppose it is because I am what the Duke of Attleborough calls a snob,” resumed he, after a few minutes’ pause, “that I am tempted to believe we never diverge from the wisdom of our ancestors unless to our cost. Lord Wrexhill, though the most upright, excellent, and in some respects wisest of men, is full of the crotchets of the progress school. His favourite theory is the necessity of marching with the times, and forming systems to square with the altered circumstances of modern life.”

“Surely that opinion scarcely deserves to be called a crotchet?”—said Cleve.

“When carried to the extremes to which he extends it. Lord Wrexhill pretends that the discovery of steam has done for the body, what printing did for the mind; and that the facilities of railroads, enabling us to see those things of which formerly we were only able to read, half a young man’s education ought to be locomotive.”

“Since the time of the Tudors, no young nobleman was ever considered accomplished unless his education were completed by the grand tour.”

“Ay, ay! but *they* went abroad to acquire exterior polish, — to learn to dance, fence, fiddle,—and come back varnished with dilettanteism. Whereas Lord Wrexhill seems to fancy that history, geography, and statistics, are only to be perfected by flying in a special train from city to city;—and that (like some *impresario* dashing across Europe

to engage a favourite singer), a man desirous to study Vitruvius's architecture, or the stratification of the Righi, instead of taking down, as formerly, a volume from his library, ought to possess himself of a first-class ticket and go and see! The marquis takes into the account neither loss of time (for to *him* waste of money is of little moment,) nor the hazard incurred by chance company or injurious examples; and I verily believe——But at what are you smiling, my dear Jervis?"

A better dissembler than Cleve would have answered——“at your vehemence about nothing!”——and thus confused his friend into perceiving how rashly he was betraying his uneasiness concerning the influence of the Clevelands.

But dissimulation of any kind was foreign to the nature of Jervis; and without pretending to disguise that he had suffered his thoughts to stray from Fairfax's lengthy dissertation, he replied——his smile changing into

a blush as he proceeded,—“I was thinking that, in spite of what the Duke of Attleborough calls the Paulus-Æmilius-Snooks nomenclature of the Americans, the Roman names are peculiarly fitted to the air and character of their women.”

“You have seen so few Americans,” replied Fairfax, a little nettled, “that I presume you generalize from a single instance. The delicate paleness and classical outline of feature of Mrs Cleveland, fulfil in short, your *beau ideal* of Virginia!”

“Exactly!” said Jervis, more pleased than ashamed to have been so well divined.

“Yours, but not mine!” added his friend. “I admit that the most beautiful women I have ever seen were Americans; nay, strange to tell, that their beauty is of the most refined and elegant order. I will admit even more; that some of the best informed women, and endowed with the highest sense of female duty, with whom I ever became ac-

quainted, were also American. But even these, one and all, were wanting precisely in the tone of mind I love to ascribe to the matrons and virgins of antiquity. No simplicity of mind—no instinctive nobleness,—none of the ease of untaught nature! All that is spontaneous in the graces of the old world, is, with Americans, the result of schooling. Impossible to be more artificial,—impossible to be more superficial.”—

“I am half inclined to retort upon you,” said his friend, “and tell you that you generalize from a single instance. Your dislike of Mrs Cleve is apparent in every syllable of your strictures!”

“My dislike of Mrs Cleve?—*Why* should I dislike Mrs Cleve?”

“*Why*, indeed!—unless that you are sick of hearing Aristides called the just! The enthusiasm her beauty creates has put you out of humour.”

“Far from it! If she would only content

herself with such suffrages, they might applaud her in the theatres for aught I care, and I would add my feeble *vivat* to the uproar of the public.—But what *does* make me a little irate is, that, in her passion for conquests, this Virginia of yours spares neither age nor calling! In order to secure the Duke of Attleborough, through Lord John, she tries to secure Lord John through myself. Even I,—grave, cold, stern, black-coated, grim-visaged, and quizzical,—am not quite exempt from her coquetries.”

“Surely you do not accuse that silent, gentle, quiet woman of coquetry?”

“That *demure* woman, if you will!—But her quietude is that of a cat waiting to pounce upon its prey.”

“My dear Fairfax.”

“Illiberal, am I not?—censorious—unjust! But note her as I have done, and you will become equally clear-sighted to her artifices. Observe how, while conversing with you or

any one else, apparently absorbed in what you are saying, her changes of complexion avouch her interest to be covertly addressed to everything going on in the room of which, ostensibly, she takes no heed. While her mild, soft, feminine voice is interrogating you concerning the height of the Pyramids, or some local question equally unexciting, you suddenly perceive by the panting of her bosom, and the change of her marble-like paleness to a crimson glow, that she is watching, in an opposite glass, Lord John whisper to your charming friend the Countess Michelozzi; or receiving some masonic sign from her odious husband."

Suspecting that Mrs Cleveland must have inflicted the same sort of wound on Fairfax's self-love, of which he had himself been recently guilty, by allowing her absence of mind to become perceptible during one of his didactic, tutor-like dissertations, Jervis, satisfied that all advocacy would be thrown

away, abandoned the fair Virginia to the justness of her cause. He even determined never to mention the Clevelands again to Fairfax, while he remained in Venice; and with all his admiration of the serenity of the fair American's classical countenance, sincerely wished that she had not been of the party. For if Fairfax had in some degree invalidated the pleasure he took in contemplating so rare a specimen of her sex's charms, *she* was the means of destroying his delight in the society of Fairfax. Under the influence of his present misgivings, Philip was no longer himself. His philosophy was awry.—His thoughts were bespoken. He was growing prejudiced,—irritable,—unjust. His eyes were on the lookout for a serpent under every bush. A sure instinct apprized him that his pupil was in danger.

That evening, Cleveland, who, much as he felt surprised at the preference evinced by

the two young noblemen for the society of Cleve and Fairfax, (which he regarded as a trait of college Master Goodchildism, which they had not at present seen enough of the world to rub off,) appeared so little disposed to create disunion between them, that both were scrupulously included in his parties and invitations,—accidentally renewed the subject of the morning's discussion.

“I cannot enough applaud your wisdom, Mr Cleve,” said he, “in having chosen to come and perfect in Italy and Greece the studies of which I hear so much. For my part I am an ignorant ass. But were I inclined to study, I should seek the only commentary worth reading upon Virgil, Ovid, and Homer, in the cobalt skies and creamy seas of the Mediterranean. No perfectly understanding the classics, eh, Fairfax, over a sea-coal fire?”—

Philip Fairfax, usually so mild and reasonable, made a crabbed rejoinder. But his

host, who, perhaps, hoped to drive him home in disgust with the party, was in a colloquial vein.

“It is my especial interest,” said he, “to maintain this opinion; because the little I ever learned was from eye-see and hearsay; and I suspect I know it all the better for not having conned it in books. I despise the musty old proverb, about a rolling stone gathering no moss. One acquires a world of knowledge by rolling about the world!”

“Live and learn, eh?”—rejoined the Duke of Attleborough. “What’s taught by experience is certainly less likely to be forgotten.”

“The fact is that book-learning has had its day!” added Cleveland, “and a long day it was. — Book-learning was indispensable to the sedentary ages,—the ages of Monkish superstition, when people had not found out that their blood circulated, or that the earth revolved. But I foresee the time when all but elementary works will be exploded,—

all but the positive sciences become obsolete. When one reflects that the wear and tear of human intellect wasted upon the farrago of casuistry and humbug, we call philosophy, might have enabled our ancestors to survey mankind from China to Peru at the tail of a locomotive,—that if the school of Archimedes had been followed like that of Plato, America would have been discovered and civilized two thousand years ago,—Pekin as familiar as one's glove,—and Paramatta macadamized and asphalted, so that, by this time, human nature would have had enough to eat and wherewithal to be clothed, without encroaching on or envying the privileges of fine folks like my friend Attleborough—by Jove! one begins to consider literature as great a curse as original sin!”—

The cheeks of Philip Fairfax glowed in indignant silence. Was it not enough to be frustrated in all his plans by the reckless, dissolute habits of this attractive savage,—

but that Cleveland must insidiously undermine his standing in the estimation of his pupil?

He was resolved, however, not to be betrayed into taking up the argument; certain that, when driven to the verge of defeat, his antagonist would take refuge in the dare-all defiance of his natural ferocity; or encase himself, like any other primitive savage, in an armour formed of glittering shells and gaudy plumage.

Luckily, the Duke of Attleborough perceived that ill blood was rising on both sides, and hastened to divert the conversation.

“I have had a letter to-day from Herbert Davenport,” said he, “and am glad to find we are likely to meet him in the south.”

“Herbert Davenport?—I should have thought him the last man on earth to travel!” observed Lord John. “Indolent—selfish.”—

“Come, come!—Don’t be too hard upon him!”—interrupted his cousin.

“At all events, too much attached to his comfort to brave the hazards of the road.”

“Herbert Davenport is certainly far from indifferent to the merits of that excellent fellow called Herbert Davenport!” rejoined the duke, laughing. “But he is quite right! He can’t like him more than I do. However you have hit your mark. He is *not* travelling from inclination, but like a bagman, with a view to business.”

“A bagman! — What in the world do you mean?” —

“That Herbert’s journey is a matter of speculation.—He has not favoured me with his prospectus, for he can be close enough, when he likes. But by putting together certain hints I heard in London from his cousin Dick, and the itinerary of his travels, I perceive that our friend is heiress-hunting.”

“Just what I should have expected of him,” said Philip Fairfax, gravely.

And Cleve, who felt precluded from giving utterance to his sentiments concerning any member of the Davenport family, secretly responded—"And just what *I* should have expected of him!"

"And who may be the golden object of his pursuit?" said Lord John Howard. "There were half-a-dozen heiresses in the London market, this season; but I fancied they were all disposed of, except that rock of Gibraltar, the bankeress."

"Davenport's intended victim does not appear to have been much in London," said the duke; "at least not since she was likely to attract attention,—not since her father's death made her an heiress."

Jervis Cleve felt the pulsation of his heart quicken at this allusion.

"And I suspect Herbert is in hopes of snapping her up before her merits transpire," added the duke. "The damsel is a sort of connexion of his; and he can't afford to let her go out of the family."

“ A Davenport, then ? ”

“ *A peu près.* Her mother, I believe, was a Davenport.”

“ Then why does not Sir Richard try his chance ? ” inquired the matter-of-fact Fairfax.

Dick don't want money. *He* can afford to marry where he likes. At least so Lady Hillingdon informed me, after taking an accurate survey of his rent roll.”

“ It was from Lady Hillingdon, then,” said Lord John, more gravely, “ that you heard this history of Herbert's heiress-hunting ? ”

“ Precisely !—Not from any interest she took in the matter, for Lady Hillingdon knows better than to trouble her head about the comings or goings of a younger son. But she was at some pains to impress upon my mind that the man so devoted to her daughter had sacrificed to his attachment

a certain pretty heiress, whom his tender aunt, her mother, desired no better than to bestow, (as the law bestows one's goods and chattels,) on her nearest of kin. The charms of Miss Joddrell, she protested, had prevailed over those of ten thousand a-year, in solid acres; a lucky thing for Herbert, for whom a chance is thus left of plucking the golden fruit."

By this time, both Jervis and Lord John had begun to look conscious and uneasy. The conversation was fortunately rendered more general by the abrupt interposition of Cleveland.

"On my first arrival in Europe," said he, "I was assured, on the Continent, that the English alone were mad enough to consult their affections in the grand affair of wedlock—the affair, of all others, in a man's life, demanding the most impartial exercise of judgment. They told me that in other

countries, wedlock is based upon equality of rank, fortune, age, and character; leaving it to the eccentricities of Great Britain to submit to the influence of a pair of fascinating eyes or a pretty foot,—the mere caprice of the moment,—in the choice of a companion for life. Younger then than now, I applauded. There seemed something brave and chivalrous in such rash self-sacrifice to the power of beauty. But since I have seen further into the way these things are managed, I am of opinion that there is no place under the sun where interested marriages occur more frequently than in England.”

A chorus of four voices instantly arose in dissent.

“I expected you Britishers to oppose me!” said he, laughing. “But facts, my dear fellows, speak for themselves. Deny if you can that the moment an heiress makes her *début* in London, she is worshipped a thousand times beyond the choicest beauty!

not alone by spendthrifts and younger brothers, but by the rich and great;—not alone by the rich and great, but by their dowager aunts and grandmothers, their sisters and cousins. Wherever Miss Million shows herself, *there* are the vultures gathered together! However revolting in person, debased in connection, or unamiable in disposition,—an heiress is sure of as many suitors as Penelope.”

“By Jove, I’m afraid you are right!” said the Duke of Attleborough, laughing. “One has seen a good deal of that sort of thing, lately.”

“But don’t fancy, that, while attacking the heiress-hunter, I am going to let off the ladies; and *there* duke, *your* experience will come to my aid. I only ask you,—I only ask *all* of you,—whether a young Englishman of fortune is not set upon like a hare by the hounds, by all the chaperons and mammas of the fashionable world? Has he not wives

pressed upon him, like slaves in an eastern market?—Can he so much as look at or address a pretty girl, without being catechized concerning his intentions?”—

The duke and his cousin smiled and shrugged their shoulders. But Fairfax and Cleve, less versed in the forms of the order of society alluded to by Cleveland, stood their ground for the honour of the sex.

“Such may be the case,” said Philip, “in the higher circles of society. But among the middle classes, the classes which afford the average sample of national character, interested matches are far more rare than marriages of inclination.”

“I doubt even *that!*” said Cleveland. “Lookers-on see most of the game. And as a foreigner, without other interest than that of curiosity in your manners and customs, I have convinced myself that the tradesman’s heiress, and farmer’s heiress, is just as much courted as the banker’s or the baroness in her

own right. Nay more,—that in the humbler walks of life, if a man *be* tempted to marry for love, he takes care to make his poor dow-erless wife pay the penalty of his generosity by reproaches for the remainder of her days.”

“I’m afraid there is a good deal of truth in your strictures,” said the duke. “Let us hope the vengeance is not reciprocal; and that Herbert’s fair lady of ten thousand will deal mercifully with her purchase.”

“Your friend has hooked his prize then?” inquired Cleveland, carelessly.

“Unless his prospects were pretty sure, he would scarcely, I should imagine, have undertaken so long a journey,” replied the duke. “Even her mother will probably be better pleased with the attentions of a member of her own family, than the addresses of a set of threadbare Sicilian princes or cut-throat Neapolitan dukes.”

“But surely there are plenty of young Englishmen travelling in Italy,” cried Cleve-

land “to contend for the prize. Is the damsel, for instance, of too humble a degree to become Duchess of Attleborough or Lady John Howard?”

“*Those* names, my dear fellow, may chance to be bespoken,” replied his grace with a smile. But Lord John looked displeased and said nothing.

“Excuse my Redskin ignorance if what I have suggested is preposterous,” added Cleveland noticing the overclouding of his brow. “I am, you know, but a savage, — a post-script to the last edition of the ‘Last of the Mohicans.’”

“But there are other pretendants free to take the lists,” added the Duke of Attleborough cheerfully, as if to set the misgivings of his transatlantic friend at rest. “Here is Cleve, for instance,” — (at the sound of his own name, Jervis suddenly started forward as if previously absorbed in reverie,) — “Cleve, who has perhaps as yet

elected no lady for his thoughts.—He looks indignant!—Nevertheless were the candidate now at the head of the poll any other than my friend Herbert, I should be apt to say to Jervis, like the Duke to his guards at Waterloo,—“Up, lad, and at her!”

“Not if your grace were aware that my obligations to the Davenport family are such, and such my own humbleness of origin, that the mere supposition were an offence to the young lady!”—observed Jervis, his usually pale face becoming suddenly suffused.

“Rubbish!”—cried Cleveland, impetuously shrugging his shoulders. “The love of a good-looking young fellow, with good brains in his head, and a good heart in his breast, an offence to any girl on the face of the earth?—Rubbish!”—

“I, at least, should understand the extent of my own presumption,” replied Jervis, coldly. “Nay, so sacredly do I regard the Davenport family in the light of benefac-

tors, that I admit it to be painful to me even to hear the—the *young lady's* name rendered the object of pleasantry.”

“Then by Jove we'll say no more about her!” — cried the good-natured Duke of Attleborough.

And it was no sacrifice to change the subject of conversation. For at that moment Mrs Cleveland, looking like some beautiful statue of antiquity animated by sudden intelligence, entered the room to absorb the attention of all present.

CHAPTER II.

Ne me parlez pas de ces villes dont l'antiquité est fardée comme une femme de cour. Que m'importent ces coutours sans physionomie, ce doux langage, sans style arrêté, —ces grands monumens peuplés d'ombres,—et ces mystères sans croyances? Autant vaudrait répandre des fleurs sur un cercueil vide et sonore! —L'Italie est connue, parcourue, épuisée, profanée. Elle n'a plus de secrets pour vos rêveries.

JANIN.

Even in the instant of repair and health
The fit is strongest. Evils that take leave,
On their departure, most of all show evil.

SHAKSPEARE.

IMPOSSIBLE to feel more strongly, more humbly, or more proudly than Jervis Cleve, that the object of the education bestowed upon him was to render him a scholar for the sake of scholarship. Devoid of all pretension to figure in society above his sphere under a sanction beyond his rights and pre-

tensions, the introductions forced upon him on quitting Venice, were accepted solely with a view to the furtherance of his literary and scientific pursuits.

In his own estimation, he was "a priest for ever," vowed to the cultivation of learning, as a Levite is devoted to the altar. His errand in Italy was to see and search, in order to connect the scattered evidences of antiquity by the luminous chain of modern enlightenment. And to effect this with the sobriety of an abstracted mind, the society into which he had been accidentally thrown, would of course render impossible.

It was not so much the orgies of men like Cleveland that were likely to endanger his reason, as the enervation arising from the frivolities of the gay world. As yet, his experience of female society was limited to the untaught companions of his sister Jane, or the formal ladies of the college dons who had condescended to notice the

Fairford youth. But his perceptions had been of late fatally extended. Such Sirens as Virginia, or such Circes as the Countess Maria Michelozzi seemed to assign a new character to life and new temptations to his career ; and it required a stronger effort than he had ever anticipated to tear himself from a world where beings so fair and gracious as these, and even girls as lovely and frank as Lucy Hecksworth, were of no unfrequent occurrence.

But like the cabalists of other days, he felt that, to secure himself against finding a distaff in his hand in lieu of the club that was to sustain him in his labours, the joys of female companionship must be renounced. The society of artists and men of letters must afford his utmost recreation after the severer intercourse of the learned. But it was not without a heavy sigh that, after an hour of romance by the side of the lovely and conciliating Mrs Cleveland, he re-

minded himself that his youth was destined to expire in cheerless isolation ; baffled in its aspirations as the breath of spring, expanding in a flowerless and a dry land, where no water is!

On finding that his gay friends were about to proceed to Rome, he wisely determined to start at once for Naples.

“I could not contemplate the glorious old city with sufficient deference in such company,” said he. “Their mockery would depreciate things in my estimation, which it is at once my delight and duty to hold sacred.”

“Right,—quite right!”—cried Fairfax, to whom he communicated his intentions. “For your own sake, you cannot keep too far aloof from us. You must infallibly singe your wings against the torch of pleasure brandished so recklessly by those with whom the duke has chosen to surround us. We are all of us ready enough to make fine resolutions

on quitting college, when we know nothing of the temptations of the world. But you have begun to discover, my dear Cleve, and will daily see more clearly, that the pursuit of knowledge is a career almost sacerdotal."

"Till lately," replied Cleve, with a smile, "I did not imagine it could be a sacrifice!"

"Take it as a rule forced on my adoption by long experience, both on my own account and my pupil's," added Fairfax gravely, "that *one* hour spent in the gay world, invalidates for any useful purpose, the three ensuing! The danger of becoming idle and luxurious does not arise so much from the attractions of

beccafichi e ortolan pelati

E buon vin dolci e letti spiumacciati,

as from the habit of hearing wrong and right confounded in the false jargon of people of the world,—all that is grave derided as all that is dull,—and mental labour condemned as equally derogatory with any other drudgery.

Myself one of the working bees, I am proud to hold, with Hæsioid, that,

την δ' αρεγην ιδρωγα θεοι κρικαροιδην ηθηκαν.”

“Trust me, I am not likely to relax in my exertions,” said Cleve with spirit.

“And trust *me* they would be crippled past redemption, if breathed upon by the inanity of the great!” retorted his friend. “Much has been said of the degradation sustained by literature in the persons of men of letters, when the great lords their patrons used to fling them a purse of gold, or reward their verses and dedications with a cheque on their banker. For *my* part, I believe that the cause of learning sustains a far *greater* injury by the admission of literary people to familiar intercourse with their patrons. Except to those in the clerical profession, they can afford no preferment; and their society is fatal as

Th' insane root

That takes the reason prisoner.”

“It is not solicitude for my worldly advancement that influences me,” replied Cleve, “for after all, what is a modern scholar to achieve by his labours?”

“Fame,—profit,—glory to himself and his!” cried his friend. “Eustace and Clarke want successors. The science of Cuvier is still in its infancy. Nay, every foot of earth on which we set our own, contains marvels to be expounded, and reminiscences to be illustrated, for such of the elect as devote themselves to the cultivation of human intelligence.”

While listening to the exhortations of his friend, the spirits of Jervis were revived. He felt, as he had done at Cambridge, that he had a vocation of his own,—that there was a world elsewhere than in the pompous saloons of the great, where specific distinctions awaited him. But after losing sight of every familiar face, his heart sank again. By the time he reached Naples, he

felt miserably alone. By the time he reached Naples, his mind misgave him. The lonely scholar doubted of everything on the face of the earth,—even of himself.

“After all,” thought he — when the excitement of gazing on the blue skies and purple shores of the Mediterranean subsided into the sadness of having no one to whom to confide the emotions to which that beautiful spectacle of nature had given rise,— “after all, is not this self-isolation of mine the result of false shame, rather than of virtue or philosophy? Was it not more the sense of my inferiority than the duty of self-sacrifice, that determined me to detach myself from the party whose sympathy rendered Venice so pleasant?—I dreaded the arrival of Davenport and the Hecksworths at Rome. I was afraid of being forced back into my sphere!”

Then came the sad reflection,—a reflection

that too often recurred to embitter even his brightest moments,—that, whether in England or abroad, *his* sphere must be a lonely one. Like a cage-bird deprived of its natural instincts by early abstraction from the nest, he found that even liberty might become a curse.

It was perhaps this besetting consciousness which imparted to the handsome countenance of the young student, an air of dejection peculiarly in harmony with its fine contour. The appearance of Jervis Cleve would have been noticeable, in any country or society. But in Italy, and connected with the name of Englishman, the charm became the greater by force of contrast. To that designation, foreigners are apt to attach the idea of everything that is robust in person, dictatorial in opinion, and ungracious in address; and the pale reserved young man, with his gentle man-

ners and *air à sentiment*, required all the authentication of his passport, to pass for *Inglese*.

Wherever he appeared, he became an object of inquiry. It was in vain he retreated from observation. Even in the course of his visits to public monuments and historical sites, his fine person attracted notice.

True to his resolution of living a retired life, he had forwarded, unaccompanied by his name or address, the letters intrusted to him by his Venetian friends for a variety of personages of the highest distinction in the Two Sicilies; reserving to himself the task of delivering in person an introduction from his learned friend of the island Convent to the prior of the Benedictines, and the recommendations procured for him in Rome by Philip Fairfax, who was so well qualified to avouch his deserts, to the heads of the various academies of Naples.

By the mode of his reception, however, he

saw that, though the nature of his university distinctions had been explained in his letter of credit, his fame had not preceded him to the land of lazzaroni. He had yet to learn how tardily even the greatest names connected with our literary and scientific glories find their way across the continent; and that the signals of the telegraph of Fame have no universal language.

“I must achieve something to recommend myself more intimately to his good will,” thought Cleve, on returning discomfited from a first interview with Frà Bartolomeo, the venerable librarian of the Benedictines, who had welcomed him only as a man of the world, instead of affording him access to the treasures under his custody, which he was jealous of unveiling to eyes profane.

So long, however, as the light winter of the Sicilies had not set in, and out-of-door enjoyments were available, the young traveller experienced too vividly the charm of the novel

scene, to find leisure for his purpose. But when the spell of novelty, and the fineness of the weather, vanished together,—when he had visited everything that was to be seen, and retreated into his own chamber to digest the fruit of his observations,—the lack of that social intercourse which even college had supplied, oppressed his spirits into apathy. He wanted his favourite books,—his familiar chair. He missed the tap at the door announcing some pleasant acquaintance,—or the arrival, unpreluded, of some still more familiar friend!—He seemed almost *afraid* of being so thoroughly alone.

An occasional visit to the Opera did but render him more conscious of his isolation. Music is a powerful softener of the heart; and the touching strains of Bellini and Donizetti, breathed with the mellifluous sweetness of the choicest Italian organs, require the responsive glance of sympathy from some well-known face.

By degrees, he felt peevish at witnessing

the sociability of others. He hated such exaggerated demonstrations of sensibility. He hated the vehemence of Neapolitan gesticulation.

Sometimes, instead of being angry with *them*, he quarrelled with himself. Having by degrees obtained sufficient favour in the eyes of the discriminating Frà Bartolomeo, not alone to be honoured with a view of the Benedictine MSS., but to be entrusted with many rare and precious works essential to his studies, he found it impossible to tie down his attention to the task he had imposed on himself.

“In such a climate and spot as this, how could I expect it to be otherwise!” cried he. “In the musty quadrangles of some dreary college, or in a monastic cell, study is recreation. But here, within view of yonder glorious bay, and all the speaking associations of yonder indented shore, how is it possible to restrict myself to the teaching of mere mortal

wisdom!—Why sacrifice the better enjoyments of nature to the barren triumph of clearing up an historical doubt, or enlightening what GOD, for his own great purposes, has chosen should remain obscure?”

Such are usually the misgivings and vacillations of genius, when no sustaining hand of watchful affection,—no moral influence of intellectual superiority,—sustains its faltering steps over the El Sirat dividing the dread abyss of doubt from the Eden of knowledge.

His only comfort consisted in an occasional letter from Fairfax;—himself discontented and ill at ease, from daily struggles against the increasing influence of the gay world over the conduct of his pupil. Not that, even to Cleve, he avowed the extent of his anxiety. He spoke only of the difficulty of obtaining a leisure day from Lord John, now that his national instinct of fox-hunting was called into play. Not a word of the far more pe-

rilous partialities which attracted the young sportsman to the house of the Clevelands!—

“ I hear of nothing from morning till night but capital runs, or the merits or delinquencies of such or such a hound,” said he ; “ and though, at present, Lord John has too much good nature either to leave me constantly alone, or drag me into society unsuitable to my inclinations and my black coat, I foresee a time when the Duke of Attleborough will not be the only one of the party constantly complaining of headaches, from too much claret, or too much lansquenet, the night before. In short, I heartily wish we were back again at Wrexhill ! But were I to write as much to the marquis, he would probably attribute my uneasiness to unfitness for the task I have undertaken.

“ Meanwhile, my dear Jervis, it is some comfort that *you* have governed your path with prudence. Not a day but I thank my stars you are at Naples ; pursuing, I trust, your

researches in the Benedictine library. The hint you threw out the last evening we spent together at Venice, was pregnant with good. Our literature sadly lacks a solid history of Italy; more comprehensive than Muratori, Guicciardini, and D'Avila, and something that Robertson would not have been ashamed to own.

“How gladly should I devote myself to such a task! How intensely should I enjoy, not alone the triumph of literary success, if success were my portion, but every step of the way leading to the Temple of Fame. Leisure and libraries,—libraries and leisure! I can imagine no pleasanter phase of human existence!—Perhaps because it is denied me! *My* career is otherwise chalked out. The great duty of my life is to secure, by church preferment, a home for the old age of my excellent mother; the sole consideration that would have determined me to accept such a respon-

sibility as weighs upon me so heavily at this moment, and renders pen and ink an interdicted pleasure. For I must make either a wretched private tutor, or wretched historian.

“*You*, my dear Cleve, are in the very position to accomplish what to me is denied. But remember that I shall not be satisfied with some *ad-captandum* essay ; a farrago in three octavo volumes, half romance, half history ; or even a dazzling display of phantasmagoria, in the style of Thierry or Barante. I must have something sterling and solid to accredit your name beyond to-day,—or even beyond to-morrow. For ‘to whom much is given, from him much shall be required.’”

This letter, far from serving the purpose for which it was intended, of rousing the ambitions of which, at Cambridge, Fairfax had joyfully watched the growth, had only the effect of producing the conflagration of the voluminous results of poor Jervis’s Bene-

dictine studies. For the style condemned by the classical taste of the tutor, was the very one in which the youthful fervour of Cleve had instinctively found utterance. A sudden transition from the secluded and monotonous life of the last twelve years, into a living, breathing world of vivid realities, rendered the classical purity advocated by Fairfax too cold for his temperament, too colourless for his taste. In practice, if not in theory, he held with the Marquis of Wrexhill, that our era is far too vivacious for the sobriety of the early chroniclers, or even the analytical spirit of the philosophical German historians. For Jervis, the brilliant and animated pictures of Thierry were replete with dramatic interest; and his attempt at an outline of the Italian republics produced only a corrected version of Sismondi's historical romance.

But it needed but a word of disparage-

ment from one of whose judgment he stood in awe, to convince him that he had sinned against the canons of good taste. Deficient in that highest attribute of genius, the consciousness of a right to create a style of his own, and govern rather than concede to the opinions of the time, he sacrificed the result of deeply seated convictions, as remorselessly as though the mere outpourings of boyish effervescence.

Little did Philip Fairfax imagine the value of the burnt-offering! Those unfledged attempts at authorship had afforded an occupation,—an aim,—an object,—to the listless recluse. Like a Hindoo mother, from whose bosom her female infant is snatched and flung into the waters as useless and unprofitable, the loss of those nameless pages left an irreparable blank in his existence. His foot, which seemed to have achieved a first step towards the Temple of Fame,

had lost all support, and the earth was again insecure under his feet.

After his hasty *auto-da-fé*, he hurried with equal precipitation to the Benedictine monastery, for the restoration of the valuable and precious MSS. which had been liberally entrusted to him; having, in the irritation of his baffled hopes, already determined on a geological excursion into the Abruzzi. He fancied that his mind required change of scene instead of repose, after the too great diversity of objects by which its perceptions were perplexed!—

On entering the cheerless library of the damp and chilly monastery, the stone floor of which was intersected with strips of coarse matting, while the stagnant atmosphere, unrefreshed by the admission of air from without, fell heavy upon his spirits,—he saw that his venerable friend Frà Bartolomeo was engaged in conversation with a visitor; and discreetly reserved till the

departure of the stranger his few last words of explanation and farewell.

But even listless and pre-occupied as he was, he could not forbear noticing the incongruity between the dress and address of the foreign guest,—manifestly a man of the world,—and the grave features and solemn garb of the reverend librarian. He had some difficulty, indeed, to avoid overhearing the matter in discussion between them; for so deeply did it interest both, that they spoke loudly and without reserve. At length, the scrupulous Englishman preferred retreating into the adjoining vestibule with his errand unexplained, to obtaining an undue insight into the business of others.

“Yonder is the English *dottore!*”—said Frà Bartolomeo, raising his voice on noticing his precipitate retreat,—“who, if he could be induced to undertake your excellency’s commission, is far better qualified than myself to render it justice.”

The "excellency" thus addressed, instantly turned towards Jervis; displaying a countenance all but Calmuck in its features, and doubly unsightly at that moment from the bitterness of a supercilious smile. Nor did Jervis appear to much greater advantage: Embarrassed to find himself the subject of a discussion so mysterious, like most Englishmen when they feel awkward, he looked sullen.

"His Excellency Prince Lobanoff," said the mild Benedictine, adroitly contriving to explain the name and quality of his visitor, "has obtained the sanction of his Majesty's government to pursue the excavations commenced and abandoned as too costly, some years ago, in the village of Edrezza, adjoining Portici. Aware how little our Neapolitan workmen are to be trusted with the conduct of such undertakings, he is anxious that one of the brotherhood of this monastery (which, under

God's favour, has obtained some renown in the world of letters) should preside in person."

"Where is the use, I ask you, of the advantages I have secured," added the prince, "unless some experienced antiquarian be on the spot to serve as *cicerone*?—Once more, therefore, reverend father, I offer you *carte blanche* to officiate on the occasion."

Frà Bartolomeo replied by an expressive gesture of deprecation.

"It is not your pleasure in short, to accept my proposal?"

"It is not in my *power*!" replied the reverend librarian. "My duties here admit of no intermission."

"As you please!" was the haughty rejoinder of the Boyar. "But it is as *I* please to credit your assertion that the young gentlemen before me can be on a par, in science and information, with a man of more than treble his years."

“I mentioned to your excellency yesterday,” observed the monk, with meek forbearance, “when submitting to you the letter of my learned brother Frà Pasquale of Venice, that the individual to whom it bore reference had attained little more than years of discretion.”

“Frà Pasquale?—*This*,—this youngling,—the Englishman alluded to in your communication of yesterday?”—cried Prince Lobanoff, in amazement.

“To whom I ventured to assign the name of the Admirable Crichton!” rejoined Frà Bartolomeo,—the habitual gravity of his marked features brightened by a momentary smile, when he saw the vivacious barbarian, who believed his eagerness in search of excitement to be zeal in pursuit of knowledge, rush up to the shy young scholar, seize him by the hand, and renew in French, English, and Italian the explanation of his purpose, as well as his earnest desire to obtain the

co-operation of one so marvellously qualified for the task;—to all which, poor Jervis replied by endeavouring to explain in his turn the motive of his visit to the Benedictines, and that he was on the point of quitting Naples.

“Of quitting Naples?—No, no, no!—Impossible that you should be let off so easily!” cried the prince. “Your arrival here is providential. I no longer entreat you to con-
cede to my request from interested motives—(though God forbid you should have cause to complain of the liberality of one whose countrymen stand first in the nineteenth century in furtherance of scientific discovery and reward of literary merit). I ask your compliance in the name of letters, — in behalf of the common cause of polite learning.—You *must* not, you cannot refuse me!”

It was in vain that Cleve stammered further apologies. He was no match for the

overbearing impetuosity of one of those showy despots who are beginning to acquire on the causeway of Europe the position occupied by the *Milord Anglais* of a couple of centuries ago; casting a bridge of gold across every difficulty, and buying up all that is rare and precious,—even objects of art beyond the appreciation of their half-savage taste.

“Have you relations in Naples?” cried the prince, unable to account for the hesitation of the diffident young man.

“None!”—was the succinct reply.

“Friends, then?”

A waive of the head afforded a mournful negative.

“Nor ties nor occupations of any kind? Then, by Heaven above, I will admit of no excuse!” exclaimed the prince. “While our task is in progress, you shall have a place at my table,—a home under my roof. I shall hold such a companion the greatest acqui-

tion; and to *you* my company need not be absolutely disagreeable."

Another hearty shake of the hand formed the peremptory ratification of a treaty, in which one of the subscribing parties was allowed to exercise little discretion.

But even when, the prince having withdrawn, the good monk who had acted as master of the ceremonies proceeded to explain to his *protégé* the princely habits, means, and intentions of Prince Lobanoff, adjuring him not to reject the advances of a patron equally high in the favour of his sovereign and zealous in the cause of letters, Jervis felt as though he had unguardedly suffered himself to be entrapped into a false position.—ANOTHER false position for one who had experienced so many!—

He felt sure of becoming as much an object of contempt as of respect, in the eyes of his new patron. If an object of deference to the prince as an accomplished

scholar, he should not be the less an object of pity as a scholar educated at the public cost.

“Some day,” mused the mistrustful Jervis, as he took his way homewards, to make reluctant arrangements for quitting his solitary lodging—“some day, when the fervour of his enthusiasm shall have subsided, he will see in his admirable Crichton only a pretending *parvenu*; and should personal dissensions arise, what chance has the earthen pot against the iron vessel?”—

His self-love recoiled from the idea of being appropriated like a menial or a hireling;—too well aware that the prosaic realism of our epoch admits not, like the naïveté of the olden time, of the man of letters maintaining a proud independence as the honoured inmate of the great.

And alas! there are all the fewer Leonardo da Vincis in the world, because Francis the Firsts are wanting!—

CHAPTER III.

By this good light, this is a very shallow monster. I, afraid of him?—A very weak monster!—a most poor, credulous monster!—TEMPEST.

He hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book. He hath not eat paper, as it were. He hath not drunk ink. His intellect is not replenished. He is an animal only sensible in the duller parts.—LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

Is it because the Russians of the last century, creators of the civilization of their country, were so conscious of the instability of their social position under the sceptre of a despot, as to seize with indiscriminating haste every mode and means of enjoyment, lest their day should have no morrow,—that the present race, which they engendered, exhibits such reckless ardour in their pursuits?

No one will deny that the frozen North

sends forth the only enthusiasts who throng the theatres, picture galleries, or masked balls of enlightened Europe. And if the imperturbable nature of the Spanish grandees arose of old from the sense of irrevocable privilege and permanence of rights and dignities, it is easy to conceive that men perpetually on the eve of being exiled to Siberia or knouted by the caprice of a sovereign despot with the double despotism of her sex and irresponsibility, lost not a moment in extracting the greatest possible amount of enjoyment from the moments and means at their disposal.

The habits of St Petersburg during the present reign being incompatible with the vivacity of these hereditary pleasure-seekers, they are to be found, *du jour au lendemain*, in every capital but their own;—fox-hunting in England—gambling in Paris—scattering like a whirlwind the *chef-d'œuvres* of Italy,—or squandering their spirits and

gold amid the meretricious pleasures and questionable society of the German baths.

Surrounded in childhood by foreign nurses and professors, their proficiency as linguists naturally incites them to travel. But conscious that at any moment they may be recalled, and that an imperial whim would invalidate their passport ere half their journey be accomplished, their impetuosity outstrips the wind. And who can blame the rapidity of their movements, the vivacity of their utterance, the irritability of their manner? While an Englishman saunters over the face of the globe, fancying himself everybody's master because he is his own, and listless in the examination of the objects that present themselves, because, if he choose, he can come and see them again another time, the men with square faces, deep-set eyes, sandy moustachios, and unpronounceable names, who sweep past us on railroads, or snatch a glance, *en passant*,

at St Paul's or St Peter's, as if life were not long enough for a second look,—are acting, whether at Glasgow or Cairo, under the invisible, but omnipotent influence of the greatest tyranny of modern times; or, as the Abbé de Pradt called the diplomacy of Napoleon,—“*la force, doublée de ruse.*”

In the establishment of one who, bred under a despotism, was of course a despot in his turn, Jervis Cleve was startled by the abject and machine-like subjection of every member of the household. The will of Prince Lobanoff was executed almost before it was expressed; the service of the domestics being as impetuous as the amateurship of his excellency.

An involuntary comparison was created in his mind between the man of the steppes and the man of the prairies,—Cleveland, and the prince;—each, great with the several greatness of his country,—strength of limb, and strength of pocket;

and unanimous only in their sense of superiority to the intellectual strength of the poor English scholar.—It would have been difficult, perhaps, to decide which of the two exceeded in insolence;—the one conceiving himself a portion of the greatness of the empire at whose foot he lay chained and grovelling; the other fancying that, because unsubmitted to a king, he possessed no other superior.

But the insolence of Cleveland was more brutal. Prince Lobanoff, like other Russians of his class, was somewhere on a par with the *grand seigneur* of the reign of Louis XV; who, if ignorant himself, maintained artists and men of letters, as cowardly lords in the time of the Stuarts used to maintain bravos and bullies. But he had imbibed, by contact with more enlightened persons, a sufficient smattering of knowledge and the jargon of diletteism, and by his habits of courtiership at home and on his

travels, a degree of exterior polish, that rendered him a pleasanter companion than the American. If a *roué*, he was a *roué* of a higher order.

Ample leisure was unluckily afforded to Jervis, to study what, to a sober Englishman, appeared the eccentricities of the prince. A sudden change of weather on the very day of his instalment in his new Palazzo in the Via Santa Lucia rendered it impossible for the present to attempt the projected excavations; and the Muscovite lord seemed to consider himself intitled to double the amount of imprecations he was in the habit of lavishing on his *valet de chambre*, and the kicks he was accustomed to bestow on Nikita his courier, in compensation for this grievous disappointment.

But though a French medical student, who formed part of his *cortège*, under the name of travelling physician, had the honour of sharing with them the ill-humour of his excellency,

Cleve,—whom he presented to his household and acquaintance as “Monsieur Gervais,—*savant distingué*,” was at present an object of consideration. The reluctance evinced by the young man to enter his establishment, rendered it a matter of pride that he should have no cause for complaint.

The “barbaric gold and pearl,” the rich plate and vases of malachite, lavishly exposed in the establishment of his excellency, did not, however, so dazzle the eyes of the poor scholar as to blind him to the utter want of refinement in its details. In his own humble lodging, there was more decency; and in English households of the third class, such as those of the Grange or Bilston Park, a thousand times more elegance and order.

Yet Lobanoff was under the especial *surveillance* of the imperial police as one of those lords of thousands of human beings, and millions of roubles, whose disaffection might at any moment create a mine

of mischief, ramifying under the very foundations of the throne!—

“Why did you not come and see the opera last night, Monsieur Gervais?” inquired the prince, the day after presenting Jervis with a key of his box at San Carlo, which amounts in Italy to a general invitation.

“I was afraid of intruding,” was a reply highly unsatisfactory to one little accustomed to find such invitations neglected.

“I relied, *mon cher monsieur*, on the pleasure of your company,” rejoined the prince, in a tone implying some title to the attendance of his inmate. “I hate to be alone!”—

“I understood that Count Astrowicz, who dined with us, was to have the honour of accompanying your excellency?”

“Astrowicz?—Certainly!—What then?—You don’t call *him* company?—A fellow who talks as with a locked jaw,—a word an hour,—and scarcely audible beyond his beard!”

“ I admit that I did not find the count very amusing. But, understanding him to be a frequent guest at your excellency's table, I concluded——”

“ Conclude nothing from that!” cried Lobanoff, whose heart happened to be open, (with champagne,) even to indiscretion.—“ Make no inferences from the conduct of a Russian towards a Russian,—which is actuated by a thousand motives we do not care to explain. The liberty to visit foreign countries, whether for the pleasure of losing sight of our own or enlarging our perceptions, is dearly purchased under such a government as ours. Few escape without being charged with a secret mission, of more or less importance. We all know it. We all mistrust each other. I have reason to believe that the chief occupation of Astrowicz is to *surveiller* my movements; and, knowing him to be in close correspondence with the emperor's cabinet, I take care that he shall know of *my* pro-

ceedings only what I choose to tell him. Of the conversation that passes between us in your presence, listen to as little as you can, and believe nothing."

To avoid giving full utterance to his disgust at such a system of things, Cleve reverted to San Carlo. "Was his excellency satisfied with the new opera?"

"Charming,—exquisite!"—cried Lobanoff, with genuine enthusiasm. "Yet had you been with us last night, you would have heard me pronounce it execrable to Astrowicz,—because of too liberal a tendency to be represented at St Petersburg. If he chose to back a recommendation of the piece by quoting *my* opinion in its favour, I should receive a gentle hint from Léon Potocki that my patriotism *was* melting away in the sunshine of Naples, and that my health would be the better for the bracing air of the Neva."

His curiosity being excited by a drama disqualified for representation in the Russian

empire, Cleve profited the following night by the privilege conceded to him. But it struck him that the prince looked less prepared for his appearance than had he chosen to accompany the party after the dinner given to Count Astrowicz.—A very beautiful woman was his only companion.

He was about to commit the still further indiscretion of retreating that he might not disturb the *tête-à-tête*, when the lowering brow of his host convinced him that a first mistake is not atoned by a second. A sufficient penalty was inflicted on him, however, by hearing himself abruptly announced by the prince as “*Monsieur Gervais,—attaché à mon service.*”

Not a word of *savant*!—His fair companion was apparently one to whom that name would convey no recommendation.

But to his great surprise, and still more so to that of the great man who counted his income in serfs instead of sovereigns, the

cheeks of his lovely companion became suffused with a vivid blush as she exclaimed—
“*Gervais?—Et puis?*”—

Concluding that the interrogation regarded the country and quality of her new acquaintance, Prince Lobanoff repeated,—but in a key subsiding to a whisper, as if half ashamed of his assumption,—“*Anglais, attaché à mon service.*”

“In that case, I am unfortunately mistaken!” replied she, with a courteous bend of the head toward the handsome Englishman. “I was almost in hopes of having at length discovered a Monsieur Gervais, recommended to me in the highest terms by my relation, Maria Michelozzi; who brought me letters from Venice, but apparently thought me unworthy the honour of delivering them.”

“Let me at least congratulate myself, madam, that they reached your hands in safety,” replied Cleve. “Nothing but the sense of my unworthiness of the favour designed

me by the countess, prevented my presenting them in person."

"How!" cried Prince Lobanoff, reconciled at once to the *contretemps* of Cleve's unlucky intrusion, by the gratification of holding at his disposal a person so celebrated, "is it possible, *mon cher monsieur*, that I see in you the person whose departure I heard so much deplored by the Contessa Michelozzi?—Surely *that* gentleman was travelling in company with a party of English noblemen?"

"And not 'attached to their service!'" replied Cleve with a significant smile; resuming his gravity while he added, "I quitted the party to which your excellency alludes, from finding its atmosphere more agreeable than wholesome for a poor scholar like myself, the business of whose life is study rather than sport."

"Were I forced to believe you," interposed the lady, "I should express some sur-

prise at meeting you at San Carlo, in the box of Prince Lobanoff."

"Not surely, madam, after learning that I am —" but *this* time the prince was careful to forestal his completion of the phrase, "attached to his service."

"Enough that we are here," interrupted he "to enjoy the charming melodies of Verdi, and the sweet strains of Moltini. No matter why or wherefore!—*Perche* is a word that always introduces a host of tiresome explanations."—

Accepting this as a hint to leave the prince to do the honours of his box to his charming guest, Jervis retreated into the background. But he was mistaken. He had made a gigantic stride in the estimation of his patron; who, if incapable of appreciating genius, was an adorer of celebrity. In new countries, literary and scientific distinctions have a double value; and the man of sufficient note to be passed from hand to hand like a

Voltaire or a Fontenelle, not alone by learned priors, but the most charming women of the day, 'was indeed a *protégé* to be proud of. Considering his summary mode of dealing with Nikita, and execrating even contrarities of weather, Lobanoff took it mildly when his fair companion, eager to profit by the occasion to improve her acquaintance with the interesting stranger, assigned him a place by her side.

While Jervis was secretly marvelling *which* of the noble dames to whom he had brought letters was the one thus gracious and thus graceful, and while the lovely stranger sat luxuriating in the fragrance of a beautiful bouquet of Parma violets which she held in her hand, she proceeded to interrogate him with the cool self-possession of high caste, concerning the state of the dramatic art in his native country.

“Can it be true,” said she, “as I have heard from the Chreptowitchs, Paul Lieven,

and others who have resided in England, that, in the land of Shakspeare, the national drama is extinct?"

By collision with great lords and fine ladies, Cleve had by this time imbibed sufficient tact to know that an explanation of the circumstances which had limited his personal experience in such matters, was less to the purpose than to cite received opinions.

"You have been but too correctly informed, madam," he replied. "The theatres dedicated to the national drama are on the verge of bankruptcy."—

"And has not your young Queen grace and spirit enough to redeem the fallen cause?" rejoined his enthusiastic companion.—

"The evil existed before her time, and is now considered irremediable," replied Cleve.

"*Nothing* is irremediable?—But from what deep-seated cause is the mischief supposed to arise?" demanded his fair companion.

"According to popular opinion, from the

lateness of hours now prevalent in England," replied Cleve. "But I suspect that, were we to return to those prevalent in London when Sheridan's 'School for Scandal' was produced on the stage, five-act tragedies or comedies would not attract better audiences than now."—

"And why, pray?"—

"We see them better acted off the stage! In an incomplete order of society, the dramas that represent mankind as they ought to be, or have been in ages more refined, command attention, at once as a lesson and diversion. But the moment a country becomes conscious of its superiority, the stage forfeits half its charm. In America, in Russia, an actor is still secure of the eyes and ears of his audience. But, unusual indeed must be the performance which, in London, withdraws from themselves the attention of the spectators."—

"But surely the opera is still frequented?" pleaded the prince. "The matchless Taglioni

was cruel enough to desert St Petersburg for London! ”—

“ Operas and ballets, as supernatural pictures of nature, remain acceptable, however high the civilization of a country,” resumed Cleve. “ It is only the fac-simile of its own manners which it disdains. High life is high comedy on the widest scale ; and how can we expect people to desert their brilliant saloons, to see them less advantageously represented on the stage ? ”—

“ Still,” remonstrated the lady, “ I am unwilling to believe that the progress of civilization deprives us of a taste for what is natural. The fine arts do not suffer from the extension of social refinement.”

“ Because incorporated with it as an integral portion ; an enhancement of the luxurious domestic life, renounced by those who frequent the theatres. To see a play, a family is forced to derange its hours and habits, to encounter a vile atmosphere and

personal inconvenience; and as an inducement for such exertions, prodigious scenic effects are provided. Whereas a choice picture, or fine statue, decorates their pleasant home, and is enjoyed from their easy chair!"—

“Alas! poor Shakspeare!”—said the lady, shrugging her shoulders. “I had hoped that, in the visit I purpose making to England next spring, I should enjoy the triumph of seeing him still more classically represented than at Vienna.”

The animated expression which had begun to intellectualize the fine features of Jervis Cleve, subsided to a blank at this intimation. The air, tone, and dress of his companion satisfied him that she belonged to an order of society, in which, on her arrival in London, her inquiries after “*Monsieur Gervais, — savant distingué,*” would be answered by the opprobrious word “*aventurier!*”

With such prospects, why improve his intimacy with one who would consider all explanation of his condition as irrelevant and importunate, yet probably resent the misconception arising from his silence?— He had to choose between offending as a bore, or as an impostor.

The beautiful opening of the second act of 'Ernani' luckily put an end to his perplexities; but not before they had provoked a sigh so profound, as to startle the attention of the fair incognita. Handsome women are apt to attribute indiscreet demonstrations of this description to the irresistibility of their own attractions; and considering that when she turned her full-orbed eyes inquiringly upon the young Englishman, she found his own riveted upon herself, there was some pretext for the prince's evident displeasure at the attentions bestowed upon his *protégé*.

"I have doubly to thank you," said she,

when the harmonious close of the first aria released the house from the attitude of attention bestowed in Italy only on the favourite portions of an opera,—“I have doubly to thank you, *cher prince*, for having endeavoured to convince me that your box is a better one for hearing than my own; since it has not only enabled me to appreciate the new piece, but secured me an acquaintance of which I have been long ambitious.”

Unable to imagine, beyond a single sullen moment, that Cleve was regarded by the great lady otherwise than by himself,—namely, as a piece of furniture dedicated to his use,—Lobanoff bowed low, as though the compliment were intended for himself.

But either because displacement from her box prevented her numerous friends from offering their homage, or vexed by the obstinate silence of Mons. Gervais, the lady soon lapsed into listlessness; and after a scarcely repressed yawn, requested the prince to ask

for her shawl; a sad dilemma for Cleve, who felt that he ought to offer his services, yet knew not how to intimate his ignorance of the name of one whom not to know seemed a matter of high treason.

While he stood irresolute, Lobanoff opened the door of the box to receive a cloak lined with sable from the hands of a gorgeously dressed chasseur in attendance, who instantly disappeared. An announcement was immediately echoed from mouth to mouth that the carriage of the Austrian ambassadress stopped the way.

The Austrian ambassadress!—The Countess von Adlerberg! — a woman distinguished alike by birth and accomplishments, to whom he had indeed despatched by a servant the letter he wanted courage to deliver in person! A respectful bow as she quitted the box was now his only mode of demonstrating his deep sense of her condescension.

“Our acquaintance once made,” said she,

pausing graciously on the prince's arm to acknowledge his salutation, "you must enable me to improve it. You will find me a constant attendant here. But my husband, Count von Adlerberg, will be eager to prove to you in our own house, the value we both assign to a recommendation from my cousin Maria."

CHAPTER IV.

Pourquoi, sur ces flots où s'élançe
 L'espérance,
 Ne voit-on que le souvenir
 Revenir ?

MERCŒUR.

O fair affliction, cease !

CON.—No, no, I will not, having breath to speak !—

O that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth,
 Then with my passion would I shake the world.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE close of a London season affords to the contemplative a fertile subject for meditation; and the amount of disappointed ambitions and frustrated pretensions whirled off from the metropolis by every successive railway train, towards the close of July, would supply matter for a thousand homilies.

But of all the capital town mansions where the last day of the season engenders angry emotions,—either on the part of senators who, after anticipating the applauses of the ‘Times,’ have figured only in ‘Punch,’—or beauties who, after trusting to become the belles of a royal masque, have been forced to content themselves with a fancy ball at the Hanover-square Rooms,—nowhere is the vexation so poignant as when the bill of “To be let furnished” removed from the dining-room windows in April, is to resume its place on the morrow of the family’s departure.

Such houses are generally the domicile of speculators of some kind or other;—families with sons or daughters to dispose of, in the unholy matrimony of barter and bargain;—or money to invest in railroads,—or insignificance to invest in fashion,—or eloquence to invest in parliament, and through parliament in a place. For one that succeeds in such projects, ninety and nine are they who, at the

close of the season, are taught to measure by a house-agent's exorbitant demands for damage and breakage, the wildness of their schemes as well as the amount of their disappointment.

No one better understood than Lady Hillingdon the mortification of finding, at the eleventh hour, her two daughters still unproposed for, except by those of whom, in the intoxication of her hopes concerning Lord John Howard and his cousin, she had sanctioned the rejection. But lest she should fall under any mistake as to her disappointment, Lady Ursula Wainwright took care that due condolence should enlighten her mind.

"I really feel for you," my dear, said she; "though I told you from the first, if you remember, that it was certain to end so. I warned you that it was a foolish venture!"

"*What* was a foolish venture?" retorted her ladyship. "Acceding to the desire of my son that he should have a home in

London, instead of being left to the costly discomfort of an hotel?"

"With every desire to see things as you *wish* me to see them," rejoined Lady Ursula, "I cannot suppose that you have been giving Greenwich dinners and Richmond parties, only to afford Mr Joddrell a home in which he does not spend half a dozen hours in the twenty-four! No one, my dear Lady Hillingdon, who has witnessed your solicitude to get your daughters invited here, there, and everywhere, and secure them the partners whom all the chaperons in London are disputing, could doubt that."

"I will not give you the trouble to doubt or dispute about the matter," interrupted Lady Hillingdon. "We have spent a very pleasant season, and there is an end of it."

"Ay, if that *were* the end of it!"—rejoined her friend, with a significant waive of the head. "But your expenses, my dear, must have been frightful. Till Christmas, you

will not half surmise all you have brought on yourself. And in the interval, what will you do with those poor girls at Brighton, with which London society has thoroughly put them out of conceit?"

"I have no thoughts of returning to Brighton," said Lady Hillingdon, drily.

"Why you have told me, a hundred times, that there is not so much as a chair or table left at Hillingdon Hall!"

Lady Hillingdon remained as dumb as though she had been deaf. Her son had strictly cautioned her against being too communicative of their plans to one whose envious nature found no greater pleasure than mischief-making.

"You cannot be going to the Dashwoods," argued Lady Ursula, "for it seems that the old gentleman takes Agatha's rejection of his nephew in very ill part."

"Did he *tell* you so?" inquired her friend, changing colour,—for aware of Lord Hilling-

don's anxiety to keep the old baronet in good humour, she had scrupulously concealed from him the proposals of Bob Dashwood.

“You do not suppose, my dear, that *I* have time to throw away on an old quiz like Sir Robert Dashwood!—A fine old English gentleman, I make no doubt, but the sort of person one never wants to see beyond the boundaries of his estate,—unless indeed he happened to have a mortgage on one's own.”

Lady Hillingdon was silenced. Judging it prudent to close the Dashwood chapter, she contented herself with observing that it was many years since she had visited Clarendon Hill.

“And it will be long enough, I should imagine, before you go there again,” retorted Lady Ursula,—“for the other night at the opera, I saw Mr Dashwood take out your pretty niece, Miss Clutterbuck, with the most marked assiduity.”

“Miss Clutterbuck?”—

“Miss Emma,—I ought to say, for the honour of Mr Joddrell’s flame. But one is seldom very accurate about the names of people one is not in the habit of meeting.”

“My father has always persisted that my youngest niece rather resembles Agatha,” said Lady Hillingdon, musingly. “Perhaps Mr Dashwood has been making up to her on that account”—

“A man who has been snubbed, is glad to make up to the first pretty girl that receives him kindly!”—interrupted Lady Ursula. “Clarendon Hill would not be a bad *pied à terre* for one of the Miss Clutterbucks”—

Lady Hillingdon shrugged her shoulders.

“So I conclude, at least, from your glowing descriptions of the property, at the time you made so much of Bob Dashwood at Brighton,—before you commenced the duke-hunting system here.”

Instead of replying, Lady Hillingdon began

to arrange and pack in her writing-desk a number of letters lying on the table; as if to make apparent to her visitor, that, on the eve of leaving London, she had not another moment to bestow upon her.

“And where, then, am I to address my letters to you?” said Lady Ursula, unable to misconceive the hint, “unless, indeed, your destination be too great a mystery?”

“To Hindon Manor. We are going to spend a week or two with my father and mother,”—replied Lady Hillingdon, anticipating with delight the amazement which so unlooked-for an announcement would produce in the mind of her friend.

“At Hindon Manor!” reiterated Lady Ursula,—as much astonished as if told to direct her letters to the Millbank penitentiary. “*You*, who have not been there these ten years!—*You*, who always so detested the place!—What in the world can take you to Hindon?”

“ A railroad, in the first place,—which has facilitated the journey by two-thirds.”

“ Distance never prevented your finding your way to Lord Charles Grantingham’s, —which is fifty miles further.”—

“ Lord Charles is within reach of the best pack of hounds in the kingdom,” retorted her companion, with repressed indignation. “ Lord Hillingdon never objected to a visit *there*.”—

“ Nor Lady Hillingdon either ! ”—was plainly depicted in the spiteful eyes of Lady Ursula.

“ And though I do not happen to be particularly fond of Hindon,—the air of which never agreed with me,” added the lady, still sorting her papers, though Lady Ursula retained her attitude of leave-taking,—“ I cannot deny my daughters the pleasure of a visit to their grandfather, who is so fond of them, and has been too unwell for London this year.”—

Lady Ursula was inexpressibly provoked. No chance of triumph so long as Lady Hillingdon assumed the cardinal virtues as her shield and buckler! No picking a hole in the amiable plea of affording pleasure to amiable daughters and their doating grandfather. Her concluding words of farewell were almost inarticulate from baffled spite.

For even with the peculiar *clairvoyance* which enabled her to detect the vilest of motives under the fairest of surfaces, she had failed to penetrate so far as the object which had prevailed over Lady Hillingdon's abhorrence of the roof under which she was born, and her antipathy of the gravities into which her infirm parents had subsided.

She knew not that, within visiting distance of Hindon Manor,—that is, within visiting distance when the will was as good as the way,—stood the fine old mansion of the Hecksworths!

“The HECKSWORTHS!” A family, concern-

ing whom no soul had cared, so long as it was represented by a worthy squire, remarkable only for his common sense; and a wife, *née* Davenport, who was simply a good sort of woman!—Whereas, as the seat of an heiress, Bilston Hall was intitled to the honourable notoriety of portraiture in any collection of noblemen and gentlemen's seats throughout the kingdom; or even to form a corollary in the form of vignette, to Lucy Hecksworth's picture in the 'Book of Beauty.' It was becoming essential, indeed, to set up a finger-post at the angle of the private road leading to Bilston Hall; so numerous were the inquirers, especially equestrians, concerning the shortest way to the place!

Had the original position of the three girls as co-heiresses been legally established, the assiduities of the neighbourhood, instead of being three times as great, would only have the quotient of a rule of three division. But as it was, the girl of ten thousand (a-year),

who, even in town, had drawn hosts of admirers around her, was in her own county a cynosure.

Among the London aspirants to her intimacy, Lady Hillingdon had been one of the first. The boastings by which Sir Richard Davenport endeavoured to enhance the value of his homage to Agatha, of the extent of his cousin's fortune and his peculiar claims to her hand, were not lost upon the mother of a spendthrift; and she was almost in hopes of having discovered a subject of request without the certainty of a savage negative, when she entreated George to think seriously of making himself acceptable to the pretty heiress of Bilston Hall.

“Thank you!—I have something better to do with my time than to bring country misses into fashion!”—was his flippant rejoinder.

Even when Lucy was pointed out to him in all her artlessness of youthful beauty, he only made it an occasion to annoy his mother by

observing that she was not a thousandth part so pretty as either of his cousins.

It was not till he found that others had the start of him,—that Herbert Davenport neither slept nor ate, so ardent was his courtship of the heiress,—and that scarcely a young man of his acquaintance but had sought the honour of Mrs Hecksworth's acquaintance,—he began to think that, in her interested suggestion, his mother was not quite so absurd as usual.

“Too late now!”—said he, when lounging one morning in Lady Hillingdon's dressing-room in Hill street. “Davenport has made too good a start for me to have a chance of distancing him.”

“It is all your own fault!” cried Lady Hillingdon, “I urged the subject upon you before Herbert Davenport had any thoughts of her.”

“On the contrary, mother, it is all yours!”—interrupted George, with his accus-

tomed filial respect.—“ If you had not tormented me so about the poor girl in Portland place, I should never have tried to annoy you by pretending to be too much in love to care about an heiress.”

Instead of reproving his want of duty, Lady Hillingdon began to compute the possibilities and probabilities that it might not be too late. No one was as yet positively distinguished by Miss Hecksworth. She was either too shy or too prudent to give encouragement to any of the numerous pretenders to her smiles. She danced with all, in succession,—talked cheerfully with all. But no one could say that she flirted. No one had a right to go home and dream of her (and Bilston Hall) as his own.

As to Herbert Davenport, she was evidently more harassed than gratified by the publicity of his homage; and though, on Joddrell's first introduction to her, Lucy treated him with somewhat more distinction than

her common run of ball-room *entourage*, it was only because she had made acquaintance, at the same moment, with Mary and Agatha, whose cheerful natural manners were peculiarly congenial with her own.

“ *My* sisters are not yet out,” said she,—in reply to Miss Joddrell’s invitation to her to ride with them,—“ and I often feel embarrassed by the want of female companions. But your brother, though a sufficient chaperon for *you*, would not satisfy mamma; who will not hear of my riding, even with my cousin Sir Richard Davenport.”

“ Afraid to trust herself with me, eh? ”—was George’s interpretation of this apology, when the offer and refusal were communicated to him by his sisters. “ By Jove, she’s right!—Once enlisted in my troop, I would not let her off so easily.”

Yet even when, with the utmost earnestness of which his frivolous nature was

capable, he set about recommending himself to the heiress, by a double amount of frills and embroidery to his shirt and varnish to his boots, and staring her out of countenance wherever these charms and accomplishments fell under her observation,—nothing ensued.—She was gracious, but nothing more; and to whom was she *not* gracious!

“It is useless to attempt anything of the kind in London,” said George, in answer to his mother’s accusation that his systematically late rising prevented his recommending himself to Miss Hecksworth by attentions during her park airing, or stroll in Kensington Gardens; that he dined too late, at the Clarendon or his club, to make his appearance in Mrs Hecksworth’s box at the opera, and sedulously avoided the little snug *matinées musicales*, where matches are supposed to be made up while counting the leaves on a garden plot on which a full-grown snail would find but short commons.

—“I cannot sacrifice my mornings to dawdling after simpering misses. One ought to meet a girl at a watering place or in a country house, to make oneself agreeable without finding *her* too disagreeable.”

“And yet our little sociable Brighton parties, seldom—but the Hecksworths never come to Brighton!” said Lady Hillingdon, interrupting herself.

“And if they *did*, it would be long enough before you caught me there, now I can manage Melton!” cried the hope of the Hillingdons.

“You might manage anything and *everything*, if you married Miss Hecksworth!” was Lady Hillingdon’s cogent rejoinder. “The stake is worth some risk, and next year, your chance is over. She has not been much known this season. But the prodigious care taken of her by that hard, *collet-monté* mother, caused people to make inquiries; and now the amount of her rent-

roll is known, everybody is getting introduced — everybody is inviting her. — Last night, at Lady Clara Heathcote's, I heard Lord Sylvester (Lord John Howard's elder brother) ask to be presented."

"But Sylvester don't want money in a wife. Sylvester can't be heiress-hunting. All those Howard people are rolling in riches!" cried George.

"The richer people are, the more account they seem to take of money; nor did I ever see the woman who was not the better liked for having a large fortune.—If therefore, you intend to follow up this affair —"

"Follow it up?—Where,—how,—when?— We leave town on Thursday, and I saw a procession of vans and wagons this morning at Mrs Hecksworth's door!"

"As you said just now, London is not the place to get on with a courtship."

"It would save us both a world of trouble, mother, if you cut the matter short, and told

me exactly what you would be at.—What do you want me to do?—Where do you intend me to go?”—

“To Hindon.”—

“To be snarled at by my hateful maiden aunts, lectured by the old gentleman on my want of appetite for family prayers and cold beef at eight o'clock in the morning, and feel all day as if one had got up by candle-light, to start by an early train!—By Jove, I would as soon be smothered in cits, at old Clutterbuck's cockney villa!”

“Don't talk so shockingly, George!” cried his mother, almost with a shudder.—“I am aware, of course, that Hindon will bore you to death.—It always did *me*.—But what can you do better? As you do not belong to the yacht club, to fall from the skies at Cowes, would only be a show-up.—And as to Brighton, where I should be obliged to go if I did not go to Hindon Manor—”

“Brighton?—Rather spend the summer at

Calcutta at once!—I am off next week to the Moors. Clangarry has promised me some deer-stalking.”

“And *I* promise you that if you will accompany us to Hindon, *next* season you will have Moors of your own. Bilston Park is not above ten miles from my father’s.”

“The devil it isn’t! Then why on earth, mother, did you not put me up to this business before the heiress came out in London at all?—One might have shot the bird on her nest!”

“Miss Hecksworth’s father has not been long dead, and as her heiress-ship was at first doubtful, as a mere visiting acquaintance, there was nothing to make my father overlook the distance for his horses.—But he will do his utmost, I am persuaded, to make our visit pleasant to the girls.”

“But Agatha and Mary don’t want to marry Millstone Park—(*what* did you say was the name of the confounded place?)”

“BILSTON! as you would have taken care to know, had you pursued this affair with the seriousness it deserves. Don't shrug your shoulders, George! You are not in a situation to trifle with your prospects in life. A momentary flush of money has turned your head. But you know very well it can't last. Your father has left you little scope for extravagance. The Jews will soon be as ill-disposed to deal with *you* as with *him*.”

A sigh, almost amounting to a groan, admitted George Joddrell's cognizance of the fact.

“And here is a girl whose fortune would place you completely at ease!”—pursued Lady Hillingdon, warming with the subject. “By securing *her* you secure Melton, Newmarket, the Moors, hunters, hacks, a yacht, a team, excursions to Paris—”

“I rather think I could make out a better list than yours, of the whims and fancies my heiress is to gratify! Heigho!—I suppose

then I must undertake the arduous duties of country courtship! But pray write word to the old fellow at Hindon, mother, that I shall be of your party, that he may brush up his establishment; for when I was last there, the stabling was not fit for a sandman's jackass! I will speak to Curlewis about getting me up something of a costume fit for a country quizzery.—I'm afraid my Moor equipments would not be exactly the thing for playing Sir Charles Grandison at Millstone Park!"

CHAPTER V.

What shall I say I have done? It must be a very plausible invention that carries it. They begin to smoke me; and disgraces have of late knocked too often at my door.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

IT might have served to console poor old Mr and Mrs Corbet for the unfilial indifference of their daughter on approaching the home of her childhood, as well as for the crafty designs of George, to know with what delight the visit was anticipated by their kindlier hearted granddaughters.

Mary and Agatha, estranged so long from the shade of the ancient avenues of Hillingdon Hall, and reared in the stony desert of Brighton where the trees are grown in flower-pots and the very weeds savour of surf,—

thirsted after the country, as the captive in a dungeon after light. The most trifling incidents of rural life were for *them* replete with interest. Haymaking was a beauty and a mystery; and the sight of a squirrel leaping from bough to bough, exceeded all the displays of the Zoological Gardens.

Lady Hillingdon was ashamed of the interest with which, in spite of the perplexing velocity of a fast train, they gazed upon the flying landscape; and but that George was repaying himself by a nap of half-a-dozen hours' duration, for having been up till daylight every night of the preceding month, their cockneyism would have brought down a severe rebuke from their brother.

Old Corbet, meanwhile, was enjoying with all his surviving faculties, the prospect of uniting his family under his roof, for the first time since the marriage of Lady Hillingdon. Either to punish the great lady for her London slights, or repay her own obliga-

tions in Portland place, his daughter Charlotte had persuaded him to extend his invitation to the Clutterbucks; and though the wealthy London merchant possessed too sturdy a spirit of independence to seek the society of those by whose ungraciousness he felt insulted, he satisfied himself with pleading stress of business as an excuse for non-acceptance; and reluctantly sanctioned the desire of his wife and daughters, who were just then rampant in spirits from family circumstances of an unprecedented nature, to meet their cousins on ground where coldness was impossible.

On arriving at the Manor, therefore, (the approach to which, Lady Hillingdon surveyed with a sort of shuddering wonder, both as to how she had managed to vegetate there for the first sixteen years of her life, and how she and her son would manage to vegetate there for sixteen days to come,)—the first object that met her eyes was the full-blown form of

her sister Sophia; while the pretty faces of her nieces were slightly discernible, peeping through the muslin blinds of a bedroom window.

“Car. Clutterbuck, by Jupiter!”—cried George, who had looked up with some interest while he fancied the inquiring eyes fixed upon the carriage to be those of the lady’s maid. — “This is a regular trap of the old folks!—A *guet-à-pens*,—a positive *guet-à-pens*!—I have a monstrous mind to go straight back to the railroad, and start for town.”

But for their mother’s corroborative ejaculations, his sisters would have remonstrated with his heartlessness. They contented themselves with reminding him, that having been descried, his precipitate flight would expose him to the displeasure of some of the family, and the sarcasms of others; while his mother, vexed as she was, sustained his courage by whispering in the impressive tone of a Belvi-

dere—"Remember BILSTON!"—It was too late to retreat,—“too late for redress;”—and thoroughly out of sorts, the heir of all the Hillingdons made his entrée into the family circle with an air of offended dignity; prepared to repel by the utmost hauteur of reserve, the coquetish advances he apprehended on the part of his cousins. Smile upon him as she might,—whisper to him as she might,—sing at him as she might,—Caroline Clutterbuck should find him hard as adamant, and sullen as a grand Turk.

But to his great surprise, and perhaps a little to his disappointment, no notice was taken of his belligerent attitude. The old people were absorbed in his mother,—his cousins, in his sisters. To *him* they were distantly civil, and nothing more.

Mortification now succeeded to displeasure, in the mind of the young gentleman intent upon inflicting *both* on persons from whom he had accepted so many acts of kind-

ness; trifling however compared with that of Lady Hillingdon, on discovering that, in the estimation of her family, she and the rotund Sophia were still sisters!—

At the age of the elder Corbets, in second childhood as in first, nature resumes her ascendancy.—Their children and grandchildren were objects of an equitable distribution of affection; while the two maiden aunts, calculating with the mean computation of selfishness, saw far more to respect in the city wealth which ministered to their enjoyment, than in the rank and fashion in which they were allowed no share.

Moreover the Portland place girls were not only really prettier than their cousins, in eyes for which an expressive physiognomy has less charm than regularity of feature and brilliancy of complexion, but their attractions were enhanced by the utmost luxury of dress;—and even Lady Hillingdon was not sufficiently well-bred to

discern the superior elegance of her daughters' unstudied simplicity, both of costume and manner. The costliness of the lace,—the richness of the silk,—the fineness of the cambric worn by her nieces provoked her utmost envy; and it was wormwood to her to find that the dressing box of the damsel she had disclaimed as a daughter-in-law, was many degrees more sumptuous than her own. With the *femmes de chambre*, the Clutterbucks must certainly have the best of it.

If any thing could extend her ladyship's surprise, it was that of her two nieces, at the total want of pretension and finery of their cousins. But that they were by peerage attestation the Honourable Misses Joddrell, the Portland place damsels would have been ashamed of their plain straw-bonnets and anxiety for a country walk. To Emma and her fashion-seeking sister, "the fields" were places set apart for growing corn or hay. *They* had never experienced an incli-

nation for "ranging" them, according to the invitation of song. A guest extrinsic to the family circle collected round the sociable tea-table, would have been amused at the contrast between persons so nearly akin, yet so wholly dissimilar. Not a sentiment expressed by one, but to the other was all but ludicrous.

Thanks however to the easy good humour of the Joddrells, acquaintance was soon made amongst them; and as George chose to comfort his ill humour by lounging on the lawn for the enjoyment of an indefinite number of cigars, the coldness between him and his cousin Car. threw no damp on the party.

From the distant sofa on which the elders were established, old Corbet directed many a gratified glance towards the group of lovely young women who reminded him of the early beauty of his own daughters; and whom he trusted to see launched, ere he closed his eyes for ever, in a career more auspicious to their happiness in this world and the next. He

would have given much to have had his old crony Dick Towler by his side, to confirm his grandpaternal triumph.

“You have not congratulated your sister, my dear,” said he, addressing Lady Hillingdon, as soon as the tea-things were removed, “on the happy prospects of our dear Emma.”

A conscious simper on the glossy cheeks of Mrs Clutterbuck and a look of feverish surprise from the lady addressed, seemed to demand further explanation.

“You are acquainted, I think, with Sir Robert Dashwood?” resumed Mr Corbet, ever ready to be circumstantial. “A very estimable man,—of unexceptionable family and fortune.”

“Sir Robert is a *very* old friend of Lord Hillingdon’s!” added Sophia, so significantly, that her sister saw in a moment she was thoroughly apprised of the obligations sub-

sisting between them. "He mentioned the intimacy to me when he brought Lady Dashwood to call upon dear Emma, the day after his nephew's proposals."

"And your daughter has actually accepted that Mr Dashwood?" — exclaimed Lady Hillingdon, trying to throw into the inflexion of her voice every thing that was scornful and disparaging.

"They are to be married early next month," replied Mrs Clutterbuck, too keenly alive to the eligibilities of the match to be easily affronted. "Sir Robert, besides making the most liberal settlements, has given up to them Clarendon Hill."

"I am sure I wish them joy of it!" — cried Lady Hillingdon, almost choked with spleen. "The dullest place in England, and in Pennington's opinion, actually unwholesome! But where in the world did you pick up Mr Dashwood?—Till within the last

few weeks, he was never out of our house. I suppose he must have absented himself lately; but I am sure I never missed him!"

"He became acquainted, I fancy, with my husband on some railway committee; and as a clever, enterprising, active-minded young man, recommended himself at once to the good opinion of Mr Clutterbuck."

"Fussy and bustling enough, he certainly *is!*" observed Lady Hillingdon, in a chagrined tone. "George used to call him *Il Tormento*, from his resemblance to a whirlwind."

"Clutterbuck never would have supported a lazy, listless, *merely* fashionable son-in-law!"—resumed Mrs Clutterbuck, unmoved by her sarcasm; "and he consequently sanctioned the young peoples' attachment from the first moment. Sir Robert and Lady Dashwood, I am happy to say, are equally enchanted with the match."

The unconcealable irritation of Lady Hill-

ingdon at finding herself thus distanced on the matrimonial course, encouraged Sophia to enlarge with full-bloom pomposity on "Clutterbuck's" liberality in giving her *carte blanche*, and the fullest details concerning the dresses ordered from Paris, the *lingerie* from Brussels, and the family diamonds of the Dashwoods resetting at Green and Ward's.

"At Green and Ward's!—Just what might be expected from people like the Dashwoods!"—murmured Lady Hillingdon, so audibly, that Mrs Clutterbuck's patience was exhausted.

"People like the Dashwoods are sometimes useful friends to people like ——" She was about to add "the Hillingdons,"—but in the presence of her grey-headed father, who held family dissensions sinful, she restrained her wrath. "It does not much signify by whom the diamonds are reset," said she, after a moment's pause; "for besides having been a century and a

half in the family, they are among the finest in England."

"Everybody's family jewels are among the finest in England!"—retorted her sister, with a sneer.

"As Lady Dashwood observed," continued Mrs Clutterbuck, determined to give one shot more,— "the heir of Clarendon Hill *might* have made a marriage such as would not have tempted her to give them up during their life time. But with so handsome a fortune down, and such prospects as those of dear Emma, she felt the sacrifice to be due."

Beaten at every point, Lady Hillingdon began to find herself too much fatigued by her journey to sit up a moment longer; and she would probably have summoned her daughters to her dressing-room before they retired to rest, to serve as conductors to her ill-humour, and be lectured for allowing one of their cousins to get the start

of them, had not George requested a private audience, to confer with his mother touching the opening of the Bilston campaign.

Though he judged it unnecessary to deprive himself of his cigar, either out of compliment to her presence, or to the snow-white draperies of Mrs Corbet's state bed-room, he removed it from his mouth, in order to make it clearly understood that, unless on the morrow morning his mother found her way to the Hecksworths, on the morrow evening *he* should find his way back to town:—"Hindon was a thousand times more insupportable than he had expected."

"But it will look very odd to my father, George," pleaded her ladyship, "if we set off on such an expedition, the very first day of being here. After promising, too, to drive with him in the pony chaise, to look at his improvements!—"

"The improvements and the pony-chaise will keep, I presume, till Saturday?"

“ So will Bilston Park.”

“ I, at least, shall not be here to verify the fact. I am off tomorrow for town.— I never bargained for being exposed to the impertinence and vulgarity of these Clut-terbuck people.”

“ But how could I possibly ask my father, so soon after my arrival, to lend me his horses?” said Lady Hillingdon, beginning to waver.

“ You don't suppose I intend to use my grandfather's old cart-horses, and postillions that look as if taken from plough?—No, no! if you make up your mind to perform your engagement with me, mother, I will send off Taylor for posters the first thing in the morning, that we may be back here in time for the old people's antediluvian dinner-hour.”

Against the wishes of George, Lady Hillingdon was little in the habit of holding out; and the following morning, before

breakfast, the arrival of two pair of post-horses, ordered by Mr Joddrell's confidential servant, created general dismay at the Manor. Charlotte Corbet trembled lest her rash invitation to the Clutterbucks should be the cause of driving her proud sister away!

Even Lady Hillingdon, on the other hand, notwithstanding her audacity of heartlessness, experienced some compunction in explaining to her father the precipitate expedition that seemed so fully to account for her visit to Hindon Manor. All she could do was to place it to the account of a solemn promise to the Hecksworths, not to let a day pass after her arrival in the county, before she visited Bilston.

“Go then, my dear,” said the conscientious old gentleman, almost re-assured—
“A promise made, should be a promise kept. It is one of the besetting sins of the age to destroy all faith in people's word of honour, by the thoughtless manner in

which, on every slight occasion, we allow it to be broken.”

Immediately after breakfast, therefore, amid a general and reprehensive silence, the four new-comers stepped into Lady Hillingdon's carriage, to set off on a morning visit to a comparative stranger. Caroline Clutterbuck alone, as she glanced at the coronet and supporters, heaved a profound sigh that lasted almost till it was out of sight.

Already out of humour, Lady Hillingdon grew doubly fretful at the questions addressed to her by her daughters, concerning the environs of Hindon ; every feature of which, they concluded, must be dear and familiar to her. But though the villagers crowded to the doors to curtsey as they passed, and though the old sexton, on learning that his former young lady of the Manor was to pass through Hindon, rushed to the belfry, to set in motion the two cracked bells under his

jurisdiction, the peevish lady passed, and made no sign.

“Ridiculous people!—What can they care about *us* or *we* about *them*!”—cried George Joddrell, throwing himself into a corner of the carriage, lest perchance any stray blockhead should suspect him of an intention to be affable. And excepting a few insolent remarks on the neglected state of his grandfather’s estate, and the absurdity of a man living in the beggarly way old Corbet did, who had such timber to clear as they saw around them, he scarcely opened his lips during the remainder of the journey.

For a journey it was. In these days of railroad expedition, twelve miles of posting on a bad road in a heavy family coach in the dogdays, must be esteemed a journey; and, little used to the country at that season of the year, dazzled by the sun and harassed by the gnats, George was beginning to curse the

roads, the weather, and even fortune-hunting in all its branches,—when, at a little village toll-bar two-thirds of the way to Hecksworth, a vulgar-looking middle-aged man in a pepper and salt suit, with a very red nose and very double chin, touched his rusty beaver to the carriage, and rode up with an air of jovial familiarity.

Lady Hillingdon had no difficulty in recognizing a certain Dick Towler, a small squire of the neighbourhood and discarded suitor of her sister Charlotte's earlier days; whom she would have cut in the broad sunshine of Hyde Park, but with whom she was forced to be more tolerant within the boundaries of his own parish.

“Good day, good day, my lady!” cried old Dick, reining in his prancing pony. “Glad to see ye back again in these parts! Long looked for, come at last! My friend Corbet has talked of your coming this many a day. Got Miss Sophy as was, to meet you and all!”—

“Who is this odious savage?”—whispered George, more audibly than was decent, to his mother.

But Dick allowed little leisure for reply.

“Thought it could only be your ladyship,” shouted he, though the level of his pony brought him tolerably near the carriage window; “’cause we’ve ne’er a coronet coach of any kind in these parts. Otherwise, as I said to myself, what can they be a-going to do, posting across the country like blazes, when they ha’n’t had time to wipe the London dust off their shoes since their arrival?”—

“We are on our way to Bilston, Mr Towler,” said Lady Hillingdon, with imperial dignity. “As I am afraid we shall be late, I will not detain you.”

“Detain *me!* Ha, ha, ha! that’s a good un!” cried the hearty old fellow, who, from his hospitality and benevolence in the neighbourhood, was so much an object of respect to the postboys, that George Joddrell’s order

to them to "Drive on!" was disregarded so long as Squire Towler showed the smallest inclination to prolong the interview. "But what are you all a-going to do at Bilston? If it's to wait on Madame Hecksworth, I can tell you you're the day after the fair! I doubt you've reckoned without your host; and if you'll take my advice —"

The adjurations of George to the postboys to proceed were now backed with so tremendous an oath, that the horses, as if such language were familiar to *them*, started off of their own accord.

The remainder of Mr Towler's counsels, though bawled after them at the top of a stentorian voice, perfected by half a century of fox-hunting, were consequently lost upon the "coronet coach."

Yet on reaching the lodge-gate of Bilston Park, they regretted not having lent an ear to advice, which would have saved them an unprofitable journey. They had indeed

“reckoned without their host.” Madam Hecksworth and the family had started the preceding day for the German baths, with the intention of wintering in Italy!

Let us hope that the ejaculation with which George Joddrell listened to this intelligence, was as much lost on the ears of the old gatekeeper, as Dick Towler’s on his own. For the disappointment of the heiress-hunter was at that moment bitterly aggravated by the sight of that fine domain—those noble oak-trees,—and the spacious modern mansion of freestone which Mr Hecksworth had just lived to complete.

“The very thing for me!” thought he. “Capital sporting country,—cheerful situation,—farms in famous order. But one may whistle for her, now that she has found her way into the midst of those cursed greedy, needy foreigners!—I was a damned fool not to nail her in town!”

The annoyance of Lady Hillingdon, mean-

while, far exceeded his own. The horses were too much blown to admit of returning without at least an hour's baiting; and there was no posting-inn nearer than Bewchester, four miles beyond the Hall. Not feeling on a sufficiently intimate footing with Mrs Hecksworth to claim hospitality at her house, the suitor and his mother were opposed to the risk of having their visit reported to the liege lady of Bilston, in terms calculated to produce an unfavourable impression.

The post-boys, meanwhile, took care to suggest (to the footman in attendance, and the footman to his lady,) that by attempting an immediate return over twelve miles of sandy road, in such weather, they ran some risk of killing their horses; and to avoid further discussion within view of the lodge, the men were ordered to proceed to Bewchester.

“This is the devil of a business!” cried George, when once more fairly launched on

the queen's highway. "Eight extra miles of this disgraceful road, for nothing! Don't laugh, Mary!—It is no laughing matter."—

"Be thankful, my dear George, that I have courage not to cry," rejoined his good-humoured sister; "for, having breakfasted in haste, luncheon-time finds both Agatha and myself tremendously hungry."—

"Disgusting!" cried George,—himself too much enraged to be conscious of any other sensation.

"Surely one might at least get a biscuit, or a glass of sherry?" inquired Lady Hillingdon,—just as they found themselves on the high road, with extensive corn fields on either side, and not so much as a cattle-hovel in sight. "Tell John to inquire of the post-boys where we could get a glass of wine and a biscuit!"—

And as George was too sulky to prevent Miss Joddrell from obeying her mother's commands, the question was asked and answered.

The little old postboy, who, notwithstanding his experience of the ill-temper of the Corbet spinsters, decided his present load to be the queerest customers that ever emerged from Hindon Manor, advanced to the window, wiping his wrinkled forehead with a silk handkerchief worn to a cobweb, with one hand, while the other grasped his hat and whip, to state that "haafe a moile funder on was a faam 'ouse, called Gleb'ston, 'elonging to Maaster Cleeve." Though *unlicensed* "to afford entertainment for man and horse," hospitality might perhaps be obtained at Glebestone.

In former days at Hillingdon Hall, or even in still earlier former days at Hindon Manor, Lady Hillingdon would have braved much hunger and inconvenience, rather than derogate to such a breach of country custom. But like Lear's fool, she was "sophisticated" by a Brighton life. A dozen years spent upon the stones of London, or a watering place, caused her to feel herself less at home on her

mother earth. The country now presented itself to her fancy as the scene of comic operas, incendiary fires, and romantic adventures; and when, in the greenest depths of a fertile valley, the picturesque abode of "Maaster Cleeve" was pointed out to them,— a low, rambling, old farmhouse, of weather-worn stone, surrounding three sides of a neat fore-court, in the centre of which stood a venerable chesnut tree, whose down-drooping branches swept the ground, crested to the very summit which doubly overtopped the house, with its cones of delicate blossoms, the party was unanimous in desire to obtain a nearer view.

The fair face of Jane Cleve, descried at the window, was as tempting to George, as the quaint aspect of the spot to the rest of the family; and the servant was accordingly despatched into the house with a statement of their dilemma, and a petition for hospitality.

Delighted to render service to man or beast, let alone ladies so beautiful, aunt Morris instantly laid down her knitting, and hobbled out to the gate, to entreat that they would be pleased to alight and rest, while the horses had a feed of corn. The road was too unfrequented, and the Cleve family too simple-hearted, to experience the surprise which such a cool proceeding as Lady Hillingdon's would have excited on the great northern or western road; and the superannuated old man, dozing in his arm-chair beside the window, was not the only member of the family who appeared wholly undisturbed by their intrusion.

Released from the glare and dust of the road, the coolness of the old house and fragrance of the little flower-garden, were deliciously refreshing. Still, in the fretfulness of her soul from the morning's disappointment, Lady Hillingdon could not refrain from bewailing herself.

“What a bore all this is!”—cried she, with insolent egotism. “If the postboys had thought proper, I am certain they might have got on very well to Bewchester!”

Trusting that these grumblings were inaudible to the civil old lady who was bustling in and out of the room to prepare a tray of home-made bread and butter, and a bottle of cowslip wine, the best refreshment she had to offer, the two girls redoubled their friendly demonstrations to poor Jane, whose cheeks were gradually attaining a crimson flush under the offensive stare of the young gentleman who, on pretence of smoking a cigar at the door, did not scruple to stare her out of countenance every time she approached.

To relieve her from this annoyance, the good-natured girls proposed that she should show them her garden; consisting of a few flower-beds, sloping towards a brook, over which the straggling branches of a

venerable beech-tree extended themselves, as if to afford shelter to the infinite variety of water-flowers which luxuriate at the height of the summer-season in every undisturbed stream.

Limited as it was in extent, that spot was the terrestrial paradise of poor Jane Cleve. It was thither she retreated from the tedious maunderings of aunt Morris, to think of her absent brother. It was there that, at the close of her household labours of the day, she dwelt in a "world of thought,"—a world exclusively her own.

With two cheerful creatures like Agatha and her sister, the poor recluse was soon at ease. Neither their rich attire, nor the airs of Lady Hillingdon, nor the coach with a crown upon it, was the origin of her momentary discomposure ; and the entrance to her garden being fortunately screened from the front of the house, she was able to display her choice roses and glass bee-hives to the

Miss Joddrells, undisturbed by intrusion on the part of their brother.

Some forbearance, however, was necessary on both sides; on that of Jane, to avoid appearing surprised at the ignorance of her full-grown companions of the commonest phenomena of nature; on that of Mary and Agatha, at the *naïve* simplicity of the young woman, who, on some points better educated than themselves, was on others so utterly untaught.

“You cannot surely have *always* lived here?”—said Mary Joddrell, as they rested themselves on a rough log serving for a rustic seat, under the boughs of the picturesque old beech-tree; and sat watching the glittering ripple of the stream among the tufted water-flowers, in the chequer-work of light and shade formed by the partial foliage.

“No, indeed,” replied the veracious girl. “Till within these few years, we lived in

a very poor cottage in the village of Bilston."

"And before *that?*"—persisted Agatha; who, more romantic in her nature than Mary, could not but fancy that her new friend belonged to a family which, like that of her dear Mrs Fairfax, might have seen better days.

"There was no 'before that,'"—replied Jane; "except that, as long as I remember, we were poorer and poorer, till my brothers and sisters were old enough to go to service, and relieve my father from their maintenance."

Poor Agatha looked a little crest-fallen.

"But it could not be in a *very* poor cottage you learned all you know?"—persisted she, qualifying her curiosity under the name of personal interest.

"Less, perhaps, than in the woods and fields surrounding it,"—replied Jane with a gentle smile; "though even those I should have been unable to read to my profit, but

for the teaching of my brother—my brother Jervis!—Perhaps, ladies, you may have heard of my brother Jervis?”

Attributing the inquiry to the same *naïveté* which had prompted one or two extraordinary questions (for how were they to suppose the son of the drivelling old farmer, and nephew of the bustling aunt Morris, a man of European renown?), Miss Joddrell contented herself with replying in the negative. But Agatha, still bent upon unravelling a mystery, pursued her cross-examination.

“Your brother, at least,” said she, “must have received a superior education?”

“Yes! thanks to Mrs Hecksworth,” replied Jane. “But education alone would not have made him what he is. Even at Cambridge—even at the university which educates the greatest and wisest in the land,—Jervis was considered a prodigy. At a small college like Fairford, it was not surprising that he should stand first.”

“Fairford?” — repeated the delighted Agatha; “you do not surely mean that your brother is the celebrated Fairford youth?”

“I have heard him called so,” replied Jane with a deepening blush; “but his *name* is Jervis Cleve.”

“Mary!—don’t you remember, dear Mary, how much used to be said of the Fairford youth in Mr Fairfax’s letters to his mother?” cried the exulting girl, starting forward to seize the arm of her sister; who, fearing that Agatha might be pushing her cross-examination further than was acceptable, had withdrawn from the conversation, and was endeavouring, with the hook of her parasol, to draw a bunch of blue forget-me-nots from the stream. “Philip Fairfax wrote in raptures about the honours achieved, and the wonders expected of his friend.”

“My brother has indeed a dear friend of the name of Philip Fairfax!” replied Jane, her face becoming animated into still greater

beauty by the joy of finding her dear Jervis's reputation thus flatteringly extensive. "There are some lines written by him in a volume of the Naturalist's Library,—one of the books presented to me by my brother!" continued she. "In my own little room, I have numbers of books to take care of for Jervis; besides the few chosen ones which, ever since I was a girl, and he at the pains to instruct me, he has given me for my own use."

A visit to the "own little room" was of course instantly proposed; and by the nature of the plainly-bound but sterling volumes ranged upon Jane's white bookshelves, each of which had its duplicate in their own school library, Mary and Agatha inferred with truth that the selection had been made at the suggestion of Philip Fairfax, borrowed from his mother's experience.

"How very delightful all this is!" cried Agatha; "how delightful, and how unex-

pected!—Yet, somehow or other, when we set off this morning, I felt pre-assured of a pleasant day.”

“ Yet, Shakspeare teaches us how seldom that such presentiments are to be trusted!” observed Jane, her voice tremulous with the unusual joy of being able to address herself to a companion capable of sympathy.

And in a moment, the exclamation of Romeo, on the eve of receiving tidings of Juliet’s death—

My bosom’s lord sits lightly on his throne,
And all the day an unaccustom’d spirit
Raises me from the ground with cheerful thoughts,—

burst simultaneously from the lips of the three girls. The works of the great poet, familiarized to all classes of his countrymen by the recent judicious multiplication of cheap editions, were not thrown away at Glebestone.

And now, the last shade of reserve having disappeared from the brow of Jane, on finding

the reputation of her idolized brother familiar to these great ladies, so utterly unlike what her experience of Mrs Hecksworth's hauteur had prefigured great ladies to her mind, she proceeded to display the herbal formed by her brother and herself during his summer vacations,—his sketches,—his common-place books;—and last, but dearest of all, a sketch of the Fairford youth himself, in academic costume—worshipped daily by the devoted sister with more than the veneration bestowed by a raw Cantab on Roubilliac's matchless effigy of Newton.

The enthusiasm of the two girls fully answered her hopes. The sketches were pronounced to be full of genius; and full of genius was the countenance displayed in that rough portrait.

“My brother is just now in Italy,”—observed Jane, becoming meeker in tone from the consciousness of overweening pride in his superiority; “and there, I hope, where the

arts are in so thriving a state, he will procure me a better likeness."

"In Italy?—As a tutor, perhaps?"—inquired Agatha, with the remembrance of Philip Fairfax in her mind.

"Not as a tutor,"—replied Jane. "Mrs Hecksworth seemed angry that he did not apply for some such occupation, or take orders with a view to college preferment. But my brother loves learning for its own sake,—not for the sake of what it will purchase. He does everything for my father and all of us that can make us happy and comfortable; but his own ambitions are moderate. I only hope," added she with a deep sigh, "that he is as happy and well-off as ourselves."

"You look as if you doubted it?"—said Agatha with increasing interest. "Has he met with any disappointment,—any affliction?"—

"God forbid!—I never heard him com-

plain. But Jervis is not a lively person.”—

“Great geniuses seldom *are*,”—interrupted Agatha.

“Are they not?—I am glad to hear it;” exclaimed Jane Cleve, who was busied in restoring to their places the treasures she had brought forward to exhibit to the young ladies. “I was afraid——” She paused. She felt as if betraying her brother.

“Of what are you afraid?—Not, I hope, of intrusting any of your feelings to *us*?” said Agatha, taking her kindly by the hand.

“Oh, no!—Much less of speaking openly to *you* than to any one I ever addressed in my life!”—cried Jane, a slight moisture trembling in her soft grey eyes;—“for you may suppose that, in my humble station, I have not had many opportunities of conversing with others than of my own degree—with whom, alas! I have less in common in thought and feeling than I ought.”

The "alas!" and the "I am afraid" which had previously suspended her communications, excited warm interest in Agatha! A very little persuasion induced poor Jane to explain herself more fully.

"I am perhaps over bold," said she, "in troubling you, ladies, with what is passing in the heart of one you never saw before, and will never see again. But I was going to say just now, that I am afraid my dear brother may not be altogether the happier for knowing more than his neighbours."

"An apprehension arising, I fear, from experience of the self-same feeling?" said Mary, with sympathizing earnestness.

"You will despise me, perhaps, if I own it," answered Jane. "But I *do* sometimes regret having been more instructed than the rest of my family. They like me the less for it; and in spite of all that Jervis has done for us, he is less beloved here than his brothers, who have gone plodding on, earning their daily bread,

able to talk to my father and aunt in their own way, and feel interested in the trifles that interest them. Nay, even less beloved than the memory of an elder one, far less worthy, and long lost to his family.”

“And *you*,—situated as you are, you must often feel miserably alone?” rejoined Agatha.

“I *should*, perhaps, if I had not such a friend as my brother; to whom I write sometimes, and of whom I think every hour of the day. But I have luckily household occupations that take up a great deal of my time; so that I have no leisure to puzzle myself whether I might not have been happier if I enjoyed the things that others of my condition enjoy,—and did not aspire to those to which it is forbidden me to aspire. If Jervis were here, indeed——”

Her own name, repeated in the loudest and far from the tenderest tones of aunt Morris, suspended the course of a colloquy

that was becoming perhaps a little too confidential.

“Jane—Jane Cleve!—you are keeping the young ladies,—and my lady is waiting for ’em,—and the young gentleman’s mortal angry!” cried the old lady, from the bottom of the stairs.

“Mamma waiting for us?” repeated Mary, in a tone of consternation, hastily gathering up her parasol and gloves for departure.

“What *shall* we say to George?”—added Agatha, with a look of distress, by which Jane Cleve discerned only too clearly that all brothers were not so indulgent as her own.

The unconcealed terror with which the Miss Joddrells hurried down stairs, amazed her. To be such great ladies,—so beautifully dressed,—whose fair hands had been exempted from their cradle from the fulfilments of any useful purpose,—apparently so secure from the vexations of life,—yet trem-

ble at the voices of their nearest relations!—God was just!—The compensations of Providence were more equally bestowed than for the last half-hour she had been supposing. She would not change places with her new friends.

“Where on earth have you been hiding yourselves?”—cried George, shoving rather than handing his sisters into the carriage in which Lady Hillingdon was already seated; while the postboys, mounted on their horses ready to start, were exchanging knowing glances with the cowboy, who had officiated as ostler, to congratulate him on the handsome tip which he was lifting up his smock frock to jerk into his pocket.

And while aunt Morris proceeded to echo faintly to her niece the objurgation with which Lady Hillingdon was favouring her daughters, the carriage door was audibly slammed to; and the moment the alert John had swung himself into his place in the rum-

ble, the signal of "all right" started the horses round the little court and the old chestnut tree, and away went the carriage like a whirlwind.

For some moments, aunt Morris stood curtsying at the door, as a last homage to the grand strangers whom she had welcomed with the uncalculating hospitality of an Arab. But long after she had re-entered the house to resume her accustomed household avocations, and try to make her superannuated brother comprehend the cause of the unusual bustle that had been passing around him, Jane continued to watch the cloud of dust that marked the transit of the gay equipage, till all trace of it was lost in the distance.

She could not quite forgive herself on finding tears in her eyes from knowing that she should never again behold those whom, an hour before, she had not as yet beheld.

The remainder of that day was a very dreary one. Fresh thorns had been scattered in the humble path of poor Jane Cleve !—

CHAPTER VI.

England is at present as polite a country as any in the world ; but the affectation of being gay, and in fashion, has eaten up our good sense and sense of religion. The follies of the day are supported by no other pretension than that they are accomplished with what is called a good grace.

STEELE.

HAD not George Joddrell, in the consciousness of his mean motives and the shame of their disappointment, issued severe orders to his servant and the postboys, previous to their return to Hindon Manor, that not a word was to transpire concerning their morning's expedition, not a soul of them would have been at the pains to utter a syllable.

But the interdiction implied something extraordinary; and John in the servant's

hall, and the boys in the stables, became accordingly mighty curious as to what could have taken the party to visit a house where there was no one to receive them; and to seek entertainment at another, where nothing was forthcoming.

By dressing-time, enough had been transmitted by the ladies' maids to the Clutterbucks and the maiden aunts, to suggest the "dear delight of giving pain" by the nature and perseverance of their questions.

But their antagonists were forewarned and fore-armed.

"I am afraid you had a sad unprofitable journey this morning?" said Charlotte Corbet to the elder of her nieces, before the soup was removed from the table.

"By no means!" said Lady Hillington, taking the explanation into her own hands. "The drive was charming!—I was delighted to renew my acquaintance with scenery that reminded me of old times."

“Still, as your object was to renew your acquaintance with Mrs Hecksworth——”

“Before we got half way to Bilston,” again interrupted her ladyship, “I knew that to be impossible. Old Towler, whom I fancied was in his grave, but whom we were so unlucky as to meet at Hopton tollbar, apprised me that we were too late. When I promised Mrs Hecksworth a visit, we expected to be here a week ago. It was from knowing she was about to depart for Italy, I was in such haste to accomplish the expedition.”

“And spite of everything, and of disappointing my father, you were too late after all!”—cried Mrs Clutterbuck with a provoking smile.

“You are not the only person, I can assure you,” added her sister Charlotte, “whom the heiress’s sudden departure has left in the lurch.—I hope, George,” said she still more

vexatiously, “that you liked the looks of the estate?”—

“Amazingly!” was the cool reply of young Joddrell, less easily put out of countenance than his mother and sisters. “I regretted only I had not taken my land surveyor with me, to form an estimate on the spot.”

“Bilston is a very pretty place, grand-papa?”—said Mary, addressing Mr Corbet, as if to obtain his interference.

“I have never seen the new house, my dear.—It is out of our distance.—The roads are much too bad.”

“Not out of distance or too bad for *post-horses*, it seems!”—observed Caroline Clutterbuck, with an indignant glance at her cousin George.

“Post-horses, my dear Car., are out of distance for my purse,” replied the old gentleman, good-humouredly. “We are forced to

potter about our own neighbourhood with our own horses, and be content !”

“If you had a bachelor son, sir, instead of unmarried daughters, you might perhaps think it worth while to visit the Hecksworths,” retorted his daughter Charlotte, with an air of pique. “It is as well, however, before setting out on such wildgoose expeditions, to ascertain that the family be not a thousand miles off !”

“Not if you promise yourself the pleasure of acquainting them in person, that their woods are in good looks, and their deer in excellent health !” said the unabashable George. “We shall probably see a great deal of the Hecksworths in the course of the winter.”

“Surely Mr Towler informed you that they were to spend the winter in Italy ?” said his grandmother, peevishly,—afraid that, in the heat of debate, the beauty of her boiled

turkey, white as if carved in ivory, would be overlooked.

“And so do *we!*” coolly replied her grandson.

“In Italy?—*You* are going to Italy? You are *all* going to Italy?” — was instantly reiterated in divers intonations by the various members of the family. Lady Hillingdon, by whom the *coup de théâtre* had been devised, was fully satisfied with the results. The whole party sat confounded!

“And how long has this plan been in agitation, my dear?” demanded old Corbet of his daughter, with a sad and serious air; feeling that, at *his* age, a separation from any branch of his family was likely to be eternal.

But Lady Hillingdon was of course incapable of so ingenuous an avowal as that the plan was hastily formed by herself and her son, on their journey homewards;—the latter,

like a desperate gamester, having resolved to devote the last of the thousands he had raised, to a forlorn hope, purporting to achieve the conquest of the heiress and Bilston Park : to which end, and on which terms, he was certain of his father's consent to the departure of the family.

“ My mother's health requires a milder winter climate than Brighton,” said he, coming to Lady Hillingdon's assistance ; “ and I have persuaded her to accept my escort to Naples.”

“ Perhaps you are right !” said his grandfather, with a deep sigh, after glancing at his eldest daughter, and comparing her sallow complexion and sunken eyes with the vigorous amplitude of Mrs Clutterbuck.

“ Quite right !” added Charlotte Corbet, spitefully. “ The Duke of Attleborough and Lord John Howard winter in Italy !”

“ *Every body* seems going to winter in Italy !” said Agatha Joddrell, overjoyed,

notwithstanding her disapproval of the motives to which she was forced to attribute her brother's sudden project,—at the idea of realizing one of the most favourite visions of her girlhood. “Mrs Fairfax's son is already there.”—

She was on the point of adding: “And a charming girl, whose acquaintance we made this morning, informed us that her brother, the famous Cambridge wrangler, was on his way to Rome.” When, luckily, the recollection of Lady Hillingdon's prohibition concerning their morning's adventure, rendered her more cautious.

A dead silence now pervaded the party. So wholly unexpected an announcement had struck dumb both contents and malcontents. The elder Corbets were dispirited by the prospect of losing sight, for so long a period, of their grandchildren. The object of George Joddrell's former flirtation could scarcely restrain her tears on finding his pursuit of

Miss Hecksworth of Bilston Park so serious as to produce expatriation; while her mother and sister, who had hoped to crush the scornful aunt under the brilliancy of the Dashwood connection, perceived that the perspective of a renewed intimacy with the Duke of Attleborough and Lord John Howard, had already fully reconciled her to the defalcation of Bob.

George Joddrell, who could not afford to leave them to their reflections, hastened, meanwhile, to break the embarrassing silence by openly cross-questioning his grandfather concerning the value and eligibilities of the Bilston estate. He chose Mrs Clutterbuck to see how utterly he defied her. He chose Mrs Clutterbuck to see that he was ashamed of nothing but being her nephew.

The chord he had touched vibrated instantaneously in the bosom of the country gentleman. Delighted to be referred to, and fully competent to enter into the subject, old Corbet was agreeably surprised to find that

the grandson, whose accomplishments of mind he had been apt to estimate at a somewhat lower rate than his accomplishments of person, was so perfectly *au fait* to the value of land in the county,—and so alive to the advantages of the Bilston property,—farms, woods, and waters. George's glibness in the disquisition seemed to guarantee an extreme intimacy between himself and the Hecksworths. Even aunt Charlotte and the Clutterbucks began to suspect they were at the bottom of the basket; and that the morning's seemingly bootless expedition had been undertaken on behalf of or certainly at the request of the heiress.

The crafty pretendant to her hand was not likely to apprise his family, that all the time his sisters were occupied in gossip with the gentle girl of Glebestone, he had been dexterously extracting from the two old people, who had lived more than two-thirds of a century on the estate, the utmost particulars

they could impart concerning its value and management; particulars so satisfactory, that, on learning the indulgence with which the late Mr Hecksworth was accustomed to deal with his tenants, and that, without injustice to *them*, the rent-roll might be nearly doubled, he instantly planned the expedition to Italy, which the present uninvested state of his funds rendered feasible for the family.

To have gone alone, would have been suspicious. But on pretence of accompanying his mother and sisters, he might follow the steps of the heiress and pursue the intimacy on the most specious grounds. It was for the sake of Lucy's health that Mrs Hecksworth judged it desirable to visit a milder climate; and though a consumptive wife is an alarming thing, provided her fortunes be as slender as her constitution, an heiress whose life is precarious, adds another cypher to her fortunes.

The Clutterbucks had only to sit by crest-fallen, while George was acquainted by his

grandfather of the increased value likely to accrue to the Bilston property from two new railroads about to traverse the county. Having received the intelligence as triumphantly as though the heiress were already his own, George Joddrell proceeded to trace out his intended line of march—" *mit klengenden spiele und fliegenden fahnen,*" towards the fairest city of the south.

His astonished sisters, though forced to listen acquiescently, longed to be alone again together, to avow their surprise at the scheme, as well as their regret that a journey so delightful should be instigated by motives so unworthy. But though neither of them so much as hinted that the chance of meeting in Italy the duke and his cousin, or rather the duke's cousin and his tutor, had no small share in their joy, a significant pressure of the hand, on both sides, implied a mutual though tacit understanding.

Meanwhile the desire of doing as they

would be done by, suggested that it would be an act of kindness towards the charming girl who had welcomed them so cordially, if they wrote to announce their approaching departure for Italy, and their willingness to convey any packet she might wish to send to her brother. The exalted fancy of Agatha was still enraptured at having detected a heroine of romance in the sister of the Fairford youth, by accidentally knocking at a stranger's door; while Mary could not but admit how much she wished that one of her showy cousins had turned out such a girl as the mild and intelligent Jane Cleve.

Early on the morrow, George proceeded to town to acquaint Lord Hillingdon with his plans, and complete the preliminaries for leaving England. And though his mother judged it decent to extend her visit to Hindon Manor to the period originally promised, her sister Sophia had it no longer in her power to annoy her by per-

petual allusions to the Dashwoods and Clarendon Hill.

The most florid description in Mrs Clutterbuck's power to inflict upon her of Brussels lace flounces and Valenciennes trimmings in preparation, became innocuous, now that the lapse of a few weeks would enable her to set her springes anew for the entanglement of Attleborough and Lord John. Already, by anticipation, she considered her three children as good as married, to an heiress, a duke, and a future Sir Robert Peel.

To have escaped Brighton, which she had begun to abhor, and Lady Ursula, whom she both hated and feared, and obtain the un-hoped for means of following up her matrimonial plans, might well suffice to reconcile her to the dulness of her old home, the lectures of her father, and the prosy stories of Mrs Corbet. Her usually variable temper stood at "settled, fair." To witness her imperturbable good humour no one would have

supposed that Lady Hillingdon was living in the bosom of her family and out of earshot of the fashionable world.

All went merry, in short, *not* as a marriage bell, but as a whole peal; when alas! the custom of country neighbourhood brought Dick Towler to dine at the Manor. As Charlotte Corbet was making up in her red-nosed maturity, as a *pis aller*, to the man she had rejected in her better-looking youth, Dick Towler could not long be excluded from the house in compliment to the fastidious ladies from town.

Scarcely had he settled his dinner napkin across his portly person and swallowed with sonorous unction a few spoonfuls of soup, when his stentorian voice caused the fligree baskets suspended to the old fashioned epergne to tremble, while with malicious jocularly proceeding to attack Lady Hillingdon.

“And so, my lady, you chose after all t’other morning to go further and fare worse?”

Told ye how 'twould be!" cried he. "Told ye puss was off her form!—But you wouldn't believe me. Bless ye, we've Lon'oners coming every day of the week to look after the Bilston heiress; and when she's at the receipt of custom, 'twould be only fair to have a flag flying, as they have at great folks' castles to let little folks know they may come and have a peep at 'em. But 'ware hawk!—Hecksworth's widow knows pretty well what she's about!—Hecksworth's widow's the very cat to have a care of the cream. I should like to get a sight of the chap that will find *her* sleeping with both eyes shut."

If poor Towler's facetious vulgarity was little tasted by Lady Hillingdon, it afforded unmixed satisfaction to the Clutterbucks; in compliment to whom, as much as to her intended bridegroom, Charlotte Corbet spitefully encouraged him to proceed.

"My sister did not *expect* to find the

Hecksworths at home," said she; "but being about to join them in Italy, she——"

"*Join* them?"—reiterated the straightforward squire. "Why, if they're so thick, how came it her ladyship didn't make herself at home, at once? When I heard of the party a-going-a-begging for a luncheon, I couldn't help thinking how vexed my good friend Madam Hecksworth would be if she thought any visitor of hers was forced to be obligated for a feed of corn to poor folks like neighbour Cleve of Glebestone."

"You never told us you had been to Glebestone?" interposed one of her sisters.

"I never even heard the name of the place to which we were taken by the post-boys!—A country inn, or something of that kind."

"Glebestone, though small, is a famous place in its way, my dear," interposed her father, in grave earnest. "In Cromwell's time, the spot was inhabited by General Ireton.

Partly on that account, partly as the home of the famous Fairford youth, there was a wood-cut of the place last year, in the 'Pictorial Times;'—besides notices in the 'Penny Magazine,' and the 'Gentleman's'—"

"I seldom see works of that description," replied Lady Hillingdon, whose acquaintance with illustrated literature was confined to the 'Keepsake' and 'Book of Beauty.' "All I noticed at the farmhouse to which Mr Towler appears to have thought it worth while to follow us, was, that the horses were baited."

"Follow ye?—Bless ye!—I'm seldom at the trouble of following anything short of a fox!"—retorted old Dick, with a hearty laugh. "But yesterday as I was riding over to Bewchester market, Dame Morris (who's an old crony and gossip of mine), beckoned me in to inquire who the grand folks could possibly be who'd condescended to put up at her poor place; and asked such a power of questions

about the value of the Bilston estates,—and whether—”

“It would have been strange if I had talked to a woman of that description about anything but the affairs of her parish,” interrupted Lady Hillingdon, with an air of offended dignity.

“No,—poor old soul,—I suppose Goody Morris has not much to tell, likely to be understood by great folks!”—retorted Dick, with an air of simplicity, “but there’s one thing,—she don’t go in search of ’em! To fall in her way, they must come to *her*; and I’m sure you’ll own my lady, that a more hospitable old creatur’ never saw the light.”

“This mysterious visit of yours which you have kept so great a secret, explains what puzzled me so this morning when I opened the post-bag,” said Charlotte Corbet, half aside to Agatha; “a letter as big as a government despatch, with the Bewchester post-mark!—I could not help wondering what

acquaintance you could possibly have in this neighbourhood."

"We made a very interesting acquaintance at Glebestone," was her niece's frank reply. "The packet to which you allude contained two sketches which we have promised to take with us to Italy, to the Fairford youth."

"You know Jervis Cleve, then?" said Charlotte Corbet, snappishly.

"He is intimately known to the son of our governess, Mrs Fairfax, with whom George is acquainted."

"Very kind of you—to convert yourself into a twopenny-post!" snarled the crabbed old maid,—“But I forgot!” added she, with a still bitterer sneer,—“These Cleves are the *protégés* of your particular friends, the Hecksworths.”

"In that case," replied Mary, who, devoid of all *arrière pensée*, could not surmise that these remarks were intended to annoy her sister,—“we are doubly interested to take

charge of the sketches; for one of them is a view of Glebestone, and the other represents a beautiful scene in Bilston Park."

"Ah! poor Lucy!—she'll be glad enough to see *that*, and thankful enough to them that bring it her!"—cried Dick Towler, having only partially overheard what was going on. "A sweeter, or truer, or better girl than *that* never breathed God's air! 'Twill be thousands of pities if she falls into the hands of a coxcomb; or worse still, turns out too delicate to live in the old place, every stick and stone about which she's so fond of."

"And is this charming heiress, then, really supposed to be consumptive?"—chimed in Mrs Clutterbuck, suspecting with truth that the subject was particularly disagreeable to her sister.

"I don't know about consumptive,"—replied the squire with a shake of the head.—"Young ladies, my dear ma'am, as you're like to know better than I am, are apt to

be 'stericky and nervous when a little touched in the tender part; and then, some jackass of a 'pothecary, as nervous as themselves, is pretty sure to talk about the lungs being affected, (to be sure they're next door to the heart!) and pack 'em off to Madeira or Nice, or some of your foreign hothouses."

"Miss Hecksworth, then, has an attachment?" persisted Mrs Clutterbuck.

"Not as any one seems to know of,—not as I've any right to say!" replied Towler.—
"It's high treason, you know, to talk about young ladies' attachments. Only for the last six months, or so, she's been going off and off, till she's no longer like herself; and though as fond of her native place, as if she'd been kneaded out of its clay, it was Miss Lucy, I fancy, who insisted on wintering in Italy."

"Just like George!" — exclaimed Lady Hillingdon, who having recovered her self-possession, chose to rally in hopes of making

the best of a bad cause. "I was sure love was at the bottom of his projects. This season in town, he and Miss Hecksworth were always talking together over the delights of Rome and Naples."

The deep blush that overspread the cheeks of both her daughters at this outrageous falsehood, was simply attributed by those present to fear lest their mother should prematurely betray the attachment subsisting between her son and the heiress.— Even Mrs Clutterbuck was now convinced. Little as she had seen of Mary and Agatha, *their* single-mindedness was not to be mistaken. From that moment, she renounced all hope of seeing a viscountess's coronet figure at some future moment at the corner of dear Car's. pocket handkerchief!

The lecture bestowed next day by Lady Hillingdon on her daughters, for having undertaken commissions for such a person as poor Jane Cleve, did not prevent them

during the short sojourn they made at a London hotel on their return from Hindon Manor, previous to their departure for Italy, from despatching to Glebestone a few favourite books, a token of their interest in the pursuits of their new friend.

Meanwhile, every preliminary was arranged for the journey by George; who, where his own interests were at stake, could be as alert as other people.

Lord Hillingdon was unable to come and take leave of his family previous to their departure:—he was officiating as one of the stewards of Doncaster races!—But he despatched a letter of affectionate farewell to his wife; seven out of the eleven lines of which contained an account of the Leger, and a message to George about a favourite mare he was to leave behind.

CHAPTER VII.

Voilà ce qui subsiste encore de cette ville puissante,—un lugubre squelette!—Voilà ce qui reste encore d'une vaste domination,—un souvenir vain et obscur.

VOLNEY.

Cette femme attirait par son mérite,—encore plus par ses travers.

LA TOUCHE.

LEDYARD, and Leyden, and other travellers in the wilderness, have left on record the exquisite sensation of finding balm poured into their wounds, in savage countries, by the hand of woman. How often is the mercy they praise so highly, emulated in civilized life, by courtesies that cheer the sinking spirits of the sad, the diffident, and the despised!

The blood of Jervis Cleve, which had begun to stagnate in his veins, suddenly attained a freer course on finding himself an

object of concern to one so generally distinguished as the Countess von Adlerberg. He was not only placed on better terms with society, but redeemed from insignificance in his own estimation.

For the countess held a prominent place in the three aristocracies recognized by his code of philosophy. Talent, beauty, and high descent, conspired to raise her above the vulgar level. Uniting, moreover, with these advantages the consequence derivable from a large fortune and influential position, there was little fear of her being influenced by paltry considerations of fashionable opinion to withdraw her favour from any one it pleased her to favour.

Both at Naples and elsewhere, the position of this highborn and highminded woman was exceptional. An orphan at an early age, from the premature death of parents who had expended their lives and fortunes in wanton excess, the fine estates attached to her

hereditary title had been redeemed from embarrassment by the prudent and generous management of her guardian, the old Count von Adlerberg. At fifteen, she had become a rich heiress; and one year later, rewarded with her hand the noble protection he had accorded to her desolate childhood.

The marriage was her own act and deed. Pretendants to her hand had presented themselves, one and all of whom were speedily dismissed by the decided refusal of the wilful young countess. For while the careful guardian was improving her estates, he had allowed her nature to run wild;—and her excellent abilities remained uncultivated, open to the successive impulses of every wild caprice;—now mad for music,—now devoted to study,—now infatuated by poetical visions, and as full of childlike passion as Goethe's Bettina.

On her positive declaration that, woo her who might, she would wed no other man than the indulgent guardian by whom her whims

had been so unhappily fostered,—the count, with the high honour becoming his high caste, set clearly before her the disappointments and embitterments likely to arise from a step, suggested, he assured her; only by her ignorance of her claims, and the undeveloped nature of her feelings. But Crescentia was positive. Her resolution became confirmed by opposition; and, almost as much perplexed as gratified by the excess of his happiness, the Count von Adlerberg, at sixty-five years of age, received the hand of a lovely girl, younger by nearly half a century.

But the man who had predicted that she would repent her precipitate marriage was thenceforward so apprehensive lest his prophesy should be fulfilled, that he became the slave of her who had chosen him for her lord and master! Every wish of the young countess was forestalled; every caprice obeyed. He, who had hitherto governed her estates with such prudent economy, seemed to fancy,

now that they had become his own, that his fortune could not be too prodigally lavished on his young wife.

Nothing she could dream of, but was procured for her. Whether her gusts of fancy aspired to the possession of costly jewels, new furniture, objects of virtù, or the intimate society of the intellectual and refined, (the greatest whether in birth or genius of her country,) her desires were instantly gratified. The result of such uxorious infatuation was, as may have been anticipated, that the fine estates of the fair Crescentia became as much injured by the generosity of her husband, as by the prodigality of her parents.

On the brink of ruin, she was the first to discover the evil and detect the cause. But she was also the first to stop short their course of extravagance ; to suggest reform, and organize amendments. While the property was at nurse, with the certainty of eventual extrication, she persuaded the count

to compromise with his pride by accepting a diplomatic appointment at Naples, out of reach of the mortifications arising from their reduced establishment at Vienna.

Till then, neither had fully appreciated the value of the other. Crescentia became aware for the first time of the high estimation entertained by Prince Metternich of her husband's abilities ; and the Count von Adlerberg, on seeing his beautiful wife enjoying her residence at Naples, contented, happy, hopeful, had the satisfaction of perceiving that the homage with which she was surrounded at Vienna, and which at times had excited some uneasiness in his bosom, had not succeeded in estranging from him the affections of his eccentric but charming wife.

She was consequently more than ever adored. Her caprices became graces in the sight of her husband, and even her faults were sacred. Secure of her regard, secure of his own honour, he rather favoured than

opposed her *engouement* for whatever was eminent in literature, or the intellectual world. It was a *tic*,—a mania, more harmless than many which might have lightened the leisure or vivified the *ennui* of a woman of fashion, without children to engross her affections, and wedded to an old comrade of her father.

Such was the woman who, on his first arrival at Vienna, Prince Lobanoff had hoped to find accessible to the brilliancy of his fortunes and humbleness of his homage; nor was there a sacrifice he would not have made to captivate her attention. But rather as a *triumph* than a *happiness*; and in her perception of this, consisted the double safety of the countess. The hard egotism, penetrating with all its angles through the courtly suit of velvet he assumed to place himself at her feet, disgusted her generous nature.

It was in deference to *her* prepossessions, that Lobanoff had squandered so enormous a

sum in obtaining the sanction of the Neapolitan government to his excavations at Edrazza. The fair Crescentia had expressed a wish to see an antique temple and Roman habitation laid bare in their original and primitive sanctity; and having secured the means of gratifying her graceful whim, his next step was to obtain the services of one less ignorant than himself, to serve as guide explanatory to their investigations.

The untoward state of the weather at once suspended his project, and invalidated its results. The favour lavished by the countess on one whom *he* regarded in a light little more honourable than any other hireling in his establishment, excited his amazement. He was not jealous, but indignant. And when at length a change of temperature admitted the accomplishment of his projects, so far from soliciting the presence of the Countess von Adlerberg to witness the magnificent surprise he had prepared for her, he

rejoiced in his power of retaliating upon the slights she had shown him, by proceeding to Portici without any intimation of his plans.

To be compelled to apply to the rival he so thoroughly despised for explanations concerning the antiquities unveiled before his eyes, was somewhat mortifying. Still there was comfort in seeing Monsieur Gervais replaced in a comparatively subordinate situation. Nor was Lobanoff capable of appreciating the fervour of enthusiasm that glowed in the young man's cheeks, or the lambent light of genius that brightened his eyes, on finding himself thus face to face with the olden time, — the time of glory and greatness,—and rescuing from darkness objects of art on which the sun of antiquity had deigned to shine.

As the workmen proceeded in their labours, while Cleve stood enraptured and entranced by every fresh discovery, the prince was loud in his expressions of disappointment. The

objects they had the fortune to obtain were far from *chef-d'œuvres*, and by his impatient commands to the workmen to hasten their movements, his impatience proved the means of destruction to many a precious relic. The lamps were mean,—the statues small and clumsy,—the vases insignificant;—appropriate, of course, to the household of a private individual, instead of bearing proportion, as Lobanoff had expected, to the enormous sum he had expended; and in the spleen of his soul he seemed to make it a reproach to his cicerone, that the proportions of the domestic architecture of the ancients were so diminutive; or rather, that his research into the remains of a provincial town, had not discovered an imperial palace.

Jervis, who felt as if beholding a sacrilegious hand laid on the ark of the covenant, when he saw those inartificial but precious lares and penates turned up by the workmen, which *he* approached with pious reverence,

flung aside again by the Russian prince as unsightly rubbish, had scarcely patience to behold Lobanoff wrapt in his cloak of sables, twirling his coarse tobacco-scented mustachios, and shrugging his shoulders with contempt, at the littleness of the Romans!

“These people must have been pygmies!” said he. “What paltry habitations,—what narrow streets,—what miserable temples! A single palace at St Petersburg covers more space than a whole quarter of ancient Rome! The greatest pleasure one derives from witnessing the insignificance of the ancients is from learning to disregard the falsehoods of poets and historians which have created for them a false reputation.”—

“Scythian!” thought the poor scholar, forced to listen with patience to the grumbings of one who manifestly expected to have laid his hand on a museum of Etruscan vases, or dug up, like a parsnip, a Medicean Venus or Belvedere Apollo. Nor to such a man did

he think it necessary to vindicate the moral greatness of those virtual ancestors of the lofty spirits of all climes and countries, as contrasted with the miserable myrmidons crawling about the gigantic streets and disproportioned halls of the Russian capital. Lucky was the chance, however, which had relieved him from the presence of the *exigeante* countess, and precluded all sympathy between him and the savage partner of his enterprise. For, unable to stifle the emotions produced by curious insight thus afforded him into the mysteries of ages, he addressed to his friend the librarian of the Benedictines, by whom it had been secured to his enjoyment, a letter containing not only the most copious details of the excavations achieved under his inspection, but a comparative view of the times with which they were connected. Insensibly his narrative and commentary expanded into a philosophical essay of the first order.

As a matter of duty to the world of letters

sufficiently urgent to dispense with the sanction of the writer, this paper was transmitted by Frà Bartolomeo to be read by Signor Carlo Bonucci at an extraordinary meeting of the Royal Academy of Sciences, held for the purpose; and scarcely had Jervis returned to the Via Santa Lucia, thankful for the consummation of his task, which entitled him to make his bow to the surly prince, when he found himself beset with proposals by the leading librarians of the city for the copyright of his pamphlet.

Refusal had been useless, for spurious copies were already in circulation. All that remained for him, therefore, was to perfect and polish his work for the press; and it afforded some compensation for the publicity thus forced upon him, to be able to inscribe his hasty work to the accomplished lady whose enlightened tastes had afforded the original suggestion of the excavations at Edrezza.

Before the little work and its dedication appeared, Jervis hastened to exchange for his former humble domicile the uneasy Palazzo of Prince Lobanoff; and though patron and *protégé* parted on courteous terms, the steadiness with which Monsieur Gervais declined the princely remuneration transmitted to him by Lobanoff (through the hands of his *chasseur*!) was resented as an act of insolent defiance.

Indifferent, meanwhile, to any renown resulting from his compulsory authorship, in a city where he stood alone in the throng, the only satisfaction anticipated by Jervis from the publication of his work, was that it enabled him to transmit to his friend Fairfax an account of his discoveries; while, in his heart of hearts, he was a little nervous concerning the manner in which his homage would be accepted by the Countess von Adlerberg.

It was almost a relief to him to perceive that she contemplated the work solely with reference to himself.

“*A la bonne heure!*” said she, on receiving a richly bound copy from his hands. “*Here* is something to assign you an European reputation. The subject is one in which all countries are interested. Now that Latin is no longer the universal language of scholars, as in the quaint old days of Erasmus, it is hard for an Englishman of letters to obtain due notice on the continent. But my husband is henceforward entitled to present you to his colleagues, and assign you the same high place in our circle which you already hold in my opinion.”—

As if to neutralize the intoxicating effects of these flatteries, the letter in which Philip Fairfax acknowledged the receipt of his work, was replete with the most cutting severity.

“Your essay is a masterly one, my dear Jervis,” said he; “but with all my heart and soul do I wish every word of it unwritten! You, a freeborn Englishman, pledged by every tie of duty to remain a devoted

son of *Alma Mater* as well as a high-minded and independent scholar, to be dedicating your pages to a mere great lady—a fantastical woman of fashion,—the representative too of what Byron so emphatically calls “the leaden mace of Austria!” Nay, worse still,—to have hired yourself out as curiosity-monger to a brute of a Russian,—a fellow who buys antiquarianism and virtù in Italy, as he would buy hock at Johannisberg or *pâté de foie gras* at Strasburg!—Fie upon you!—You, who owe yourself to your college, to attach yourself as cicerone to the household of a quass-bibbing Boyar! But no!—I cannot believe you have so far forgotten what is due to the dignity of your vocation, as—being placed above all necessity for such a derogation by the liberality of your university—to receive the pay of a foreigner for doing that which even a needy man of letters would have undertaken as a pleasure. My dear Cleve, send all these foreign connexions

of yours to the devil, or there will be an end of your English career.”—

By such a charge, unfounded as it was, Jervis Cleve was cut to the soul. Instead, however, of replying to his friend that all was as it ought to be, and that he had *not* renounced a single cubit of his academic dignity, he threw the letter indignantly aside.

“Accustomed to play the monitor, Fairfax sees nothing in this world except through the eye of a preceptor!” cried he.—“Methinks he might have found *something* to praise in my unfortunate essay!—Greater scholars than himself are pleased with it. He is mistaken, however, if he fancies I have chained myself to the galley of Cambridge drudgery for the rest of my days. University distinctions are not to *me* so all-absorbing as to render me inaccessible to the clarion of continental fame. Fairfax will never see me in any other light than as the raw Fairford Youth who presented himself at St John’s.

With no horizon of his own beyond the quadrangle of his college, — a tutor, the son of a governess, — his mind is governed by trite axioms of morality, conned out of writing-masters' copies! —

Content to dwell in decencies for ever,

he is not only incapable of social ambitions, but grudges them to others qualified with more comprehensive instincts." —

From that day, in the fretfulness engendered by the arbitrary assumptions of his friend, Cleve ceased to make a virtue of absenting himself from a world where honours and caresses awaited him, in place of the pins' pricks captiously inflicted on his self-love.

"*A la bonne heure!*" was once more the exclamation of the sprightly Ambassadors, when at length he made his appearance at her diplomatic *soirées*. And allowing him no leisure for embarrassment, she hastened to present him as a friend to the select circle of

her friends, as well as in the character of the learned Pundit of Edrezza to the more extensive and dignified associates of the Count von Adlerberg.

Thus favourably announced, and bearing in his person still fairer credentials from the partial hand of Nature, needs it to add that the young foreigner was universally welcomed? In continental society, distinction of any kind constitutes an endowment — for Genius has an aristocracy of its own. In England, artists are well paid, and great men have their grave bespoken in the sepulchre of kings. But in other countries, they have their place in the warm and breathing favour of society. The greatest take them by the hand. The fairest take them to their heart.

The claims of Cleve to the good will of the Neapolitans moreover were of an especial kind. They not only knew him to be one of the first scholars of one of the most enlightened countries in the world, but he had poured the

effulgence of his genius on one of their national trophies. Though exposed to some displeasure by the frankness with which his little treatise pointed out the narrow prudence of the Neapolitan government in despoiling the ancient Roman city of its objects of art, and ranging them labelled in a museum, instead of leaving them, under sufficient custody, in the spot which the will of heaven had preserved inviolate for two thousand years, as a species of mark or standard whereby to measure the civilization of mankind,—the spot where, each being devoted to its appropriate purpose, these specimens of antique art acquired a tenfold value,—his exposition of the meanness of every public monument completed by republican Rome, in contrast with the glorious edifices raised by the Cæsars,—the Pantheon, the Colosseum, and other immortal structures—reconciled him to the good opinion of the court.—

The academies, on the other hand, could

not sufficiently admire the accuracy of his taste, and purity of his style. Accustomed, like the Ionians, to assign a threefold form to grace, they readily discriminated the concise simplicity of diction with which he had expounded his novel theory concerning the origin of volcanic phenomena, as contrasted with the many coloured flow of eloquence characterizing his historical recital; which, like some affluent stream, reflected at once upon its surface the glowing tints of the passing clouds, and the glittering pebbles seen through its limpid waters,—the march of time with its mutation of centuries, and the immutable grandeur of eternity.—

No sooner had the fair Neapolitans ascertained by ocular demonstration that the Admirable Crichton by whose genius antiquity had been raised from the dead, and the domestic life of the contemporaries of Titus, placed in life-like relief before their eyes, was no musty pedant, but a *giovinetto*

cavalier,—a handsome young man, worthy the admiration of that fervid clime where beauty constitutes a worship,—than Cleve found himself beset with invitations.

“ I have procured tickets for you for the *bal nobile* of the Accademia,” whispered the countess. “ No remonstrance! It is my pleasure,—it is *everybody's* pleasure that you should be there.”—

And when, half trembling at the idea of the reproof he was likely to incur from Philip Fairfax, should such a dereliction from his principles become known to his rigid mentor,—and half-ashamed of his capitulation of conscience at the “ *I will* ” of an arbitrary woman,—he entered that dazzling scene, that wilderness of glittering mirrors and gleaming chandeliers, the first thing intimated to him by his noble patroness was that the Royal Family had issued a command for his presentation.

And now, indeed, he repented of his com-

pliance with the caprice of the charming ambassadress !—He felt thoroughly out of his element. — The reserved scholar blushed at the celebrity of his own name. — Like the cannon that recoils from the thunder and lightning of its creation, he fled from the rumour of his renown.

This timidity did him no disservice. Though the deportment of those who walk backwards is usually stiff and constrained, there was a charm even in the awkwardness of one whose diffidence was at once so genuine and so groundless.

“ You must assist me to re-assure my English *protégé*,” was a request, which, on the part of the Austrian ambassadress, a woman as irreproachable in conduct as decided in character, procured for Cleve the support even of his own country people—the last to admit the claims of mental distinction to advancement in social life.—

“ He brought me no letters,” said the

English ambassador,—who would probably have preferred the formal recommendation of some illiterate dowager, to the authorship of Shakspeare,—when the Prince de Bisignano, grand master of the court, inquired confidentially whether any personal obstacle existed to the Royal invitation with which the young *savant* was about to be honoured. “But I have no reason to believe Mr Cleve unworthy the favour intended him by his Majesty. The Countess von Adlerberg has spoken to me warmly in his behalf.”

Thus sanctioned, it was impossible for the most insolent of exclusives or sauciest of dandies to cast a stone at him: the Countess von Adlerberg, numbered at Vienna among the *crème de la crème*, and at Naples, one of the highest influences of fashion, being as capable of conferring consequence on those she elected into her circle, as in London society the friendship of the Duchess of Sutherland conveys a moral certificate.

Public as well as private honours were heaped upon the young illustrator of the antiquities of a city denominated even by Horace *otiosa*; and at the close of so many centuries still too much absorbed in luxurious indolence, to explore its treasures without the introduction of a Russian prince, and the interpretation of an English scholar! —

Nor was the admiration of the vulgar diminished by finding poor Jervis the favoured of ambassadors and the guest of Royalty. An object of general enthusiasm, he was every where received with a degree of distinction, accorded in England only to such illustrious strangers as the King of Hanover and Tom Thumb! —

Not but that the English, with whom as usual during the carnival, the hotels of Naples, and the quarter of Sta. Lucia were crowded, did ample justice to their countryman the moment they found him an object of adulation at a foreign court.—For

the Britons who boast so loudly on all occasions that they “never will be slaves,” are on the contrary so slavish to opinion, as to suspend their certificate of merit towards all mental superiority, till confirmed by the “vivat” of other countries, or the tide of fashion in their own.—

Such was the position of Cleve when the Bilston family suddenly arrived in Naples; where, estimating her claims to notice by the toadying of her courier and the amount of her credit with Rothschild, Mrs Hecksworth expected to produce an instantaneous sensation.—

But for *her*, neither court nor embassy opened its arms! Mrs Hecksworth was only one of the extensive class of Mr and Mrs Marmaduke Smiths, and Sir Thomas and Lady Turniptops, who, recommended by the Foreign Office, pursue their jog-trot dinner-giving system of society every winter in Rome, Florence, or Naples, as in Wimpole street

every spring, or Herts or Hants every autumn. And, though Lady Clara Heathcote and Lady Reigate endeavoured to bring her into notice by citing her everywhere as the mother of the great heiress, when it became known that the said heiress, being in delicate health, did not intend to enter into society, and that the two girls who accompanied their mother to the *Accademia* balls had only ordinary fortunes, they were suffered to retain their places unnoticed, and remain illustriously obscure.

One of the first questions invariably addressed to Mrs Hecksworth, by certain Neapolitan princes and marquises who found it convenient to eat the crumbs from the dinner-table of Mrs Marmaduke Smith, or Lady Turniptop, was, “whether she knew her distinguished countryman, *Sire Gervais?*” and on finding her negative produce considerable surprise, she concluded “*Sire Gervais*” to be some young English baronet on the grand tour, and secretly determined that he should

be presented as a partner to Helen and Julia.

“You will meet him at the Austrian embassy,” replied the Duc de Ste. Christine, to whom she signified her wish. “He has quitted Lobanoff, with whom he formerly resided, or I would call on him, and bring him, if possible, to your house. But I should have a hard fight for it! Other Englishmen have obtained eminent popularity at Naples,—Acton, Nelson, Gell.—But none have exceeded Sire Gervais.”—

“No matter!” thought the now portly lady of Bilston. “Herbert Davenport will be here next week, who knows most of the fashionable men about town, and will manage our introduction to Sir Gervas — Heaven knows who! Not that when he arrives I shall perhaps care to make the acquaintance. Herbert’s last letter informed me it was scarcely worth while to have stopped short in his journey, to spend a

week at Rome with the Duke of Attleborough, since the whole party is about to transfer itself to Naples; and their intimacy with my nephew, Sir Richard, will soon make us acquainted. The girls are consequently sure of the best partners, without troubling themselves about this mysterious Sir Gervas."

CHAPTER VIII.

Un homme ne doit pas, sans fortune et sans nom,
Se permettre d'aimer la fille d'un Baron !

COUSSADE.

Dost thou despise

A love like this? A lady should not scorn
One soul that loves her well, however lowly.
Love is an offering of the whole heart, madam ;
A sacrifice of all that poor life hath ;
And he who gives his "all," whate'er that be,
Gives greatly,—and deserveth no one's scorn.

PROCTOR.

THE first impulse of Cleve on learning the arrival of the Hecksworths, was to quit Naples. Not because he feared that the haughty curiosity of his original patroness would exile him from the high ground he had conquered. His frankness had placed the Countess von Adlerberg in full possession of

his history; which, as she affectioned him precisely in the noble spirit of admiration with which Metastasio was regarded by Maria Theresa, or Voltaire by Catherine the Second, did him rather service than injury with one in whose bosom one of the highest instincts of true nobility, — Genius-worship, — was strongly developed.

But he was afraid Mrs Hecksworth might consider him *too* presumptuous, if he accepted in *her* presence the honours to which, *in* her presence, he felt less intitled. It was doubly difficult, however, to absent himself at that moment. The threatening aspect of Vesuvius was drawing the attention of the learned and curious towards Portici; where he found that his presence was anticipated with general interest.—

But when the rumour reached him that Miss Hecksworth was considered, or considered *herself*, too delicate to accompany her mother and sisters into society, he felt it impossible to

tear himself from the place without having enjoyed a glimpse of the sweet face by which his dreams had been so long haunted.

The infatuated visionary at once longed and dreaded to behold her. His very existence was concentrated in that of the family out of the dust of whose estate his frame seemed to have been kneaded. The Hecksworths had given bread to his fathers; to himself, a life which is more than life. And penetrated by the sense of such obligations, he felt capable of sacrificing his very heart's blood for the lovely girl who had been made the instrument of his bitterest mortification.

“ So young,—so fair,—so fortunate,—*to die!* ”—mused he, as he cast his eyes upward to the stately apartments engaged for Mrs Hecksworth in the Strada di Toledo. “ With all the better joys of life unknown to her! Ignorant of her power of conferring happiness on one, and prosperity on many!”—

Often, after nightfall, he wasted hours in

pacing the deserted street under her windows, in the hope of discerning Lucy's shadow on the blind. Her image was constantly before his mind's eye;—not as he had last seen her, but pale, wasted, repining,—like the shade of the lost Eurydice,—a type of those fragile daughters of the north who wander to the genial shores of the Mediterranean, to warm themselves in its sunshine, and die!—

His fears, however, exceeded the truth. The removal of Miss Hecksworth to a milder climate portended neither danger nor death. She was delicate, *not* ill. But finding indisposition the only admitted pretext for absenting herself from the noisy crowds in which it was her mother's wish that she should shine triumphant, she gladly accepted the character of an invalid.

Not that she had attempted to deceive her mother or her medical attendant. Because she expressed a preference for a southern atmosphere, and because the ailments of

kings and heiresses are always liable to exaggeration, they chose to infer that she felt more ill than was apparent. But Lucy was incapable of deception of any kind. There could not be a more favourable specimen of the class of English girls reared in the bosom of domestic life ; unable to imagine evil, because evil has never met their eye ; incapable of speaking falsely, because falsehood has never met their ear.

But the happy seclusion of her girlhood disinclined her quiet mind for the unmeaning bustle of the fashionable world, which requires exertions of dress and small-talk, harassing to those whose tastes are simple, and habits unassuming.

Though of far from a mistrustful nature, she could not blind herself to the fact that, during her father's lifetime, she had lived on an equality with her sisters ; no greater object than they of solicitude to her parents, or admiration in the eyes of the neighbourhood ;

neither prettier nor cleverer than Helen and Julia, whom, with all her sisterly affection, she knew to be neither pretty nor clever.

Had her change of fortunes occurred a few years earlier, Lucy might have deceived herself into a belief that time had wrought wonders in her favour. But this was impossible. She was forced to admit the humiliating fact that, even with her mother, her sudden increase of value was solely derived from the attainment of ten thousand a-year!

Cruel lesson!—Injurious discovery!—How was an uncorrupted nature to bear, unhardened or unembittered, so sad an experience of the heartlessness of the world! Fortunately, the result produced was two-sided. The overweening importance she saw assigned by others to the gifts of fortune, rendered them contemptible in her eyes! She hated the wealth which those most dear to her seemed to hold dearer than herself, and became jealous of the influence of her gold.

A sudden blow struck upon a young heart on its entrance into life, is pretty sure to dispose it either to unnatural levity, or unnatural reserve. From the baseness that surrounded her, Lucy retreated into herself. She was now of age, in full possession of her independence. Had it pleased her to reign and rule alone at Bilston, her mother and sisters, who were liberally provided for, must have sought a home elsewhere. But so different were her views, that her chief regret resulted from the discovery that they could no longer live together in the same heart-in-heart companionship as before.

But having conditioned for her personal independence, she conceded to Mrs Hecksworth unlimited authority over her household; the very thing to occupy her attention, and delight her heart. Active, fluent, and self-assuming, she was the very woman to legislate with stewards and dispute with lawyers. There was something imposing in her air. There was some-

thing governmental in her turn. She who, in the first blush of her honeymoon, had established a village school, delighted, in the sternness of her maturity, in the management of an estate, in examining leases, arguing with solicitors ; and keeping stewards, house-keepers and farmers to their duty.

The only fear was, lest, misapprehending the retiring nature of her daughter's spirit for incompetency, she should presume too much upon the privileges assigned her ; and allow her despotism to penetrate into the sanctuary in which the heiress chose to seclude herself. Though Lucy had virtually abdicated her rights, she knew the full value of the personal enfranchisement which the law of the land,—in some instances superior to the petty etiquettes of convention,—assigns to heiresses with their 'scutcheon of pretence.

But though it was easy to conceive that, in the exercise of maternal authority over her younger daughters, Mrs Hecksworth should

sometimes overlook the emancipation of the elder one, who exhibited so dutiful a spirit of self-abnegation, there were points as yet unmooted between the mother and daughter, on which Lucy was likely to plant a standard of independence. In the choice of a partner for life, she was resolved to admit no interference; and though she listened with respect to the remonstrances of her mother against her love of retirement, she adhered to her quiet routine of life, in the small suite of apartments she had selected for her own use, adjoining the more considerable ones appropriated to the family.

Every morning, after breakfast, Mrs Hecksworth's visits initiated her into the family history, and the gossip of the place; but, as if aware that the pursuits in which her soul delighted would obtain little sympathy in return, she kept her own counsel from one who looked upon the morality of life as comprehended in the word "propriety," and as-

signed as much importance to the exact mode in which her curtsey was returned by a duchess, as aunt Morris could possibly have done to the recognition of the great lady of the Hall.

The only point on which her mother's infatuations rendered Lucy uneasy, was her tendency to attribute to the attractions of her younger daughters, attentions distinctly conceded to the Bilston rent-roll. Lucy was the last person to be misled on such a point by personal vanity. But, schooled by the mean adulation of which she was the object, she was also the last person to be deceived. The difficulty was to undeceive Mrs Hecksworth, without appearing to disparage the claims of Helen and Julia.

"Are you quite sure it is wise, dear mother," said the heiress one morning, when Mrs Hecksworth was lamenting almost with tears, the impossibility of obtaining an invitation for the two girls to a splendid ball about to be given by the Princess di Pietra

Catella, — “are you quite sure it is wise to encourage the attendance of Herbert Davenport, by accepting his services in such matters? He is to arrive, you say, in a few days, and get you invited everywhere. But will not his interference intitle people to believe that he is one of the family?”—

“And so, I trust, he will soon be!” replied Mrs Hecksworth. — “In London, he never quitted Julia’s side ; and the moment our journey to Italy was decided, he found out that *he* too had always intended to winter at Naples.”—

“I admit his attentions to be marked. But are you certain they are addressed to Julia?”—

“Certain!—I never saw him address ten words to Helen in my life.”—

“But to *me*!—You must surely have noticed that he neglects no opportunity of recommending himself to me?”

“Of course not.—With such a fortune as

yours, he has reason to suppose that, at the marriage of your sisters, if you approve their choice, you will come forward in their behalf.”—

“I have little doubt that the motives of Herbert Davenport are *interested*,” replied Lucy, more firmly; “but I suspect they are more so than you imagine.”—

Mrs Hecksworth shrugged her shoulders.

“It is only natural, my dear Lucy,” said she, “that the attentions you have received in London should cause you to think highly of yourself. But *do* allow *some* chance to your sisters!”—

“It does not strike me, mother, that I interfere *much* with their pleasures or prospects!”—was the mild rejoinder of the heiress.—“All I fear is, that you may encourage, or at all events allow poor Julia to form expectations concerning Herbert Davenport, which, trust me, will never be realized.”—

“You fancy, then,” said Mrs Hecksworth

with a smile half compassionate half ironical, “that Herbert is in love with *you*?”—

“Not the least in the world!—Do not so mistake me.—I believe his sole object to be my fortune.”

“As Julia’s inheritance hereafter, if you persist in refusing every match that presents itself.—Perhaps so!”—

“No,—he is simply, though subtly introducing himself into the family; trusting that he may by degrees overcome my aversion, and obtain my hand.”

“As if you were likely to accept *him*,—a junior branch of the family,—after refusing Sir Richard!”—

“Mr Davenport may suppose, with truth, that I did not *like* my cousin.”

“He must think very highly of himself to suppose you would prefer *him* to one of the best looking men in England, with such a property as the Grange!”—

“Little as I like him, I *do* prefer him to

Sir Richard!—But I need not tell you, dear mother, that I have no partiality for either.”

“Then why throw cold water on Herbert’s courtship of your sister?”

“If it existed, and were acceptable, believe me, I should *not*.—But knowing my fortune to be his object, I should grieve if your acceptance of his introductions intitled any one to accuse me hereafter of caprice or coquetry, when, on the explanation of his views, I reject his suit.”

Mrs Hecksworth patted her daughter patronizingly on the shoulder. “Do not be alarmed, my dear!” said she, preparing to quit the room,—“that day will never come! You are more likely to have me interceding with you for an increase of dowry for poor Ju. !—By the way, Lucy,” added she, returning towards the table, where Miss Hecksworth was engaged in drawing, to place before her some visiting cards which she took from the memorandum book she had been holding in

her hand,—“who, do you think, are arrived in Naples?—Lady Hillingdon and her daughters!”—

“Those pleasant girls we met at dinner at Lady Reigate’s?”—

“Precisely.—We exchanged visits in London, if you remember, towards the end of the season; and they have left their cards here this morning.”

“I am glad of it,” replied Miss Hecksworth, more interested in her drawing than the intelligence.—“Julia and Helen will find them an acquisition.”

“And why not *you*, my dear?”—

“I?—Oh! *I* am out of the question. Till I am strong enough to join in your gaieties, it costs me too much exertion to form new acquaintance.”

“Without going to balls or fêtes, my dear,” remonstrated her mother, “you will not, I hope, seclude yourself from the little parties I hope soon to collect around me?”

There will shortly be a charming knot of English people in Naples. Herbert Davenport writes me word he has persuaded the Duke of Attleborough to accompany him hither, and that his cousin Lord John Howard will soon follow.”—

“ But we know nothing of either ? ”—

“ Connected as we are with Herbert, the acquaintance is a matter of course ; and will prove a great acquisition, both to yourself and your sisters ? ”—

“ *That* I can hardly answer for till it is made ! ” said Lucy more cheerfully. “ Thank you, dear mamma, now that you have disposed of Julia to your satisfaction, for looking out for flirtations for Helen and myself !— But what have Lady Hillingdon and her daughters to do with your projects ? ”—

“ Only that the Duke of Attleborough was said to admire one of the Miss Joddrells.”

“ And you barbarously intend *her* claims to interfere with ours ? ”—resumed Lucy, a

little surprised to find that what she had alluded to in jest, was earnest on the part of her mother.—

“Why, situated as we are,” resumed Mrs Hecksworth, in a confidential tone,—“I could not with propriety allow these young men to establish an intimacy in the house, unless other young ladies besides my daughters were admitted. If you had a brother to justify their visits, it would be different. But as Herbert Davenport does not at present reside under my roof—”

“And as I sincerely trust you will not suffer him to be constantly in the house,”—added her daughter in a lower voice.—

“We may find the Hillingdon party of service,” concluded her mother.—“Surely my nephew Richard once paid attention to one of the daughters?”—

“So Herbert informed me; and that it was out of pique at my rejection of his proposals.—But I have since heard of Sir

Richard Davenport at the feet of some Brighton belle.”—

“Some watering-place flirtation, I make no doubt,” said his aunt, who still clung to the possibility of her nephew becoming her son-in-law.—

“I rather think *not*; for she was said to have an enormous fortune,—the daughter of one of our most successful railway speculators.”

And as Lucy anticipated, a hint to the disparagement of Sir Richard Davenport sufficed to send the partial aunt out of the room.

Meanwhile, the Hillingdon party had installed themselves at Naples. That very day, a dinner party at the house of the French ambassador was kept waiting nearly an hour by George Joddrell, who had brought letters of introduction to the ambadress from her family. But with every indulgence for the proverbial and ill-bred impunctuality of the English, the weary faces of the hungry guests at length rendered it necessary to sit down

without him. "Accident or indiposition," they decided, " must be the cause of Mr Joddrell's delay."—

No great ceremony was observed concerning the seat left vacant for one of whose arrival no further hope was entertained; and when, towards the end of the first course, George made his appearance, without affecting so much as a pretext for his tardiness, his transparent cambric shirt lavishly embroidered with *danseuses*, and his carefully curled locks filling the room with the fragrance of Atkinson's shop,—the elaborately got-up dandy found himself seated between a fierce-looking square-built old Calabrian general in a black stock, whose mustachios seemed powdered with gunpowder; and a peculiarly gentlemanly looking and plainly dressed young Englishman, with whom, in the dead silence that followed his aukward *entrée*, he was not sorry to enter into conversation.

Under other circumstances, George Jod-

rell would probably have regarded him in supercilious silence. For there was nothing of the cut of St James's street about him; and he sat listening with polite deference to a very long story, from a very ugly old woman beside him, whom, in his place, Joddrell would have treated with as little ceremony as a pew-opener. As it was, he condescended to inquire of his handsome young countryman "What, on earth, people *did* with themselves at Naples?"—

The question was a puzzler. — The individual, to whom it was addressed, seemed fully aware how little analogy could exist between *his* pursuits and those of the highly dressed, highly scented fribble by his side. Still, aware that even the finest of English fine gentlemen affect to enjoy the beauties of Naples, he spoke of the general interest excited at that moment by the unusual inflammation of Vesuvius, and the general expectation of an eruption.

“ I have seen one in the *Muette de Portici*,” replied George, “ often enough to have lost all curiosity about the matter.”

“ Having so recently arrived here,” said his new acquaintance, a little surprised, “ you have probably not yet visited the different monuments of the city ? ”—

An expressive gesture implied “ No, nor do I intend it.”—

“ There is a superb view of Naples from the *Miratodos*,” continued his companion ; “ and on your way from Saint Elmo, you should go and see ——”

“ I never go to see *anything!*” interrupted Joddrell, abruptly cutting short the conversation he had courted. “ My question regarded the things that are likely to come and see *me!*—I’m afraid Naples is dreadfully *slow?*—Who have you here just now ? ”—

Again, the question was a puzzler !—“ Do you allude to the Italian or English society ? ” inquired the embarrassed stranger.

“English, of course. One can’t calculate to a nicety on birds of passage. The foreign society of a third-rate capital is easily guessed. *Primo*, the corps diplomatique; *secondo*, the royal household,—the worth of a Jew’s eye in gold lace on their uniforms, and not a paul in their pockets beyond an ill-paid shabby salary!”

“My neighbour, the Marchesa di Montrone, understands English,” interrupted the stranger, lest his new acquaintance should commit himself by further impertinence.

“So much the better!” retorted Joddrell. “My strictures will not be thrown away. But you have not answered my questions about the English in Naples?”

“Because little qualified to do so,” replied one in whom the reader will probably have recognised Jervis Cleve. “I have few acquaintances among my countrymen.”

“To the credit of your taste, my dear sir!” cried George, after swallowing with becoming

gusto a glass of *lacryma Christi*, filled for him by the *maître d'hôtel*.—"Insupportable at home, English society abroad is doubly disgusting. On the continent, the brutes affect a sort of ease and *savoir vivre*, which remind one of the *disinvoltura* of a dancing bear.—Are you going to Princess—what's the woman's name's—ball to-night?" added he, because pre-assured to the contrary by the unpretending diffidence of the stranger.

"Princess Pietracatella's," replied Cleve, without answering his interrogation.

"I suppose it will be the ditto of all foreign fêtes!" resumed George with a contemptuous curl of the lip.—"A blaze of light—a deluge of syrup and water—and a circle as formal as a row of ninepins."—

"The last fête at her house was very brilliant, and far from formal," replied Cleve.—"I am not myself a dancer, but those who are, pronounced it to be a charming ball."—

"You are going to-night, then?" said

George, a little surprised ; for he had been endeavouring in vain to procure an invitation. —“ I suppose the balls here begin late, as you have to dress first?” continued he.

“ On the contrary, they begin early. The Austrian ambassadress calls for me here.”—

George Joddrell, who had entertained misgivings that he was seated next the chaplain of the British embassy, or one of Rothschild's English clerks, felt agreeably reassured. He even condescended to confide to his companion what he knew must be speedily apparent.

“ Arriving but two days ago,” said he, “ I was, of course, too late for an invitation to this ball.”—

“ Considering the opinion you expressed just now of foreign fêtes, I cannot suppose it a matter of much regret,” observed Cleve, who, till then, had attributed Mr Joddrell's exaggerated style of dress, so out of place at a dinner party, to the forthcoming ball.

“ I don't know.—I should have liked well enough to go, for the fun of the thing. One never understands the *carte du pays* of a place, till one sees what it can turn out at an evening party.—Besides, I promised Attleborough and John Howard, who will be here to-morrow, to make a survey of the Naples tigers for them, before their arrival.”

“ You have ample time,” said Jervis.—“ The Duke of Attleborough does not arrive till next week. I have had a letter to-day, commissioning me to engage apartments for his grace and the Clevelands.”—

Mr Joddrell was now placed completely at his ease. He found that he was not *encanaillé*. The correspondent of the Duke of Attleborough *must* be a gentleman; and he accordingly fully admitted his disappointment about the ball.

“ Cursed vexatious, isn't it?” said he.—“ All the people here seem to be going!”—“ My neighbour,” whispered Cleve, “ is

mother to the Princess Pietracatella. You have only to express your wish to our host or hostess, and, through *her*, instantly procure an invitation."

Too proud to admit that an invitation had been applied for in his name, and distinctly refused by the princess, whose list was overcrowded, Joddrell suffered his new acquaintance to express to the venerable marchioness, with whom he was a great favourite, the desire of his young countryman.

But the uncivil unpunctuality of Mr Joddrell, and the slang dialect so singularly in contrast with his effeminate costume, had made a sinister impression on the old lady; who, in the days of the exile of the Neapolitan court to Sicily, had formed an extensive acquaintance with Englishmen of a very different calibre. Her stately mode of expressing her regrets that it was too late to attempt any addition to the invitations issued from the Palazzo Pietracatella, was so marked and

expressive, that Jervis, accustomed to her usual beneficence of manner, could not doubt that the levity of George's observations had excited her disgust.

He was spared all useless surmise on the subject. Scarcely had they quitted the dinner-table, when the carriages of the Marchesa di Monfrone and the Countess von Adlerberg, were announced together; and away they went to the ball.

CHAPTER IX.

Je connais la valeur réelle du clinquant que les femmes du monde s'appliquent pour se faire scintiller. et des paillettes qu'elles sèment autour d'elles. Leur personne, leur esprit, et leur coeur ne porte que du faux. Devant dieu, ces femmes là n'entendent que le soufflet de l'orgue,—incapable d'apprécier l'hymne sacrée.

GAUTIER.

Great Lady,

Canst thou be sad?—Then I forgive thee all.

BARRY CORNWALL.

INFIRM of health as he was able and active in mind, the venerable representative of the court of Austria rarely accompanied his lady into the circles where his predominant position compelled their appearance. And as it happened that Count Adolph von Stahremberg, the *attaché* to whom devolved the charge of escorting her on such occasions,

was young, handsome, and an endangerer of reputations, as a matter of prudence, the countess frequently forestalled their tête-à-tête, by securing the company of Cleve; a man *sans conséquence* in the estimation of the court circle.

Still, the young *savant* was too pre-eminently handsome and the ambassadress young enough, for the intimacy to excite more observation than she surmised; and while he was assisting to remove her shawl in the cloak-room of the Palazzo Pietracatella, all present stood aloof, as if in deference to an established *liaison*.

While delivering to the gorgeous chasseur her excellency's shawl and snow shoes, to be forthcoming after the ball, Cleve became the object of observation to some English ladies who were waiting to receive a number in exchange for their cloaks. Not that they recognized him. — Dazzled by the brilliancy of the scene, bewildered by the prospect of

a new fête in a new country, and doubtful till a few hours before of obtaining an invitation, Mrs Hecksworth was little likely to surmise that, in the attendant of one of the greatest ladies of Naples, she beheld the humble *protégé* of her late brother.

To the two girls, Cleve was a perfect stranger; and though their mother fancied that the face of the handsome young man who was giving his arm to the lady in the blue crape dress so profusely trimmed with diamonds was not unfamiliar to her, her attention was divided between the brilliant attire of the countess and the expressive countenance of her companion.

On the part of Cleve, on the other hand, the recognition was instantaneous. The colour that overspread his sallow cheeks, even to the roots of his hair, avouched that the presence of his benefactress had cowed his better part of man!—

In spite of the distinctions to which he had

worked his way, and though the chosen cavalier of one of the most admired and highborn women of the day, no sooner had he caught sight of Mrs Hecksworth, than he subsided in his own estimation into the ragged gardener's boy, weeding the flower-borders at Bilston Hall!—

He could have found it in his heart to sink upon his knee before her and beseech her not be too hard on the work of her hands ; not, a second time, to humiliate him by rendering one of the kindest and sweetest of human beings the instrument of her contemptuous usage. But this very thought, this odious reminiscence, brought with it the painful recollection of Lucy's illness. She could not be in danger, indeed, or her mother and sisters would scarcely have the heart to attend a gay entertainment. But the indisposition must be severe which, at *her* age, and with *her* attractions, forbad her participation in the pleasures of so brilliant a fête.

What would he have given to be reassured ! What would he have given for the power of interrogating, unknown and unsuspected, those two shy girls ; who, though far from equalling many of the beauties present, were to him the fairest of all ; from exhibiting in their air and manner something of a family resemblance to their elder sister.

Chance favoured his wishes. The Princess de Pietracatella, to whom the newly-arrived English were presented on their entrance, and who, like most well-bred foreigners, was anxious to render her house agreeable to foreign guests, instantly looked round for partners of their own nation for the Miss Hecksworths. On applying to Cleve, who was standing near at hand with the countess, he was luckily able to excuse himself on the plea that he never danced ; for well could he conceive the indignation with which the haughty lady of Bilston, whom he was persuaded recognised and disdained to

notice him, would resent his presumption in pretending to the hand of one of her daughters.

When the princess returned to express her polite regrets to the strangers, Mrs Hecksworth seized the opportunity to make an apology in the name of her elder daughter. Accustomed to find the heiress the chief object of attention, she was persuaded that an invitation had been vouchsafed by the princess only for the sake of Lucy.

“I regret to learn that one of your family is indisposed,” replied the noble hostess, vexed that the troublesome Englishwoman could not proceed at once into the ball-room, and leave her at liberty to do the honours of her house to new guests ;—“our climate is highly restorative. I trust it will be beneficial to your daughter.”

A moment afterwards, Jervis, whose heart was full at hearing this unequivocal allusion to Lucy, met the eye of Mrs Hecksworth so

distinctly, that he could not with propriety abstain from a profound bow ; and the marked deference with which it was returned convinced him, and truly, that she had not the slightest recollection of his person. It was not *such* a curtsy she would have bestowed on aunt Morris's nephew !—It was not *such* a smile she would have vouchsafed to Jervis Cleve !

She was evidently embarrassed at finding herself almost without acquaintance in the busy throng. The foolish habit of the Mr and Mrs Marmaduke Smith and Sir Thomas and Lady Turniptop class of the community, of discussing among themselves personages they do not know, and fêtes to which they are not invited, had led her to suppose that the whole English society of Naples would be assembled at the princess's ball ; whereas scarcely a dozen were present, and those strangers to the Hecksworths.

Right glad, therefore, was she, in the crush

of the first doorway, to encourage the approach of the handsome young Englishman who had bowed to her, by a few common-place remarks on the brilliancy of the entertainment, and heat of the rooms.

The rejoinder of Cleve was uttered with a degree of reserve which, from her experience of the insults offered by young Englishmen of fashion to *chaperons* on the look-out for partners for their daughters, she attributed to *hauteur*. But she was not the worse disposed towards him from fancying him privileged to be impertinent.

With the view to give herself a countenance after the rebuff she had received, on emerging from the doorway into a small saloon hung with yellow damask and gold, decorated with bouquets of choice exotics, and still untenanted, Mrs Hecksworth hastened to take possession of one of the stately *fautewils* ranged round the room; motioning to her daughters to place themselves on a sofa by her side.

There sat the stately lady,—fanning herself with considerable dignity, regardless of the stream of brilliant guests flowing onward through the room to the *salle de bal*.

The two girls, unused to such large assemblies, fancied—it *might* be *fancy*,—that they were surveyed by the spectators with something of a supercilious smile ; and Mrs Hecksworth distinctly saw Lady Clara Heathcote shrug her shoulders as she hastened on to the ball-room.

Still however, they had no reason to surmise that anything was amiss ; and Cleve, much as he longed to apprise them that they were guilty of a breach of etiquette, stood watching them from the further doorway, dreading to find the family of Lucy exposed to criticism, yet not daring to intrude his insignificance on the only persons present intitled to hold him of small account.

Mrs Hecksworth would never forgive him if he proved her guilty of ill-breeding !

At length, the sound of a national air that reached him from the orchestra of the ball-room, inspired him with courage ; and he approached the English party with an air of respectful deference.

“ I fear, madam, you will think me guilty of great presumption in addressing you,” said he. “ But you are probably unaware that this room is reserved for the Royal Family. The Court is expected here to-night. The King and Queen, I believe, have this moment arrived.”—

Starting from the place she had usurped, without pausing for a word of reply, Mrs Hecksworth invited her daughters to follow her ; nor was it till the party had made a hasty exit from the chamber that she turned to thank her friendly counsellor for his interposition.

But though Cleve remained at her side, it was no moment for explanation. As they entered the adjacent room by one door, their

Majesties, escorted by the Prince and Princess de Pietracatella, made their appearance by the door opposite ; the young and lovely Queen addressing a few words of compliment, as she passed, to the various ladies who had the honour of being known to her, and who were ranged in a formal line on either side.

The presence of the Royal Family was of too frequent occurrence just then at the ministerial and diplomatic fêtes, to excite much sensation. Still, happy were those distinguished by the smiles of the sovereign ; *unhappy* those who had not enjoyed the honours of presentation. Though such were of course occasionally present, etiquette required that they should so regulate their movements as not to excite the notice and inquiries of the King and Queen.

Yet Mrs Hecksworth, in her gold turban and family diamonds, stood there as irretrievably exposed as the figure of Queen Anne in St Paul's churchyard ! Where her gracious

hostess wished her, at that moment, it is difficult to say ; persuaded as she was that new English faces would provoke the curiosity of the King, and that she might as well attempt to pronounce the name of the Chief Rabbi as that which, at the instance of Baron Rothschild, she had inscribed on the invitation card of the stranger.

Nor was the situation of Mrs Hecksworth much more enviable. She knew herself to be out of place, without the power of escape. In spite of appearances, all her audacity at that moment lay in her authoritative-looking turban. Her very breath was oppressed with perturbation ; and a gentle moisture rose perceptibly on the brows of the two terrified girls, who had not yet been presented, even in their own country ; and for whom kings and queens were still personages with crowns on their heads, and death-warrants in their pockets.

Just, however, as Prince Pietracatella was marshalling the way towards the yellow damask

saloon,—just as the Queen had reached the spot where the stately Englishwoman, upright as Trajan's column, had taken up her position, the fine countenance of Jervis Cleve, who had retreated a few steps into the background, caught the eye of her Majesty. Stopping short with a gracious smile, she addressed him in English, which no one who listened to the sweetness of her accent could have wished more correctly spoken.

“We shall hope to hear of you soon at Portici,” said she. “The King has given orders that every facility should be afforded you. We are fortunate, sir, to have you at Naples at such a moment.”

A profound bow acknowledged his deep sense of her royal graciousness; far less profound, however, than the one he had dedicated to Mrs Hecksworth. When the royal party quitted the room, where all were standing during their transit, he was careful to escape in an opposite direction; afraid, at

that moment, of beholding the discomfited face of the mother of Lucy. He still felt,—it was a weak and pitiful feeling,—as though the honours heaped upon him were a sort of offence to Mrs Hecksworth!—

Count Adolph von Stahremberg was luckily pleased to join the waltz which struck up a moment afterwards; when it became his duty to hold himself at the disposal of the countess, in case she should require his arm.

“Who is yonder imperial looking country-woman of yours?” demanded she beckoning him to approach her. “At one time, I was afraid she was going to dispute the way with the King and Queen!”

“The lady is a stranger here.”

“But surely the rules of common politeness are the same at Naples,—London,—everywhere?—Admit that your English great ladies are not the civilest in the world! Vienna possesses traditions concerning one of

your ambassadors, which, if inserted as incidents in a farce, people would decide to be too preposterous!"

"Mrs Hecksworth, madam, is not a *great* lady,—but a *country* lady,"—replied Cleve with an apologetic smile.

"*Une provinciale?* — *J'aurais du m'en douter.* But in that case, what is she doing here?"—

"I am the last person who ought to question her right to be anywhere!" replied the candid 'Monsieur Gervais,' "since but for *her* I had been still a clod!"

"*Est il possible* that Madame Axvoss is the Madame de Warens, of whom you once spoke to me?" demanded the giddy countess. And Jervis, unversed in the memoirs of Jean Jacques, and concluding the name thus used to imply a patroness or benefactress, simply replied in the affirmative.

"I ascribed to you a very different perception of the beautiful!" rejoined her excel-

lency, with an air of compassion, “but there is no accounting for tastes.—At some earlier period, your Madame de Warens was perhaps what my Neapolitan maid calls *stupendissima bellissima*.”

Suspecting that he had misunderstood her previous interrogation, Cleve was eager to explain.—But this was impossible.—The Austrian ambassadress was too great a lady and the ball too grand a ball, to leave her many moments of the evening unsurrounded by a host of admirers.

At length, while leaning on the arm of Cleve, on her return from the supper-table, the attention of the master of the house being absorbed by his Royal guests, poor Jervis contrived, with his usual truthful earnestness, to make her understand that she had misinterpreted his words.

“I trust it is for the vindication of your *taste*, rather than of the lady’s character, you are thus explicit?” said she, a little sick of

the subject—"I admit that I *was* shocked at the heinousness of your choice."—

"Without reference, madam, to my personal obligations to Mrs Hecksworth," resumed Cleve, gravely, "she holds, as the mother of—of such daughters—too honourable a position to be trifled with.—And so far am I from being intitled to speak or think of her with familiarity, that I verily believe she regards me as scarcely on a par with her servants."—

"We must try to enlarge the poor soul's perceptions during her sojourn in Naples!" replied the Countess von Adlerberg.—"Should an opportunity occur, present her to me. Doating upon conversions of any kind, it would be an unspeakable triumph to enlighten the views of so rare an *avis* as a bigot of the nineteenth century."

Scarcely had the countess signified a request, arising from the discovery suggested by her tact and knowledge of the world, of the

relative position of the patroness and *protégé*, than the movements of the throng emerging from the supper-room, brought them in contact with Mrs Hecksworth and her two daughters; unescorted, unsupported, and consequently nervous and awkward, like most persons making their way in a new society.

A few words addressed to Cleve, as she passed, by the uneasy chaperon, indicated that his notice would be acceptable. Still, he hesitated to obey the orders of the Countess von Adlerberg; for still, the *Hochgeborne* lady of the Austrian ambassador, with all her privileges of precedence, remained a less important person in his eyes than the mother of Lucy!

But his embarrassment served only to enlighten the mind of his noble friend to his humiliation; and she instantly renewed her commands, in such terms as left him no alternative. The presentation was made; and at the proposition of the countess, the party

took possession together of the nearest seats at hand.

Gladly would Cleve have effected his escape from the little *coterie*. But it was impossible. The countess entreated him to remain.

And now, however amended in experience of the ways of the world by his recent noviciate in society of the highest order, inexpressible was his surprise at the mutual deportment of the two ladies, whose every word and movement had, just then, interest in his eyes.

Accustomed to see the ambassadress in the familiar intimacy of domestic life, he had not supposed it possible she could assume at will an air of such consummate dignity. To the English squire, she was not merely gracious, but *affable*. Not more regally condescending the deportment of the high-bred Queen of Naples towards himself!—

The demeanour of Mrs Hecksworth towards the ambassadress, on the other hand, was all

but servile. The woman so stiff in her own circle, so haughty towards himself, was abject in her submission to the great lady; coinciding in all her opinions,—conceding to all her propositions,—watching the very inclination of her eye as an indication of her pleasure or caprice.

Jervis did not pause to consider the cause of her meanness ; or that Mrs Hecksworth was conciliating the good will of one of the leading personages of Naples, only to promote the pleasures and interests of her children. All he experienced was regret that the mother of Lucy should sink so low, as he felt she must be doing, in the estimation of the Countess von Adlerberg. Grateful for the kindnesses her excellency had lavished on *him*, whose attitude towards her had been so different, he feared she must despise his country-woman as a slavish toady.

Impossible to guess!—All that was denoted in her manner was friendship for himself. Her

appeals to the opinion of “*ce cher Monsieur Gervais*” formed her only reply to the *tirades* of Mrs Hecksworth;—treating him more like a friend than an acquaintance,—more like a relation than a friend. And while Helen and Julia, who sat devouring the conversation with open ears and mouths, noted the fine expression which the excitement of animated conversation imparted to his countenance, their mother secretly set him down as a personage of the highest importance.

“Can you inform me,” said she, rushing to Lady Clara Heathcote, the moment Madam von Adlerberg quitted the room on his arm, to take her departure, “the name of the very agreeable Englishman who is with the Austrian ambassadress this evening?”

“An Englishman?—Surely you know Mr Heathcote by sight?—It must have been Mr Heathcote!”

“No!—a much younger man than Mr Heathcote!”

“ Then it was the person whom Marsan and Percy Knox call *L'Etoile Polaire*,—a man who has written a wonderful book about Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the temples and worship of the ancients, and been elected member of all the academies and universities in Italy. He is the right hand of Bonucci and at Angelo.”

“ A literary man, then?”—exclaimed Mrs Hecksworth, glancing at her daughters with an air of consternation—*almost* of disgust.

“ Yes,—a wonderful lion at Naples,—and as popular as poor Sir William Gell.”

“ JERVIS CLEVE!” faltered the lady of Bilston, with a crest-fallen countenance.—“ How true it is, that on the continent one cannot be too cautious about making English acquaintance!”

CHAPTER X.

Que de plantes chétives et languissantes, pales et pénétrées, se sont épanouies dans ce perpétuel printemps ; se sont relevées belles et vivantes, transplantées dans ce paradis !

DE LA TOUCHE.

Newton,—Euclid,—fine old ghosts !

Noble books of old Greek learning !

Ye have left huge aches behind,—

Head and heart and brain are burning.

All ambitious to attain

Wealth and fame,— the specious bubble,—

Up I climbed to Wisdom's steeps,

And got a fall, boy, for my trouble.

THE satisfaction with which the more liberal Lucy welcomed, on the morrow, tidings so exceeding her expectations of the prosperity of the family *protégé*, experienced some drawback from the misgivings inspired by his position as regarded the Austrian ambassador.

Were his honours *really* the fruit of his

labours?—Was his celebrity a mere tribute to his genius?—Or had the Fairford youth degenerated into the toy of fashion;—promoted for his striking personal appearance, rather than from intellectual superiority, to the notice of Royalty and favour of the great?

Still more dispiriting than these misgivings were the ejaculations of Mrs Hecksworth concerning the presumption which had enabled the labourer's son to overleap the barriers dividing him from the aristocratic classes of society.

“ I do not mean that his manners are exceptionable now he is *there*,” said she.—“ But conceive the effrontery of my garden boy ever pretending to the attentions of ambassadors ! ”

“ It is not your garden boy, my dear mother, but the senior wrangler of St John's, —the man who monopolized all the prizes of his year — the author of the Essay on the Domestic Life of the Romans, who——”

“Yes, yes!—I am aware of his claims,” interrupted her mother.—“But it is for *us* to uphold them, and not *him*. After all, they do not alter his condition. His old father and aunt are not the less two illiterate peasants. And he ought not to lose sight of *them*, when he intrudes into society so far above him.”

“I cannot consider him an intruder,” observed Lucy in a low voice.

“And I am sure no one seemed to think him so, last night,” added her sister Julia, who was not a little charmed by the good looks of the countess’s *protégé*. “Even that snappish woman, Lady Clara Heathcote, allowed Monsieur Gervais to be extremely pleasing in his manners.”

“And before we entertained a suspicion who he was,” added Helen,—“you said yourself, mamma, that he was a remarkably elegant young man.”

“Yes!—because I was then unable to contrast his manners with his rank and fortunes. I judged him in the abstract. Bear in mind, my dear Helen,” continued the pompous lady, more sententiously, “that in our judgment upon persons or circumstances, the fitness of things is the first point to be considered.”

The young ladies looked grave, as became young ladies undergoing a maternal admonition. Lucy alone remained unshaken; neither from presumption, nor perversity, but the desire to see her mother more generous in her interpretation of one, their connexion with whom constituted, in *her* opinion, one of the finest feathers in their cap. She could not bear to see Mrs Hecksworth, who was vain of so many paltry advantages and proud of such trivial distinctions, blind to the fact that her hand had raised one of the most gifted minds of GOD’S creation from darkness to sun-

shine. Dearly as she loved her mother, she could not fancy her intitled to renounce the credit of such an action.

“ If, instead of obtaining university honours and the notice of the great,” pleaded she, in reply to a still more contemptuous stricture aimed by her mother at poor Jervis, “ his talents, like the shrewdness or boldness of some speculator, had achieved fortune,—if his genius were repaid with riches instead of fame, you would not surely rebuke him as presumptuous for enjoying the fruit of his exertions?—You would not consider him bound to go in rags, and bestow his money on some public charity?—And why be more miserly of the unsubstantial honours of society, which cost nothing to those who award them, and convey but as little permanent advantage to those who receive!”

Instinctively, Mrs Hecksworth glanced towards her two younger daughters, as much as to say, “ *your* independence of opinion, Lucy,

I am forced to put up with,—undue advantages of fortune having enabled you to overlook my authority. But do not corrupt the two poor girls whose inheritance your seniority has frustrated!”

She contented herself, however, with observing aloud,—“The doctrines of the day, my dear, have obtained a hold upon your imagination, only too natural at your age. As you grow older, you will grow wiser. Like you, I was once discontented with the established order of things. Like you, I was a reformer. But I have learned better now.”

“On the contrary, my dear mother, I am perfectly *satisfied* with the order of things,” argued Miss Hecksworth. “The world has grown almost as liberal as I could wish. Everything tends towards a fair equalization of rights,—a fair fusion of classes.—I am quite content. I should be sorry to see the reformation of society progress more rapidly,—

for all sudden changes are liable to a re-action. All I regret is, to find a person I revere desirous of restoring the bigotries of former times. It is you, dear mother, and not I, who disapprove of finding the Fairford youth an object of general regard."

"Not of general regard. I am satisfied that he should be *regarded*. What I disapprove is his advancement to a place in society above his proper sphere."

"But what *is* his proper sphere?—Certainly not his native village, and the company of the exciseman and tax-gatherer!—To that, you have rendered him superior."

"His sphere is that of school-masters,—professors,—artists,—professional men."

"But the sphere of professional men often rises to the foot of the throne," persisted Lucy. "Generals, admirals, bishops, chancellors, as the head of their several professions, are admitted into the highest society ;

and why not the first men of letters,—the first men of science of the day?”—

“I will not pretend to dispute with you, Lucy,” cried Mrs Hecksworth, getting very angry, because out-argued. “I can only repeat my regret at hearing you adopt the dangerous jargon of the disaffected classes. It is unbecoming your age,—it is unbecoming your situation in life.—It is an extension of the levelling principles which have brought so many of the countries of Europe to the verge of a revolution.”

“I think you will admit, mamma,” pleaded one of the younger girls, “that whether Mr Jervis Cleve’s admission into society be right or wrong, it has not emboldened him to forget his obligations to *you*?—It was not *his* fault if we mistook him! It was not *his* fault if we paid him too much attention. Nothing could be more distant or respectful than his manners.”

“Because he knew himself to be thoroughly in my power!—Conceive what would be the consequences to him, were I to proclaim his real condition and circumstances!”

“I am much mistaken if he ever concealed them!” said Lucy warmly.—“What would he gain by concealing them? His greatness results from his very littleness. It is what you term his *real* condition,—that is his *former* condition,—which makes him so great a wonder.”

“You will have an opportunity of judging for yourself, Lucy,” said her sister Julia, who had already enlisted herself in the cause of Cleve. “For before mamma had the least idea who he was,—when she fancied him a Sir Gervas Somebody,—she invited him to call upon her.”

“By which invitation he will doubtless hasten to profit,” said Mrs Hecksworth, reddening, with an air of vexation, “though he ought to be aware of my mistake.”

“Too well aware of it, I suspect, to show himself here!” said Lucy. “I *hope* so. Never shall I forget that scene at Bilston! Never shall I forget your commissioning me to—but no matter! It is not worth thinking of *now!*”

“If I were addicted to betting,” replied her mother, “I would risk a wager that before I leave Naples, young Cleve will take care to let me see and hear enough of the vogue he has managed to obtain, and that we shall have him here in the course of the morning.”

Lucy thought not; but she said nothing. A few minutes afterwards, his card was placed in her mother’s hand.

“I am at home to visitors!—Tell the porter, Thomas, that I *am* at home to-day to visitors!” repeated she to the English footman by whom the card was brought into the room.

“The gentleman did not ask to come in, ma’am. I saw him myself. He merely asked after your health and Miss Hecksworth’s.”

Lucy would have given much for courage to demand a more explicit account—whether the inquiry regarded *Miss* Hecksworth's health, or *the* Miss Hecksworths'. But it was impossible.—She was left as much in doubt concerning the discrimination of Thomas in numbers and cases, as in the powers of memory of Cleve.

Meanwhile the orders issued by Mrs Hecksworth entailed the annoyance of a visit from George Joddrell. Instead of the mild, reserved, plainly-dressed Monsieur Gervais, Thomas fancied himself to be fulfilling his lady's intentions by ushering into the room what Cowper calls

A fine puss-gentleman, that's all perfume.

With more fur upon his coat, more velvet embossed on his satin cravat, more varnish on his boots, and more mirific balsam on his hair than might have served a regiment of Life Guards and the window at White's, George Joddrell threw himself awkwardly into a chair, embarrassed into talking louder and

more emptily than usual by the consciousness of his murderous intentions.

For, sooth to say, though his views were those of a decided fortune-hunter, he was not un-prepossessed by the sweetness of Lucy's countenance and frankness of her manner; and on seeing her again, was struck by the improvement which a sojourn of several months on the continent had effected in her dress and appearance. He saw at a glance that he should be by no means ashamed to produce her in society as his wife.

"I have just been hearing from my mother and sisters," said Lucy, in order to divert the unpleasant stare in which he was indulging at her expense, "an account of their gaieties last night at Princess Pietracatella's ball."

"You were not there, then?"

"I am too feeble, or too lazy, to go to balls."

"Quite right!—I never go to them myself. Balls are the greatest bore on earth. A ball

is only a party,—noisier, hotter, and dustier than other parties.”

“ I can assure you, Mr Joddrell, that the *fête* of last night was a very brilliant one,” interposed Mrs Hecksworth, fancying that the less she had enjoyed it, the more it was deserving to be enjoyed.

“ I dare say—for those who *like* that sort of thing!”—rejoined her visitor. “ But I abhor dancing. The example of the I-o-ways, O-jib-beways, and all the savages Catlin brings over to amuse greater savages than themselves, fully establish my theory that dancing is only good to put one in a passion. These redskins, who follow the dictates of nature, dance themselves into the state of excitement enabling them to butcher their enemies. With *us*, on the contrary, it is a stimulant that incites people to attack their friends.”

“ We had not much opportunity of dancing ourselves into a rage last night at Princess Pietracatella’s,” observed the candid Julia,—“ for we scarcely knew any one there.”

“I should be surprised if you did, from the sample I saw of the company,” retorted Joddrell.—“I met yesterday, at the Montebello’s, an Englishman, a positive adventurer, who bragged of going to the ball, like some schoolboy invited to his dancing master’s!”—

“You allude, I dare say, to a Mr Jervis Cleve?” said Mrs Hecksworth, glancing with an air of triumph at Lucy.

“Precisely.—You perhaps know something about him;—for I fancy he comes from your part of the country?”—

“Mr Cleve’s father, and father’s father, were hedgers and ditchers on the estate of Mr Hecksworth,” replied the unrelenting lady, while the colour of her daughter rose to her temples.—“I myself gave this young man his first schooling.”

“For which, I suppose, he thanks you, as such people usually do, by pushing past you, and throwing up the dust in your face?”—added Joddrell, playing with his glove buttons.

“It would certainly better become him to abstain from society where he is likely to meet us,” replied Mrs Hecksworth, feeling her consequence redoubled.

“It might render our company very unacceptable if he did!”—rejoined Lucy, indignant at the means of attack afforded by her mother against a person so deserving, and so guiltless of offence.

“On my honour, Miss Hecksworth, you are too indulgent!”—cried George. “You are nearly as bad as my sisters; who, because when driving out one day last summer (while staying at my grandfather’s at Hindon), they were struck with the picturesque appearance of an old house, and obtained the refreshment of some dry bread and pump water from this man’s vulgar family——”

“*Not vulgar!*” interrupted Lucy—“only simple—only peasants!”—

“Have thought proper,” added George, without noticing her interruption,—“to charge

themselves with a parcel of drawings for this fellow—I beg his pardon—this *travelling* fellow. *That* application, Miss Hecksworth, even *you* would not dispute?”—said he, fancying he had devised something amazingly clever.

“To despatch drawings to Italy,” observed Mrs Hecksworth, “seems rather like sending coals to Newcastle!—But I dare say those poor Cleves imagine Naples to be somewhere in the West Indies.”

“How I should like to see the drawings!” said Lucy. “I dare say they are done by that pleasing looking sister of Mr Cleve, whom I used to see at church.”

“Precisely!—a deuced pretty girl—the very damsel with whom my sisters chose to make acquaintance!—As to the drawings, depend upon it they are not worth your curiosity, or I would ask my sisters to show them to you before they despatched them to their destination (for till the dinner yesterday we did not know where this great luminary

was to be heard of!) They are merely sketches of his father's cottage, and some scene in the neighbourhood. Now I think of it, it was a dell in your park at Bilston."

Lucy Hecksworth did not choose to admit to such a person as their visitor, how much her interest in the subject was increased by this announcement.

"Do Lady Hillingdon and your sisters pass the remainder of the winter here, Mr Joddrell?"—inquired Mrs Hecksworth, apprehensive that, by dwelling too much on the Cleves, something might lead to the disclosure of her blunders of the preceding night.

"Yes,—I fancy so.—Yes, probably.—We shall stay till the end of the Carnival; and then make off with the rest of the English, to Rome, for the Holy week.—And *you*?"—

"Our movements depend upon the health of my eldest daughter," replied Mrs Hecksworth, glancing at Lucy, whose cheeks were covered at that moment by so vivid a flush, as, unless

it were hectic, argued little necessity for a milder climate.

George Joddrell was fully justified in observing, "If your sojourn in Italy depend on the state of Miss Hecksworth's health, we must not hope for the pleasure of your company."

"Lucy is a different creature since we came abroad," replied Mrs Hecksworth, seeing that her daughter was annoyed at so direct a compliment.—"She has been stronger and better ever since we left home."

"I don't wonder!" cried George, unguardedly. "In England, women die of the spleen!—What can exceed the dulness of our country life, unless during the sporting season, when people fill their houses with company.—In my opinion, no greater blunder than our system of life! The first thing a rich Englishman does is to place himself in the centre of a gloomy park,—planting himself in,—building out the road,—immuring himself from obser-

vation on every side, as if self-condemned to so many years of solitary confinement. Our country-houses are cells, on a handsome scale. Whereas a foreigner surrounds himself with the habitations of others. *His* château stands on the outskirts of a large town, within reach of social pleasures; and as soon as the leaves are off the trees, away he goes to the capital, in search of cheerful society and theatrical entertainments."

"Even foreigners, however, admit the English *vie de château* to constitute the pleasantest society in the world."

"To constitute the most characteristic feature of English life!" emended George.—
"But it chiefly excites their admiration as proving that hundreds of noble families, in England, are rich enough to accomplish that to which few foreign princes can pretend."

"Our Chatsworths, Alnwicks, and Badminton must certainly surprise them!" added Mrs Hecksworth.

“ Surprise is not always a pleasurable sensation,” retorted George. “ I should be surprised if I saw a crocodile peeping from under your sofa, instead of what I presume to be Miss Hecksworth’s lap-dog! However,” continued he, (while Julia stooped to extricate her sister’s pet,) “ such houses as those you name cannot be cited as a sample of average English life ;—and even *they* are only visited by foreigners on gala occasions. What I complain of so confoundedly in our psalm-singing kingdom, is the monotony of a regular country neighbourhood, where people live nine months out of the twelve, like rabbits in their burrows,—enlivened only by occasional formal dinner parties and unmeaning morning visits,—such people, in short, as my grandfather’s family at Hindon.”

“ Not having the honour of knowing them, or the pleasure of having seen their place,” replied Lucy, more formally than was her wont, “ it would be presumptuous to pro-

nounce upon their means of amusement. But they have at least the advantage of a pretty neighbourhood; and I am myself old fashioned enough to fancy that nothing in this world approaches so near supreme felicity as English country life."

No one replied. Mrs Hecksworth, remembering the eagerness testified by her daughter to escape from Bilston, secretly accused her of inconsistency; while Joddrell exclaimed within himself—"All up with my chance!—To take *that* crotchet into her head, the girl must certainly be in love!"

He had, however, nothing to complain of in his mode of reception. Lucy expressed herself eager for the renewal of her acquaintance with his sisters; and Mrs Hecksworth apprized him of the number of her box at San Carlo, and took leave of the only son of Lord Hillingdon, as became the mother of three unmarried daughters.

Meanwhile Jervis Cleve was jogging in a *calessino* on his road to Portici!

Gladly had he profited by the gracious intimation of the queen, to hasten to a spot, to *him* already so propitious. For any other object but that of scientific discovery, to quit Naples, even for a day, would have required explanation, both to others and himself. But thanks to the interference of no less an instrument than a volcano, he was not forced to admit, even in the deepest of his reveries, that he was flying before the face of Lucy, like some shepherd before that of the descending divinities of Greece. From all he had undergone, he found that he had not courage to behold her face to face.

He had not established himself many hours, however, at the inn at Portici, before he repented his precipitancy. A Richmond or Greenwich hotel, or a cake-house at Windermere or Killarney in winter-time, could scarcely be

more comfortless. Such of the curious as were drawn thither by the inflamed condition of the mountain, contented themselves with a morning visit, returning to their homes at Naples to sleep; so that Jervis experienced all the forlornness which follows the transition from a peopled and brilliant capital to the stillness of the country,—or that duller than country, a small unfrequented town.

So hurried had been his departure, that the packet brought by the Miss Joddrells from his sister, had not yet reached his hands; and poor Jane having relied upon the long letter thus despatched, he remained without news from home.

“At Glebestone, too, they have forgotten me!” mused he, after vainly endeavouring to find in a book some substitute for human voices. “How, in fact, should they interest themselves in one whose vagrant habits they doubtless attribute to want of

affection. Poor Jane!—Poor Jenny! If I were but sure that the tastes with which I have endowed her have not turned to her disadvantage,—that the dragon's teeth were not rising up to war against her peace!—Perhaps she feels herself as lonely and miserable among those with whom she has not a taste in common, as I in this dreary place!—But no!—the ground *she* treads, is familiar to her. The trees *she* looks on are those which shaded her childhood. The church which every Sabbath witnesses her pious prayers, is that under the shadow of whose walls our poor mother is lying. She *cannot* be as lonely as *I* am. Italy, so beautiful,—so entrancing,—so reflective of the glorious skies that hover above it,—Italy, of which in my college days I used to dream as something unattainable,—something as far removed from me as the times of its Roman greatness,—now that I have reached it, throws me back only more bitterly on myself. I have

enjoyed all that intense communion with the beautiful in material nature, can afford ; and find it insufficient to quicken the pulses of my heart, or gratify the factitious longings inspired by education. And now, what remains ? An alien here,—in my own country scarcely *less* an alien,—forgotten by those of kindred blood, and forbidden to ally myself with those of kindred spirit,—the corpse in its shroud is not more helplessly alone ! ”—

“ Good ! ” — will perhaps exclaim some stout-minded reader. “ In just such a mood of mind are great enterprises engendered. Knowledge is a jealous master, who requires a man to leave kith and kin, and follow only *him*. A scholar isolated from personal ties and extrinsic influence, like Jervis Cleve, has space for the wings of his ambition to expand, and leisure for abstractedness of study to lead to the highest results.”

No !—Again and again, No !—That the human mind may attain perfection, the human

heart must be at ease,—“*il faut être en paix avec dieu, avec les hommes, et avec soi-même.*”

Though deferred to by colleges, and honoured by the smiles of royalty, Jervis Cleve was, on the contrary, at issue with himself and others. During his absence from Naples, moreover, new shoots had sprung upon his hedge of thorns. His departure afforded as much advantage to his enemies, as regret to his friends.

While the solitary man, in the intervals of scientific research,—

Roulait dans son esprit les futures années,
Se ressouvenant de l'avenir,

Fairfax and his pupil, and his pupil's evil genius, had arrived suddenly at Naples!—

CHAPTER XI.

Des quatre saisons de la vie humaine, — enfance, jeunesse, age mûr, vieillesse, — L'ENFANCE consiste en pleurs, — LA JEUNESSE, en contrariétés d'amour, — L'AGE MUR, en ambitions et labeurs, — LA VIEILLESSE en infirmités et regrets : — souffrance quadruple !

GAY. L'EMBRYON.

Oh ! age has weary days
 And nights o' sleepless pain.
 Thou golden time o' youthful prime,
 Why com'st thou not again ?

A MIND at war with itself is apt to find in society only aggravations of its strife. But situated as Jervis was at that moment, in contact with the grandest features and attributes of nature, it was impossible for his personal tribulations to retain the ascendancy. Thus face to face with nature, contending

with her for mastery of her secrets, his spirit was at once humbled and elevated,—like Jacob, wrestling with God.

After a week's sojourn at Portici,—after a contemplation by day, by night, and in the stillness of the morning and evening twilight, of the inflamed mountain,—after listening to its terrible voice in the night season, and watching from a boat in the bay its frightful emissions,—after hazarding with a chosen company of the professors of Naples, the terrible fate of Pliny,—and still more, after venturing the same awful contingencies *alone*, he returned to his old habitation, for the purpose of pursuing with his coadjutors a course of experiments on the observations they had made and the products they had obtained.

His mind was comparatively tranquil. The littleness of the things of this world had obtained an awful exemplification in the terrors of an implement of divine vengeance, by which, at the appointed time, cities had been

destroyed, and nations swept away. An emperor, a pope, a Mrs Hecksworth, had become mere atoms of dust in the estimation of the awe-stricken philosopher.

“ Thank heaven, you are come at last,— and thank heaven you have been where it became you to be!” cried Philip Fairfax, shaking him heartily by the hand, the morning after his arrival in his old quarters.—“ I have been here every day, for the last four; fancying that as soon as Vesuvius had roared itself quiet again, we should hear news of you.”—

“ I arrived last night,” said Cleve, as soon as his friend would allow him scope for utterance.

“ And as I live, not a hair of your head singed!—I expected to see you looking like the ghost of Empedocles; or, at least, a sergeant of Braidwood’s fire brigade. Instead of which, you are only a little paler and thinner!”

“ I have been working hard,” replied Cleve, with one of the melancholy smiles that imparted so great a charm to his countenance. —“ But I am the better for it :

The labour we delight in, physics pain.”

“ You can’t work *too* hard ! ” — rejoined his uncompromising companion, —“ ’tis your vocation, Hal ! — But what pain, I should like to know, have you to physic ? — Young, healthy, successful in all your undertakings, I hold you an especial favourite of fortune ! — For you, the labour you delight in is required rather as a sedative, lest you grow too much inflated by the prosperities and joys of the world. — Above all, my dear fellow, you are your own master ! ”

“ You say it with so long a face and so heavy a sigh,” rejoined Cleve, “ that I could almost fancy you had found reason, since we parted, to repine after independence ? ”

“ And so I have ! ”

“Some misunderstanding with Lord John?”

“On the contrary!—I wish he *would* quarrel with me, that I might have some pretext for dealing with him more harshly than I fear he will ever afford occasion for. The fact is, I love him like a brother,—nay, in spite of our approximation of age,—like a *son*; and have not courage to treat him with the wholesome severity he requires.”

“I sometimes think you insist too largely on the value of wholesome severity,” said Cleve, with a second smile.—“To me, whom you also profess to regard as a brother, you prove your love only by excess of chastening. And I suspect that Lord John, like myself, is more likely to be amenable to gentler entreatment.”

“My entreatment of him is gentle enough!” cried Fairfax, whose abruptness of movement and manner showed him to be more out of sorts than Cleve had ever seen him in the course of their acquaintance.—“But I am

beginning to feel the responsibility I have undertaken too harassing!"—

"Your misunderstanding, then, is perhaps with Lord Wrexhill?"

"I wish it were! For men of his age and nature are accessible to reason; and we should soon be friends again. No! I believe I possess *his* implicit confidence; and am consequently the more annoyed at finding that the moral authority on which I relied to uphold my influence over my pupil, is, under certain circumstances, as the smoking flax!"

"He has broken bounds, then?"

"Not overtly. If he had, my passport would already have received its *visa* for England. But—

Dodone, inconsulté, ne rend plus d'oracles.

My influence is gone! He still likes me well enough, poor fellow, to make a mystery of his change of feelings, or rather of habits,—which only redoubles my anxiety. For Lord John

to become cautious and reserved, things must be going sorely amiss !”

“ The Clevelands, of course !—You were beginning to feel uneasy before we parted at Venice.”—

“ Far more uneasy than I cared to acknowledge. But though I have never lost sight of them since, and have been constantly on the alert to circumvent their manœuvres, they have the best of it ! Nothing but the necessity of being on the watch against them, prevented my joining you at Portici the very day of my arrival here. What a glorious opportunity to have lost ! An eruption of Vesuvius ; a thing one has been dreaming of since one’s school-days—The blooming of one’s favourite aloe !—And to be forced to stand aloof,—forced by dread of the nefarious practices of a fellow, who, in spite of his manly deportment and apparent frankness, is, I am convinced, a sneaking villain. Cleveland’s courage is but the courage of the bravo,—

and his shrewdness, the cunning of a swindler ! ” —

“ Gently, gently ! ” remonstrated Cleve,—alarmed by this unwonted exasperation on the part of the mild Philip Fairfax. “ What in the world has Cleveland done to provoke this harshness ? ”

“ If I did but *know!*—” resumed his friend. “ If I fairly understood what he would be at, I might establish a defence. But I can only form inferences from Lord John’s sudden reserve towards me,—his true and disinterested friend.” —

“ Which may arise from a thousand causes unconnected with Colonel Cleveland.”

“ So I thought,—so I trusted—I was in hopes I had affronted him,—that I worked him too hard,—that he thought me priggish, pedantic, opiniative, tyrannic,—I did not much care *what*,—knowing myself to be actuated by a sense of duty !—But the moment Herbert Davenport joined our party — ”

“That hateful Herbert Davenport!”—murmured Cleve.

“*His* instinctive appetite for the dear delight of giving pain caused him to drop certain hints —”

“Never believe in hints!—An honest man speaks out!”

“But in some cases, an honest man *cannot* speak out, because he is never trusted. Herbert Davenport is unprincipled enough to impose no restraint on those who are doing wrong. In a day, he achieved the confidence carefully withheld from *me*. I could see it in the exulting expression of his eyes every time he looked at me! One saw him secretly rejoicing at the “tutor being distanced.” The very sound of his voice, as he addressed me, said, “You are an egregious dupe!”

“I should not advise you to believe it, without better authority!” rejoined Cleve, smiling at the strange vehemence of his friend.

“But I *have* better authority! Thus warned, I became more curious. I found that

my fears had even fallen short of the truth. What I had supposed the *end* of the mischief, was only the means. I was not wrong in supposing Lord John had attached himself to the wolf in sheep's clothing, whom (in honour of her fair skin and regular features) you choose to liken to a Roman matron. But I am now convinced that this buccaneering adventurer"——

“ My *dear* Fairfax ! ”——

“ Threw his wife purposely in the way of Lord John, in order to entrap him into their society, and render him doubly a victim. I have good reason to know that he has signed bills to a large amount, in favour of Cleveland, payable doubtless on the attainment of his majority;—and from what fell from Davenport, I conclude that, among the charms of Cleveland's house, both my pupil and the Duke of Attleborough were attracted by deep drinking and high play.”

“ But surely you have remonstrated with Lord John ? ”

“Again and again!—perhaps a little too often. For he has now the air of wishing to avoid my company, from distaste to *me*, as much as from preference for the *Clevelands*.”

“That he should seek the society of a very amusing man and very beautiful woman, is not wonderful,” observed Cleve. “But it is difficult to believe that he should suddenly cease to prize that of a friend so valued.”

“A man may not serve two masters. In me, Lord John beholds the apostle of self-denial;—in Cleveland, of self-indulgence.”

“Hercules hesitating between virtue and vice.”—

“No, by Jove!—There is no hesitation in the case. He gives his days to Mrs Cleveland, and his nights to her husband. Herbert Davenport coarsely congratulated me that—But no matter! Enough that my post has become a sinecure; and I should have resigned it three weeks ago, but for the dread of removing the last restraint upon the conduct of

Lord John Howard. I have written to the marquis, intreating him to recal us to England, that I may convey the steed safe back into his stable, instead of flinging down the reins on his neck."

"Perhaps the Clevelands may find at Naples some newer prey;—some game to play, that may relax their attempts upon Lord John?" said Jervis, deeply sympathizing in the distress of his friend.

"I dare not hope it,—I cannot hope it! *Where* will they find a more guileless nature, or a nobler property to fix their fangs on?—He is the very man for them;—an unencumbered estate,—an unsuspecting heart! No end to the disappointments likely to arise from their triumph. My mother will be as deeply grieved as myself! One of those charming girls, whom she loves almost as a daughter, had—But let *their* secrets be sacred. I have no right to betray *them!* Let my own mortification suffice."

“How true it is,” mused Cleve, “that till the close of a man’s career, no one should opine upon his good or evil fortune. Lord John Howard had everything in his favour:—rank, fortune, merit, talent—”

“With all the prospects of distinction as a benefactor to his country, that good intentions and good abilities could secure! Yet all has come to a sudden stand-still. Nay, like the foundations of an incomplete structure, even what has been already achieved will crumble away and turn to no account. His nature will deteriorate,—has *already* deteriorated! Conceive that proud young man trafficking with Jews,—selling his birthright for a mess of pottage,—flinging away an ancient inheritance upon two brazen adventurers!”—

“Let us talk of something else,” said Cleve. “This subject excites you too painfully.”

“On the contrary, if you only knew what a

relief it is to give vent to all that has been rankling in my heart, and which I sometimes thought would choke me!"—

"You are aware, I presume," rejoined Cleve, "that the family to whom you just now alluded, have arrived, at Naples?"

"The Joddrells?"

"Lady Hillingdon, her son, and daughters."

"Then, by Jove, the mischief is complete!—For I have little doubt that the object of such a journey, on the part of a family so embarrassed, is to revive those attentions on the part of Lord John which were much noticed in London.—Poor girl!—What a disappointment!—What a mortification!"

"Strange to tell, I am just about to address a letter to her," said Cleve. "Miss Joddrell has been kind enough to bring me a packet from my sister, which she sent here during my absence, and which I have still to acknowledge."

“ But why not acknowledge it in person? ”

“ Intrude, unsolicited, upon English people of their rank in life?—And *you* to advise it,—who so short a time ago reproved me for not being altogether an anachoret! ”

“ Still, a civility of that description must be acknowledged. ”

“ And most gratefully. But from the specimen I saw of the family in young Joddrell, the other day, I have no desire to push my acquaintance further. By the way, I must show you the contents of the said packet,—views of home by the hand of my dear good thoughtful sister. But you must give a look first to the specimens collected during my recent expedition. ”

“ The drawings first, if you please. I shall visit Vesuvius to-morrow. It may be *months* before I look upon an English landscape!—Beautiful!—Charming! ”—continued he, as Cleve, having repaired to his writing desk, placed in his hand the sketches of Glebestone

and Bilston Park.—“And this, then, is the house where you were born!”—

“The house where my family resided,—the house I have been so happy as to procure them.—I was *born* in a cottage,—a mere hovel.”

“How charming,—how enviable!”—cried Philip Fairfax, with enthusiasm.

“To be born in a hovel?”—

“No!—the talent which has enabled Miss Cleve to bring the home of those you love, thus vividly before you! But to perfect the gift, she should have added a sketch of the artist.”

“It needed not,—her countenance is pictured in my heart.”

“But not in mine, my dear fellow!” cried Fairfax. “I spoke for myself.—I would fain make acquaintance with the face of the ‘dear Jane’ of whom I have heard so much. Indeed she *owed* it me! Consider the pains I have bestowed on her education. She is

nearly as much my mother's pupil as the Miss Joddrells."

"Poor Jane!" murmured Jervis, after a moment's pause, as if musing aloud. "I ought to have reflected, before she became so, upon the destiny that awaited her,—the destiny for which it might unfit her! Had it been in my power to *complete* her education and qualify her to complete that of others, all would have been well. But at Glebestone—poor girl! I fear she is grievously out of place. The letter that accompanied these drawings was written in all the excitement of having conversed, for the first time in her life, with girls of her own age and acquirements; and the raptures in which she writes of the Miss Joddrells (who I conclude resemble others of their class), proves to me, alas! how ill my sister is qualified for her own."—

"No, they are *not* like other girls of their class!" cried Philip warmly. "They are all that is excellent;—natural in character as

well as sterling in principle. And when I remember all it cost my poor mother to keep them so, in a house where so much that was discreditable met their eyes on every side, and subject to the interference of parents the most despicable, I cannot help thinking your sister far better off, poor and independent, under the roof and protection of her father, than eating the bitter bread of a governess in the house of the first duchess in the land! By the way, Cleve, the Duke of Attleborough had me thank you for all the trouble you have taken about securing his apartment. You will have him here, in person, by-and-by."

"I took no trouble. The duke has nothing to thank me for. I merely mentioned his name at the best hotel in Naples, where they were only too happy to retain their best apartments for him. Are the Clevelands equally satisfied?"

"So far from it, that they have already

moved into lodgings. I suspect they find their proceedings too much under *surveillance* in an hotel. Independent of my peculiar motives for alarm concerning Lord John, there is something suspicious about all their movements. Cleveland's passport is an English one instead of an American; and though there were in Rome several families of high consideration from the States, I ascertained that the Clevelands were not known to them, even by name."

"You have not surely imbibed the popular delusion that all people from the other side of the Atlantic must be acquainted with each other, though natives of provinces two or three thousand miles asunder?"—

"I have invariably found Americans who are in the enjoyment of a sufficient fortune to make themselves heard of, in Europe, by their splendid mode of life, perfectly well known *by name* to the better orders of their countrymen. All Irishmen do not know the Duke of

Leinster. They are not the less aware of his existence."

"I understood from you, at Venice, that the Duke of Attleborough had made acquaintance with the Clevelands in the best society."

"But *where?*" interrupted Fairfax. "At some German bathing-place,—a spot where nobody is made accountable for his antecedents! The duke is, as you know, the most good-natured young man on earth; but too idle to form opinions or even preferences of his own. The duke always follows the multitude. Whatever is good enough for others, is good enough for *him*. Lest he should be supposed proud or assuming, whoever he finds popular, he accepts as an acquaintance; falls in love with the woman most surrounded by admirers, and buys a horse, only because others are bidding for it."

"And were others bidding for Colonel Cleveland?" said Jervis, laughing.

"Precisely! Like any other good-looking

fellow who gives good dinners and sports a good equipage,—besides being a crack shot and having a capital seat,—Cleveland is acceptable wherever he goes. For his deficiency of polish and connection, the mere name of American affords a plausible excuse.”

“But surely they had letters of recommendation?”

“Not that I ever heard of. At Venice, they were introduced everywhere by the Duke of Attleborough; at Rome, where people,—particularly English people,—are more extensively canvassed, his grace appeared to have grown more cautious,—it was not for *me* to ask *why*.—And Cleveland seemed growing cautious too. For he not only ceased to promote the appearance of his wife in society, but to my certain knowledge forbad her to return the visit of the Hanoverian ambassadress, who, fancying the Clevelands were travelling with the Duke of Attleborough, and con-

cluding them to be related, was civil enough to send her a card."

"How unaccountable! I always thought he treated that unfortunate woman in a manner highly disrespectful——"

"Like a savage, as he *is*. And of late, ten times more brutally."

"Do you feel quite certain," added Cleve; hesitating to propound so grave an accusation, "that she is really his wife? A man of his habits would feel little scruple about giving his name to his travelling companion, provided it suited his purposes.—To whom is an American responsible?"

"To every man of honour whose wife or sister he has entrapped into a disreputable acquaintance! But what then? Cleveland boasts himself the best shot in Europe; and has been performing incredible feats in the shooting gallery at Rome, on which some thousands were won and lost. To own the truth, however, I *do* suspect that he is not

married to this wretched woman,—which is the source of all my uneasiness. Consider, my dear Cleve, *consider* what I should have on my conscience for the rest of my days, if, while under my charge, a young man of Lord John Howard's prospects, should have not only seriously injured his fortune, but formed a connection with a worthless woman, only the more dangerous for her attractions,—whom, infatuated as he is, he might perhaps be induced to marry !”

Pale with the emotion produced by mere allusion to such a prospect, Fairfax started from his seat, and with hurried footsteps began to pace the room.

“What I hope—what I wish—” cried he at length, stopping short and again addressing his friend, “is that, at Naples, he may become weaned from this fatal couple by the pleasures of society.—There seem to be plenty of English people here,—good English,—respectable English,—whom, like most young

fellows without your knack for speaking every foreign lingo, he prefers to the company of foreigners. And if these Hecksworths, and Hillingdons, and Heathcotes, and Reigates, would only take it into their heads to come forward with a little civility, one might gradually rescue him without his perceiving it, from the hands of the Philistines.”

“Hardly,—if he find his captivity so charming as you imagine. But we shall soon see. These people, doubtless, *will* show him attention. Most of them have daughters, for whom Lord John is a desirable partner at the fêtes which are now of nightly occurrence.”

“If he would *only* take a fancy to one of them!”—interrupted Fairfax. “When I quitted England, the charge chiefly impressed upon me by Lord Wrexhill was against allowing my pupil to be prematurely entrapped into matrimony. All he seemed to apprehend for his son was an early and ill-considered marriage; and from manœuvring

mammas and young ladies on their preferment, I was prepared to flee like the plague! The marquis even entrusted me with a letter of interdiction to be delivered to his son *in extremis*. And after all, in escaping from Scylla, I have suffered him to be swallowed up by Charybdis! By the way, my dear Jervis, what has become of your Austrian ambassador? ”—

“What was likely to become of her,” said Cleve, somewhat disposed to resent the implication,—“except to retain her position at the head of one of the first houses in Naples; doing honour to her high *caste* by the irreproachability of her conduct and grace of her manners?”

“Humph!—She is in no want, I see, of a champion. Nevertheless, somebody in Naples wrote word to somebody in Rome, by which somebody it was repeated to myself, that the Countess von Adlerberg, who, it appears, has established a sort of *bureau*

d'esprit at l'Ambassade d'Autriche,—the last of embassies where such attempts are to be borne,—fancies she has found a Petrarch,—or rather a Tasso,—in the illustrator of the domestic life of the Romans.”

“ I should be glad to know,—what you will doubtless refuse to give up,—the *name* of your *somebody!* ”—cried Cleve. “ Though not, like Colonel Cleveland, a crack shot and the hero of a shooting gallery, trust me I would make him retract every syllable of an insolent scandal, injurious to the reputation of one of the noblest and best women in the world.”

“ I don't suppose such a charge would be injurious to her reputation,—as times go. The lady is only accused of a Platonic passion for a certain Monsieur Gervais.”

“ Of that you shall judge for yourself,” replied Cleve, more calmly. “ This very day, I will ask her permission to present you. So slight is my influence, that I am far from

certain of obtaining it; still less that, when introduced, she will be as gracious as I could wish. The countess, though full of good qualities, is capricious and wayward as a child."

"As capricious and wayward as she please, provided she don't make a fool of you, or induce you to make a fool of yourself! The dedication was a silly business. No! don't be afraid! I am not going to renew a chapter on which we have expressed ourselves fully, and had out our quarrel. As to the graciousness of your Austrian excellency, on *me* her *agaceries* would be thrown away. That sort of woman has no more existence, as a woman, in my eyes, than the gilt *fauteuil* in which she is seated. You would do me a much greater favour than asking her to notice a poor, snobby, black-coated tutor, like myself, by persuading her to be civil to Lord John, and invite him to her house, where he would

probably meet all these pretty Hecksworths and Joddrells."

The face of Jervis Cleve became so suddenly crimsoned at this request, as to attract the attention of Fairfax.

"Well, well!" said he, fancying that his friend was affronted by his unceremonious allusions to the countess, "I will learn to speak of your *gnädige Gräfinn* with the respect due to an excellency of Austria.—And now, enough of lords and ladies for the present.—I want to see your specimens from the Solfatara.—I want to see what progress you have made in the *real* business of life!"

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