A BOOK ABOUT SHAMS:

RELATING TO THE

GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION.

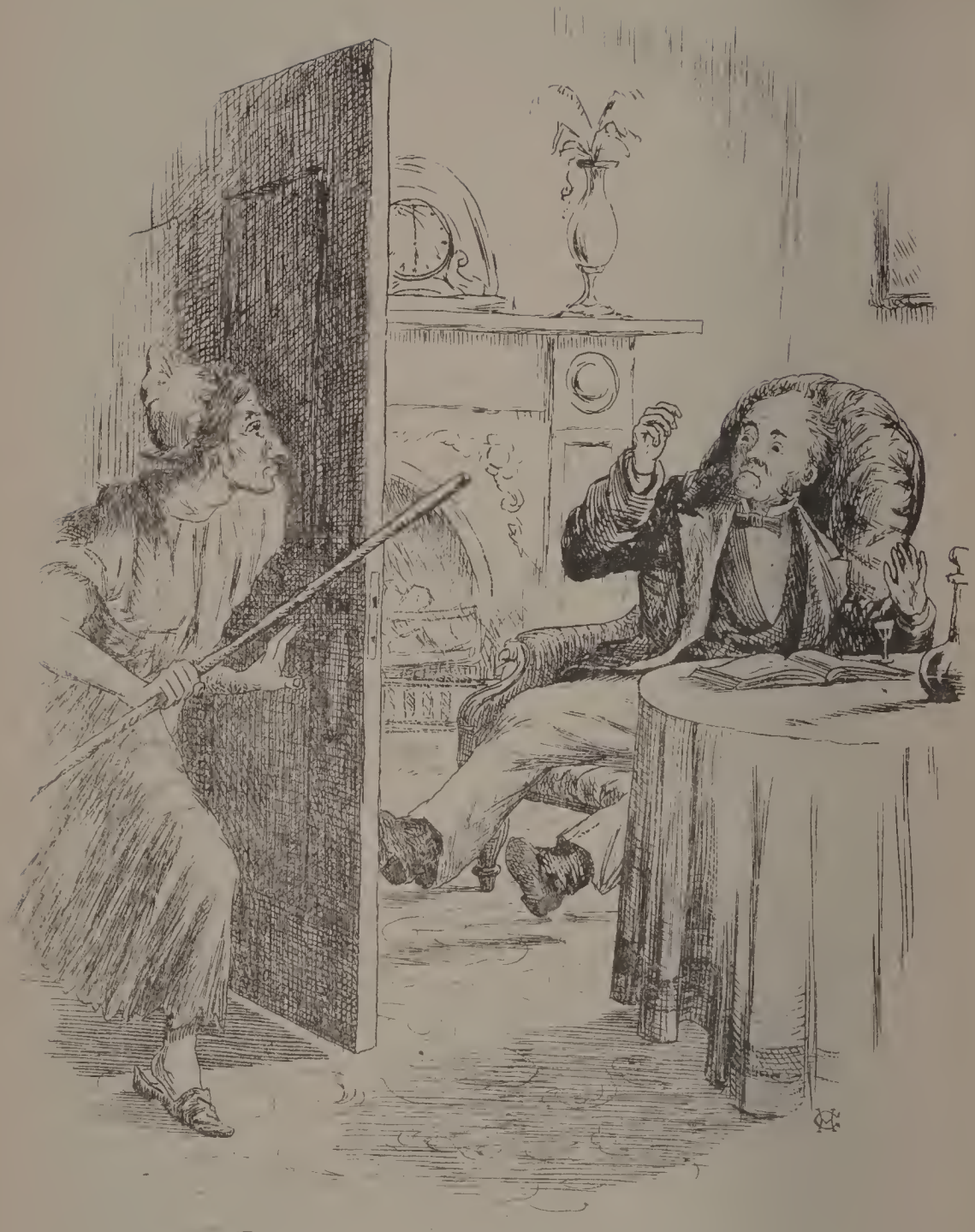
By the same Author,

SPECIAL THERAPEUTICS,

IN THE TREATMENT OF

ACUTE AND CHRONIC DISEASES.

Cloth, 8vo. 3s. 6d.



An unwelcome Visitor

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A BOOK ABOUT SHAMS:

RELATING TO THE

GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY LORY MARSH, M.D.

"See the sad crones who laid the needle by,
The loom and spindle, fortunes to divine,
And wrought with herbs and images a lie."
FORD'S *Inferno.*

ILLUSTRATED.

London:
WARD, LOCK, AND TYLER,
WARWICK HOUSE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1870.

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INTRODUCTION.

IF any of my readers should feel tempted to believe that a feeling of professional jealousy at the marvellous success of Shams in all ages has dictated the following pages, I beg to assure him that such is not the case; and he will the more readily believe me if he considers that Shams are not confined to Medicine alone, but are often supreme in the political, religious, and scientific professions as well. But the reason we hear more of quack doctors than of other impostors is because, as a rule, the former line of business is more profitable, and furnishes the richest harvest of dupes.

It has been said that "the pleasure is as great in being cheated as to cheat;" but this only holds good till the cheating process is discovered; when I am sure that the meekest dupe must be roused to fierce indignation against those by whom he has been deceived, not unmingled with a feeling of humility on account of his own misplaced faith. No doubt, faith is a good thing when rightly directed; true faith in God, for instance, not only saves a man from superstitions and delusions of all kinds, but enables him to battle with and triumph over the hard necessities of practical life. But this kind of faith rigorously presupposes an honest and cleanly life; and every-day experience teaches us — even the records of the law courts—that the dupe, in every nine cases out of ten, is merely permitted to be cheated in punishment of his own want of moral straightforwardness. But what can we say of faith in a man whose exorbitant professions brand him at once as an impostor? It can only be accounted for on that deep principle which has always predisposed poor human nature to believe in the prophets of "pleasant things." Matters have only to be put before us in a light in which we wish to see them, and we are all prone to borrow

any spectacles that may be offered to assist us in the search after what we wish to find, no matter whether it be political power, religious belief, or the cure of real or imaginary diseases.

This being a general law of human nature, some scoundrel is always at hand to "exploit" it, whispering in our ear that he alone is able to administer the very panacea we require.

Once befooled by such impostors, there is no limit to the absurdities of which the human mind is capable. Were it not for the betrayal of professional confidence, I could many "tales unfold" of blighted happiness, ruined prospects, and premature death, the result of the unscrupulous practices of impostors, against whom the public have a right to look for protection to the State. But few are found to interest themselves in such social questions, until they have too dearly bought their own experience; which, unfortunately, they are often unwilling to give others the benefit of, not wishing that the world should know the extent and nature of transactions in which they have played so inglorious a part.

The fable of the Spider and the Fly has a much more universal application than many of us are disposed to admit. Even at the present day, there are more spiders about our path than people imagine; and it is little flattering to our vanity to know that they find a goodly harvest of flies. Some forms of commercial imposture, for instance, ease men of their money; but however loud and violent the denunciations of the sufferers against swindles of this kind, the ruin and desolation they occasion are too insignificant to admit of a moment's comparison between them and the forms of imposture that lead men and women to imagine themselves the victims of untold miseries, which only owe their existence to a diseased imagination. All classes of society, of both sexes, are exposed to the latter kind of imposture, while the greater their wealth and means of happiness and enjoyment, the greater the harvest they afford the quacks. The dupes of the commercial swindles are often men over-greedy of gain, for whose protection it is not necessary to take much trouble. What they lose in money they sometimes gain in common sense and prudence; the investment often bringing them in a rich return in a way they

never expected. There are many people who in early life have lost their fortune and suffered ruin by some commercial swindle, that have so far profited by their experience, as ultimately to become wiser and better men.

No such compensating process, however, can be alleged for the man or woman who has suffered loss of health, and whose mind and body have been ruined by the withering touch of quackery. At the period of their ruin, such persons were mostly young, over-confident, and credulous, and therefore sure to be trapped by some of the ingenious gentlemen who have made human folly their special study. In the interests of such persons, and as one whose attention has long been directed to this subject, I have thought it well in the following pages to give a brief account of some notable quacks who have had their influence for evil upon modern society; by way of indicating, especially to those who may be foolish enough to believe that the inexorable laws of nature can sometimes be outwitted by an impostor, the direction in which their ruin inevitably lies.

The Sham, we know, is a very Proteus in his disguises; but there are some distinguishing features about him, some extravagance in his pretensions, which may always lead to his identification, whether in a Cagliostro, or in a London practitioner who has patented the *elixir vitæ*. Here, for instance, is the true ring of the quack—the mark of Cain upon the brotherhood of lies: —"You shall follow me," said Paracelsus, "you, Avicenna, Galen, Rhasis, Montagnana, Mesues—you, gentlemen of Paris, Montpellier, Germany, Cologne, Vienna, and whomsoever the Rhine and Danube nourish; you who inhabit the isles of the sea; you likewise, Dalmatians, Athenians; thou Greek, thou Jew; all shall follow me, and the monarchy shall be mine!" Here is the inflated soul, the overweening pretensions, and the contempt of the honest part of the profession, by which quacks may always be recognized.

Of course I am not so over-sanguine as to imagine that my little book can make any sensible impression upon the ranks of the impostors; but if it saves one victim from their clutches, and in so far lessens the

sum of human misery, I shall be well content. Perhaps the most certain advice to my readers to preserve them from the clutches of these human harpies, would be—"To be pure in mind and to fear God:" but this strain has been said and sung ever since the world began; and still the crowds of dupes—and of dupes accounted wise in their generation—come up to the slaughter day by day and year by year. There is one consolation for them, however; their very gobemoucherie presupposes *some* innocence, while so much cannot be predicated of the Shams. From falsehood to falsehood they graduate in malignity, until they blossom into full-blown Devils, out of whom every element of human goodness and truth seems to have been carefully extracted. And well they often prosper in their time; but we must consider that they are playing at long bowls, and that the game is not always scored within our visible horizon. But there is a sure ground for our very consolatory belief—although the quack himself may little dream of it, sleeping secure upon his comfortable precipice—that his genius for deception will be a poor refuge for him

when that awful eternal Sunlight shall one day suddenly burst in upon his house—the Sunlight in which nothing that is not true, nothing that is not pure and innocent, may live!

A BOOK ABOUT SHAMS.

CHAPTER I.

A Heyday of Shams.—Louis Blanc on the State of French Society.—Conditions Favourable to the Growth of Quackery.—Political Quacks.—The "Fighting Bourbons."—Louis XV.—His Immoral Court.—Madame Poisson.—The Countess du Barry.—Her Presentation at Court.—Arrival of Marie Antoinette at Compiègne.—Her Reception.

THERE is a certain amount of historical interest attending the lives of Quacks, as well as criminals of all sorts. Some have proved themselves greater adepts at their calling than others; and just as in the annals of criminality we have our Lucrezia Borgias and *causes célèbres*, which from time to time startle

us with their tragic character; so amongst Quacks we find some who have proved more successful than their competitors in the impostures practised upon the credulous of their times. To such an extent does this hold good in the case of some of the more notorious impostors; so frequently have they been found amongst the companions and confidants of princes and nobles; that their names have become intimately associated with the history of the age in which they lived.

Conspicuous among the class referred to are the names of Mesmer and Cagliostro, being the most prominent examples of the order to which they belong. In glancing at the lives of some of the most notorious empirics, we are at once struck with the great similarity of character which runs through them all. They appear to possess a mental organization peculiarly fitting them for their occupation. Truly may it be said that quacks, like poets, "must be to the manner born." You cannot teach a quack his business; he must adopt it from the native impulse of his mind. Just in proportion as his knowledge of human nature is equal to his necessarily low cunning, so will his success be. Mankind seem to possess an instinctive love for the marvellous, and a superstitious feeling of curiosity, as almost a part of

their existence. Upon this feeling it is the business of the quack to work; so that it is hardly surprising that even men of strong intellect and sense sometimes find it difficult to steer clear of impostors, whether medical or political, or clothed in the mask of religious hypocrisy: so clever are these impostors to find out the weak points in our poor human nature.

The interval between the years 1740 and 1795 will always be regarded in history as the period when imposture and impostors of all kinds reigned most triumphantly throughout Europe. Looking back upon the past, it seems to us almost impossible to realize the universality with which quacks and quackery ruled the world, before the outbreak of that great event, which, as it were, removed the film from men's eyes and taught them to begin to think. The event to which we refer is the American War of Independence. Since that struggle took place, which resulted in the practical carrying out of a new system of government, a gradual change has been going on. To this general change quack doctors, like cheats of every other description, have found it necessary to adapt themselves, so as to rise equal to the modern conditions of society on which they prey. This is to be observed in

the marked difference between Quacks of the 18th and 19th centuries; although the question as to whether quackery has improved with the progressive improvement of the world, may be one not easy to decide.

Although in many respects an improvement has taken place, we may venture to assert that quackery has not yet arrived at that stage of development when the evil has altogether ceased to exist. A general crusade against empirics has been initiated, and it is sincerely to be hoped that it may not be without effect. Into the pit which they love to dig for their fellow-men, they might be most fittingly consigned themselves. In England the State has furnished powers amply sufficient to grapple with the evil, which it only requires a strong will and concerted action to uproot entirely.

Louis Blanc, in speaking of the condition of society in Paris previous to the advent of Mesmer and Cagliostro, attributes their marvellous success to the state of public feeling at the time: perhaps by way of apology for the extremes of absurdity into which his countrymen were betrayed. It is certain, however, that these impostors appeared just before the outbreak of the great Revolution, marked as it was by such hideous orgies of satanic cruelty and murder. To render our subject more in-

telligible, it will be necessary to take a cursory glance at the condition of France at that particular crisis—when she was not only about to dethrone her legitimate king and to establish a Republic—itself after a few years destined to end in anarchy—but to take another and more fatal step: the dethronement of Religion and the substitution of Reason in its stead. Old beliefs had become unsettled, and men who professed to believe nothing, were ready, in reality, to believe anything, however absurd. In reference to this subject a recent writer remarks: "There is a lingering touch of superstition in all men; from reverence for the unknown, from the occult and omnipresent wonders of nature—probably no man living is exempt. It is well that it is so. Environed on all hands by marvels which finite apprehension fails to grasp, subject to ever-recurring doubts which man cannot answer, and with mysteries which merely succumb to time, and perseverance, and labour, how could it well be otherwise? The forces that surround us are many of them unseen. Electricity, galvanism, the divisible properties and influences of light, are invisible. This would excuse, did it not even explain, man's credulity. He sees these forces only in their results. In spite of some of his senses, he is coerced to accept the existence of these powers. Upon these

elements of curiosity and credulity in man, the charlatan works. Environed by terrors,—grounded by philosophy, no less than by faith, in the eternity of spirits as in the indissolubility of matter—man looks backward and forward with an ardour stimulated by anticipation, strengthened by hope. He sighs for a happier lot than that which this probationary world affords. He is thus ever open to cherish hopes of snatching a fearful glance at futurity—to peep through the blanket of the dark. From the remotest time man has attempted to bridge the unknown gulf, and, in anticipation, leap the world to come. He has been thus ever disposed to listen to any seer, to follow any leader who would profess to guide him in the perilous journey. From such a species of faith, no age, country, or class, has been wholly exempt."

Political Quacks played such an important part in the world's history at and before the epoch of the great French Revolution—especially in connection with the unfortunate Marie Antoinette,—and many of the acts of mis-government terminating with the violent deaths of Louis XVI. and his Queen, were so clearly due to his predecessor Louis XV., that, even at the risk of wearying the reader, we shall venture to refer at some

length to the history of the latter part of the reign of this last-named monarch. Our desire is to show, not only, as M. Louis Blanc has stated, that the marvellous success of Quacks, during the concluding half of the eighteenth century, was due to the condition of national feeling at the time; but still further to prove that the scepticism and credulity of the age was of gradual growth, and not the result of a sudden vagary of popular feeling. The theory of the divine right of kings, which had been maintained by the Bourbons for centuries, had already ceased to command popular respect; and the system which it inculcated had come to be regarded as a sham and a mere scheme of political imposture. Scepticism in this direction, as well as in the dogmas and excessive formularies of an intolerant priesthood, disposed the people "to listen to any quack, and to follow any leader who professed to guide them in seeking their political and religious liberty."

The Bourbons, who had occupied the throne of France for so many years, had furnished a long line of *fighting kings*, the last of the race for all practical purposes being Louis XV. His successor, Louis XVI., presented none of the characteristics of the house from which he came; he was no fighter, and so fond of mechanics that he

would have made an excellent locksmith; but he was certainly a very indifferent king. In the early part of his reign, Louis XV. appears to have displayed all the fire, courage, and *bon esprit* of his ancestors. President Hénault, speaking of this period of his life, says: "This Prince, in the year 1744, while hastening from one end of his kingdom to the other, and suspending his conquests in Flanders that he might fly to the assistance of Alsace, was arrested at Metz by a malady which threatened to cut short his days. At the news of this, Paris, all in terror, seemed a city taken by storm: the churches resounded with supplications and groans; the prayers of priests and people were every moment interrupted by their sobs; and it was from an interest so dear and tender that he acquired the surname of 'Louis the Well-beloved.'" We shall be chiefly interested in noting some of the acts of this king during the thirty-one years which intervened between the period of his illness at Metz and the fatal attack of small-pox which terminated his life at Versailles, on the 9th of May, 1774. The two periods present such opposite pictures, that we at last fail altogether to recognize any trace of that character which acquired for him the people's title of the "Well-beloved."

In the latter part of his life, the King appears to have given himself up to the gratification of every personal and sensual enjoyment. He became indifferent to the wants of his people, or the happiness and well-being of those over whom he was set to rule. His court was the most licentious and immoral of any in Europe. He chose as his favourite Madame Poisson, the daughter of a butcher, whom he created Marchioness de Pompadour in 1745. She appears to have acquired complete ascendancy over her royal master, and is supposed to have had considerable influence in State affairs. This influence she used with great judgment and wisdom; so much so, that her death, which took place in 1764, was a matter of considerable regret to the nation at large. The next person on whom the King's affection alighted was Marie Jeanne Barry, a milliner in Paris—a woman of remarkable beauty, who, having passed through various stages of vice, was ultimately introduced to the King by his valet-de-chambre. To enable her to be presented at court she was ennobled, by having conferred upon her the title of the Countess du Barry. She was ignorant, intriguing, and extravagant, though not ungrateful or ungenerous. During the reign of her royal patron she was all-powerful. Her presence at court was exceedingly repugnant to the old nobility,

especially the Duc de Choiseul, who, with the Duchess de Grammout and the Royal Princesses, was most anxious to hasten the arrival of the Dauphiness, Marie Antoinette, at Versailles, in order to prevent the presentation at court of Madame du Barry. It was thought the King would never allow his mistress to be presented to the bride of his grandson, the heir-apparent to the throne of France. Madame du Barry on this occasion displayed the full force of her character. To her the presentation, in due form, by one of patrician birth, was of the utmost importance. Every cunning artifice which herself, her brother and sister, could devise, was had recourse to, to counteract the machinations of those who may be regarded as being her natural enemies. The Countess succeeded in getting presented at Versailles the day before the arrival of the Dauphiness: on which occasion all the ladies of the court, to mark their sense of displeasure at the proceeding, absented themselves from the levee, on the plea of sudden and alarming indisposition. The ceremony having been concluded, the King, in a loud distinct voice, spoke as follows: "Ladies, her Royal Highness the Dauphiness will be at Compiègne to-morrow; we shall meet her precisely at noon. All the ladies who have been presented will go, except, however, those who are ill; for the journey might be

fatiguing; and her Royal Highness would be sorry to aggravate their indisposition." The sarcastic allusion to the indisposition of the ladies was intended to mark the royal displeasure at the absence of those who had found it convenient to adopt the plea of sickness on the occasion of the presentation of the Countess du Barry.

Let us now imagine the Royal Party journeying to Compiègne, to witness the arrival of Marie Antoinette. Travelling in her suite were Prince Louis de Rohan, Bishop of Strasbourg, and Count Cagliostro. In the course of our narration these two individuals will be found linked together in the closest and most intimate friendship, and housed and fed at the government expense in the Bastille; whither the villany of the one, and the gross credulity of the other, had conducted them. But reverting to the doings at Compiègne, we behold one of the most dazzling pictures in French history. Triumphal arches of flowers and evergreens, with congratulatory inscriptions in Latin, French, and German, everywhere marked the line of progress the *cortège* was intended to take. Dumas says: "The Dauphin had arrived *incognito*, with his two brothers, about eleven o'clock the night before. Very early in the morning he mounted his horse, as if he had been a

private gentleman; and followed by his brothers, the Count de Provence and the Count d'Artois—the one fifteen and the other thirteen years of age—he galloped off in the direction of Ribecourt, the road by which the Princess was to approach. Mounted on swift horses, the three brothers accomplished three or four leagues in half-an-hour. The eldest had set out serious, the two others laughing. At half-past eight they returned, the Count de Provence almost ill-tempered, the Count d'Artois more gay than before. The Dauphin was uneasy, the Count de Provence envious, and the Count d'Artois enchanted, about one and the same thing—the beauty of the Dauphiness. The grave, jealous, and careless character of each prince respectively was written on his face. At ten o'clock the look-out employed to watch for the expected train, announced that a white flag was displayed on the steeple of the Church of Claives, which was to be the signal that the Dauphiness was approaching. The bells of the church commenced to ring, and were answered by the firing of cannon.

At that instant, as if he had only waited for this signal, the King entered Compiègne in a carriage drawn by eight horses, between a double file of his body-guards,

Return of the three Princes.

and followed by the immense train of court carriages. The guards and dragoons at a gallop opened a passage through the crowd; which was divided between two feelings—desire to see the King and curiosity with regard to the Dauphiness. One hundred carriages, drawn by four horses, extending nearly a league in length, contained four hundred ladies, and as many lords of the noblest families of France. These hundred carriages were escorted by out-riders, heyducks, footmen, and pages. The gentlemen of the King's household were on horseback, and formed a brilliant army, glittering like a sea of velvet and gold, waving plumes and silk, in the midst of the dust raised by the horses' feet. They halted an instant at Compiègne, then slowly proceeded to the spot agreed on for the meeting, and marked by a cross, near the village of Magny. All the young nobility thronged around the Dauphin, and all the old around the King. On the other side, the Dauphiness was also slowly approaching the appointed place. At length the two parties met. On both sides the courtiers left their carriages; two only remained occupied—that of the King and that of the Dauphiness.

The door of the Dauphiness's carriage was opened, and the young Archduchess sprang lightly to the

ground, and advanced to the royal carriage, The King, on perceiving his daughter-in-law, ordered the door to be opened, and hurriedly got out.

The Dauphiness had calculated her time so well, that just as the King put his foot to the ground she was close to him, and sank on her knee. "He raised the young Princess and embraced her tenderly, yet casting a look upon her which made her blush."

Let us now glance at some of the events to which this tawdry and pretentions scene—a conspicuous sham in itself—forms a fitting prelude.

CHAPTER II.

Shams in the Suite of Marie Antoinette.—Her Marriage.—Maria Theresa.—Ill-omened Festivities.—A King "Going to the Dogs."—Sad Condition of France.—A Strange Dialogue.—Political Societies.—The Order of Egyptian Masons.—The Grand Copt and his Sentiments.—Political Knavery at Home.

THE circumstances attending the introduction of an amiable Princess to her adopted home and family certainly seem to have little direct connection with our subject; but in her suite, as we have said, were to be found two of the greatest impostors the world has ever known. It was, moreover, essentially an age of Shams; everything from the Throne downwards wearing a false and hollow character. Quack rulers, priests, doctors, politicians, swarmed when Marie Antoinette made her entrance into France; and no book about Shams could properly leave unnoticed the circumstances of the time.

Marie Antoinette was attended, as before mentioned, by the Cardinal de Rohan, whose name afterwards became so intimately associated with her unfortunate history; Count Cagliostro was also there, travelling in the disguise of an officer in the service of the King of Prussia, closely observing events, and gaining a knowledge which, at a later date, we shall find him making use of to influence the unholy passion which the Cardinal had already begun to indulge towards his Royal mistress. A reputed saint, De Rohan, had fully surrendered himself to no saintly spirit, to whom we shall find him as we proceed ready to yield willing obedience.

The Dauphiness having been introduced to her future husband and the rest of the Royal Family, the party returned to Compiègne. On the following day they repaired to Versailles, and, amidst the splendour of court liveries, pontifical ceremonial, and the brilliancy of the most extravagant and servile court in the world, the nuptial knot was tied, to the rejoicing of all France. The King wearied by the ceremony, and especially by the State dinner which followed, dismissed the company, and retired to his apartment at nine o'clock, thankful, no doubt, that as far as he was

concerned, the day had come and gone, which was to witness the decline of one court, and the rising into anticipated brilliancy of its successor. The Dauphin and his bride on retiring to their apartments, proceeded to present themselves before the multitude, which thronged the court-yard and terraces of Versailles to witness the grand display of fireworks in honour of the occasion—for no *fête* was then, as now, considered by the Parisians as complete without a display of fireworks. Previous to the commencement of the fireworks, Marie Antoinette stole away to address a line to her mother. In such an act of filial devotion there appears nothing very remarkable, although many have pointed to it as evidence of superlative affection. Doubtless every young lady, under similar circumstances, would be anxious to do the same. In this respect Marie Antoinette simply followed the dictates of a daughter's affection, for a mother such as few women have ever had: for Maria Theresa was a woman of whom her people had just cause to be proud as the "mother of her country." It was this woman who, deserted by all her friends, when it was sought to wrest from her the kingdom of Hungary and Bohemia, bore in her arms the lovely child, now Dauphiness of France, and throwing herself upon her Hungarian subjects addressed them in the following words:—"Abandoned

by my friends, persecuted by my enemies, attacked by my nearest relations, I have no other resource than in your fidelity, in your courage and constancy. I commit to your hands the child of your kings." Such a spectacle was calculated to rouse the fire of the noble Hungarians. They drew their swords and exclaimed with one voice, "We will die for our King, Maria Theresa." So it was not likely that that child could have forgotten her mother on her bridal day, when she became the wife of him who would one day sit upon the throne of Charlemagne.

France had, on the other hand, especial reason to rejoice, that a Princess so young, so beautiful, had come as it were to purify the atmosphere which necessarily surrounded a court where Madame du Barry reigned supreme. As she stood by the side of the Duc de Brissac to witness the display of fireworks, and heard the congratulations of the multitude, she might well exclaim—What a crowd! What a number! and almost believe the old courtier when he replied, "All these, Mademoiselle, are your lovers."

"The evening," says Dumas, "at first lovely and serene, by degrees became overcast, and gusts of wind, gradually increasing in violence, tossed the branches

wildly to and fro, as if they had been shaken by some giant arm; while immense masses of cloud hurried across the heavens, like squadrons rushing to the charge. The illuminations were suddenly extinguished, and, as if fate had determined to change the general rejoicings into gloom, no sooner had the first rockets been discharged, than the rain descended in torrents as if the heavens had opened, and a loud and startling peal of thunder announced a terrible convulsion of the elements.

"Meanwhile the people of Versailles and Paris fled like a flock of frightened birds, scattered over the gardens, in the roads, in the woods, pursued in all directions by thick hail, which beat down the flowers in the gardens, the foliage in the forest, the wheat and the barley in the fields. By morning, however, all this elemental chaos was reduced to order; but the first rays of light, darting from between copper-coloured clouds, displayed to view the ravages of the nocturnal hurricane. Versailles was no longer to be recognized. The ground had imbibed that deluge of water, the trees had absorbed that deluge of fire; everywhere were seas of muddy water, and trees broken, twisted, calcined by that serpent with burning gripe called lightning. As soon as it was light Louis XV., whose terror was so great

that he could not sleep, ordered his valet Lebel, who had never left him during the night, to dress him. He then proceeded to the bridal chamber, and, pushing open the door, shuddered on perceiving the future Queen of France reclining on a prie-dieu, pale, and with eyes swollen and violet-coloured like those of the sublime Magdalen of Rubens. Her terror, caused by the hurricane, had at length been suspended by sleep, and the first dawn of morning which stole into the apartment, tinged in religious reverence her long white robe with an azure hue. At the further end of the chamber, in an arm-chair pushed back to the wall, and surrounded by a pool of water which had forced its way through the shattered windows, sat the Dauphin of France, pale as his young bride, and like her, having the perspiration of nightmare on his brow. The nuptial bed was in precisely the same state as on the preceding evening.

"Louis XV. knit his brow; a pain keener than any he had yet felt, darted through that brow like a red hot iron. He shook his head, heaved a deep sigh, and returned to his apartments, more gloomy and more affrighted, perhaps, at that moment, than he had been during the night."

Two days after that terrible night the Dauphiness went to dine with the King at the Tuileries. Paris was illuminated, and the accustomed fireworks about to be displayed. The beginning seemed to promise well for the end. The crowd filled the Place Louis XV., which was capable of accommodating six hundred thousand persons. Whilst all eyes were eagerly watching the spectacle, a rocket was observed to take a wrong direction, and immediately the whole stage, on which the fireworks were erected, became enveloped in flames. The rush and confusion which followed defied all description. Twelve hundred persons were left dead upon the ground, besides numbers who threw themselves into the Seine and perished. What a sickening thought for the young bride! She sent all the money she possessed to the Lieutenant of the Police, for the relief of the distressed, and together with her husband and all France, sorrowed over the loss of life, which converted what was intended as a national rejoicing into a national mourning. Soon after this the Dauphiness became tired and wearied of the pomp and ceremony of State, and, by the King's permission, retired to Trianon, the miniature Versailles; where we will leave her until she re-enters Paris as the Queen of Louis XVI.

After the marriage of the Dauphin in 1740, the King devoted himself more completely than ever to the pleasures of the chase, the table, and the society of the Countess du Barry, who appears at this time to have acquired a complete ascendancy over him. He hated business, and seemed at this period to have but one fixed idea with regard to affairs of State; which was, as the Americans would phrase it, that "the machine would run his time." Meanwhile a school of philosophers and pamphleteers, represented by Rousseau, Voltaire, Marat, Mirabeau, and others, had grown into importance—their pens always busy, bringing to the surface ever-recurring instances of favouritism, peculation, and imbecility—holding up to public gaze the wrongs, the oppressions and hardships of the poor, and thus attracting to themselves, by slow degrees, the great mass of the people. But the Bourbons, as well as the old nobility of France, were essentially a fighting race; and being incapable of appreciating any other career, were consequently deaf to the philosophers. "Remark," says Carlyle, "how from amid the wrecks and dust of this universal decay new powers are fashioning themselves, adapted to the new time and its destinies.

"Besides the old noblesse, originally of fighters,

there is a recognized noblesse of Lawyers, whose gala-day and proud battle-day even now is; an unrecognized noblesse of Commerce, powerful enough, with money in its pocket; lastly, powerfullest of all, least recognized of all, a noblesse of Literature: without steel on their thigh, without gold in their purse, but with the grand thaumaturgic faculty of thought in their head. French Philosophism has arisen; in which little word how much do we include. There, indeed, lies properly the cardinal symptom of the whole wide-spread malady. Faith is gone out; Scepticism is come in. Evil abounds and accumulates; no man has faith to withstand it, to amend it, to begin by amending himself; it must even go on accumulating. While hollow languor and vacuity is the lot of the upper, and want and stagnation of the lower classes, universal misery is certain enough: what other thing is certain?

"That a lie cannot be believed? Philosophism knows only this: her other belief is mainly that, in spiritual, super-sensual matters, no belief is possible. Unhappy! Nay, as yet the contradiction of a lie is some kind of belief; but the lie with its contradiction once swept away, what will remain?

"In such a France, as in a powder-tower, where fire

unquenched and now unquenchable is smoking and smouldering all round, has Louis XV. lain down to die. With Pompadourism and Dubarryism, his fleur-de-lis has been shamefully struck down in all lands and on all seas; poverty invades even the royal exchequer, and tax-farming can squeeze out no more; there is a quarrel of twenty-five years' standing with the Parliament; everywhere want, dishonesty, unbelief, and hot-brained sciolists for state-physicians; it is a portentous hour. Such things can the eye of history see in the sick-room of King Louis, which were invisible to the courtiers there. It is twenty years gone Christmas-day, since Lord Chesterfield, summing up what he had noted of this same France, wrote, and sent off by post on December 25th, 1753, the following words, that have become memorable: 'In short, all the symptoms which I have ever met with in history, previous to great changes and revolutions in government, now exist and daily increase in France!'"

Whilst this decadence of royalty was gradually but surely undermining the authority and power of the Bourbon race, the people were subscribing for a statue for Voltaire. The name of Rousseau charmed the poor and middle-class—the latter then dawning as it were

into existence—whilst it struck terror into those who should have proved themselves the shepherds of the people. It was for Louis XVI. a misfortune that he was born in such an age: for if the monarchy had but a short time to live in France, he of all men was the most likely to hurry on the work of its destruction. The King's aversion to business is exemplified by the following dialogue with his Minister of Police, as reported by M. Dumas:—

"Sire," said the Minister, "may I beg your Majesty to allow me a few moments on business of the utmost importance?"

"Oh, I have very little time now, M. de Sartines," said the King, beginning to yawn.

"Only two words, your Majesty."

"About what?"

"About those people with the second sight—those illuminati—those workers of miracles."

"Pooh! Jugglers. Give them permission to exercise their trade, and there will be nothing to fear from them."

"The matter is more serious than your Majesty sup-

poses. Every day we have new Masonic lodges formed:—they are now a powerful sect, attracting to them all the enemies of monarchy—the philosophers, the encyclopædists. Voltaire is to be received by them in great state."

"He? he is dying."

"He, Sire? Oh, no; he is not such a fool."

"He has confessed——"

"Merely a trick."

"——In the habit of a Capuchin."

"That was an impiety, Sire. But with regard to these Freemasons, they are always active: they write, they talk, they form associations, correspond with foreign countries—they intrigue, they threaten—even now they are full of expectation of a great chief or head of the whole body, as I have learned from some words which escaped from one of their number."

"Well, Sartines, when this chief comes, catch him and put him in the Bastille,—and the whole affair is settled."

"Sire, these persons have great resources."

"Have they greater than you, sir, who have the whole police of a large kingdom?"

"Your Majesty was induced to expel the Jesuits—it was the philosophers whom you should have expelled."

"Come, come!—No more about those poor quill-drivers!"

"Sire, those quills are dangerous which are cut by the penknife of Damiens." Louis XV. turned pale. "These philosophers, Sire, whom you despise——"

"Well, sir?"

"Will destroy the monarchy, Sire."

"How long will they take to do that?" Sartines stared at this coolness.

"How can I tell, Sire? Perhaps fifteen, twenty, or thirty years."

"Well, my dear friend, in fifteen or twenty years I shall be no more; so talk of all these things to my successor."

The anxiety expressed concerning the effect of the

Political Societies, which were springing into existence in all parts of the kingdom, was but too well founded. Availing himself of the existing state of things in France at this time, we find Cagliostro forsaking the trade of empiric to become politician, plotting and intriguing against the King, and using all his craft to overthrow the State and help on the Revolution. No doubt he vainly hoped to make his account out of the general confusion that was sure to follow. At this time, as Head, or Grand Copt, of the Order of Egyptian Masons, the arch-impostor wielded great political influence. These Egyptian Masons were a sham society, having nothing in common with our Freemasons, but pretending to have for their object the regeneration of mankind. By means of Mesmerism, Alchemy, the Elixir of Life, and other baits, Cagliostro was enabled to lead the society at his will. The following unique conversation, reported as having taken place at a Lodge of the Order in Paris, will give an idea of the influence of the Grand Copt, and the style of opinions which were considered "fine" during that heyday of Shams:—

"You understand," said Cagliostro, "it is not to go through some Masonic ceremonies that I have come from the East. I have come to say to you, brethren:

Take the wings and the eyes of the eagle! Rise above the world, and cast your eyes over its kingdoms! Nations form but one vast body. Men, though born at different periods, in different ranks, arrive all in turn at that goal, to reach which they were created. They are continually advancing, though seemingly stationary; and if they appear to retreat a step from time to time, it is but to collect strength for a bound which shall carry them over some obstacle in their way. France is the advance-guard of nations. Put a torch in her hand, and though it kindle a wide-spreading flame, it will be salutary, for it will enlighten the world.

"An old king, weak, vicious, yet not so old, not so weak, not so vicious as the monarchy which he represents, sits on the throne of France. He has but few years to live. Events must be prepared to succeed his death. France is the keystone of the arch; let but this stone be unfixed, and the monarchical edifice will fall! Ay, the day that Europe's most arrogant sovereigns shall hear that there is no longer a king in France, bewildered, they will of themselves rush into the abyss left by the destruction of the throne of Saint Louis!"

A Swiss now spoke somewhat in the following

strain: "On our mountains, in our valleys, by our lakes,—our words are free as the winds and the waters. Let me say, then, that a great event is on the eve of arriving, and that to it the French monarchy may owe its regeneration. I have seen, great Master, a daughter of Maria Theresa travelling in state towards France, to unite the blood of seventeen Emperors with that of the successor of the sixty-one Kings of France, and the people rejoiced blindly, as they do when their chains are slackened or when they bow beneath a gilded yoke. I would infer, then, that the crisis is not yet come. My studies have convinced me of one truth—that the physiognomy of men reveals, to the eye which knows how to read it, their virtue and their vices. We may see a composed look or a smile: for these, caused by muscular movements, are in their power: but the great type of character is still imprinted legibly on the countenance, declaring what passes in the heart. The tiger can caress, can give a kindly look, but his low forehead, his projecting face, his great occiput, declare him tiger still. The dog growls, shows his teeth, but his honest eye, his intelligent face, declare him still to be the friend of man. God has imprinted on each creature's face its name and nature. I have seen the young girl who is to reign in France: on her forehead I read the

pride, the courage, the tenderness of the German maiden. I have seen the young man who is to be her husband: calmness, Christian meekness, and a high regard for the rights of others, characterize him. Now France, remembering no wrongs and forgetting no benefits, since a Charlemagne, a Louis, and a Henry have been sufficient to preserve on the throne twenty base and cruel kings—France who hopes on, despairs never—will she not adore a young, lovely, kindly queen—a patient, gentle, economical king? And this, too, after the disastrous reign of Louis XV., after his hateful orgies, his mean revenges, his Pompadours and Dubarrys? Will not France bless her youthful sovereigns, who will bring to her as her dowry, peace with Europe? Marie Antoinette now crosses the frontier; the altar and the nuptial bed are prepared at Versailles. Is this the time to begin in France your work of regeneration? Pardon if I have dared to submit these thoughts to you, whose wisdom is infallible!"

"If you read physiognomy, illustrious brethren," said Cagliostro, "I read the future. Marie Antoinette is proud; she will interfere in the coming struggle, and will perish in it. Louis Augustus is mild; he will

yield to it, and will perish with her; but each will fall through opposite defects of character. Now they esteem each other, but short will be their love; in a year they will feel mutual contempt. Why then deliberate, brethren, to discover whence comes the light? It is revealed to me. I come from the East, led, like the shepherds, by a star, which foretells a second regeneration of mankind. To-morrow I begin my work. Give me twenty years for it—that will be enough, if we are united and firm."

"Twenty years!" murmured several voices. "The time is long."

The Grand Copt turning to those who thus betrayed impatience, "Yes," said he, "it is long to those who think that a principle is destroyed as a man is killed with the dagger of Jacques Clement, or the knife of Damiens. Fools! the knife kills the man, but, like the pruning-hook, it lops a branch that the other branches may take its place. Instead of the murdered king rises up a Louis XIII., a stupid tyrant; a Louis XIV., a cunning despot; a Louis XV., an idol whose path is wet with tears of blood, like the

monstrous deities of India, crushing with changeless mien women and children, who cast garlands before their chariot-wheels. And you think twenty years too long to efface the name of king from the hearts of thirty millions of men, who but lately offered to God their children's lives to purchase that of Louis XV.! And you think it an easy task to make France hate her lilies, which, bright as the stars of heaven, grateful as the odours of flowers, have borne light, charity, victory —to the ends of the world! Try, try, brethren! I give you not twenty years—I give you a century. You scattered, trembling, unknown each to the other, known only to me, who only can sum up your divided worth, and tell its value—to me who alone can unite you in one fraternal chain—I tell you, philosophers, political economists, theorists, that in twenty years those thoughts which you whisper in your families, which you write with uneasy eye in the solitude of your old sombre towers, which you tell one another with the dagger in your hands, that you may strike the traitor who would repeat them in tones louder than your own—I tell you, that these thoughts shall be proclaimed aloud in the streets, printed in the open face of day, spread through Europe by peaceful emissaries, or by the bayonets of five hundred thousand soldiers, battling for

liberty, with your principles inscribed on their standards. You who tremble at the name of the Tower of London; you who shrink at that of the prisons of the Inquisition, hear me—me, who am about to dare the Bastille! I tell you, that we shall see those dreaded prisons in ruins, and your wives and children shall dance on their ashes. But that cannot be until, not the monarch, but the monarchy, is dead—until religious domination is despised—until social inferiority is extinguished—until aristocratic castes and unjust division of lands are no more. I ask twenty years to destroy an old world, and make a new one—twenty years!—twenty seconds of eternity!—and you say it is too long?"

How very similar to this are the harangues uttered in the present day by the "followers of reason" and the advocates of universal equality, as though such a thing were possible. True, the people have at all times a right to a voice in the election of their rulers; but these should not be "rulers of darkness," plotting and conspiring in secret to overturn order and destroy the institutions of a country. Politically, the will of the people should be regarded as supreme, but only when it is free from the leading-strings of such politicians as Robespierre, Cagliostro et hoc genus omne; men

who only seek the destruction of existing institutions in order to exalt themselves.

It must not be supposed that because we read of these things as occurring in another country and in a by-gone century, that there are not men still in existence ready at any moment, if they had the power, to re-enact the horrors of the French Revolution. We have, perhaps, just now to deal with as much political quackery as at any period of our history, and with a host of pretenders who are seeking to make capital out of the theories of political philosophers. As a rule, men who form their opinions from books, and elaborate them in the study, are not seldom dangerous—and the more honest in the expression of their theories, the more dangerous—as furnishing political knaves with instruments which they can wield to their own purposes. It was the philosophers and so-called followers of Reason that put ideas into the minds of the quack politicians who sought to rule and govern France, so long mis-ruled and misgoverned by an incompetent monarchy. Of course there must be a head of every State, and the successful government of that head will greatly depend upon the wisdom of its councillors; who, recognizing the necessity of a national voice, should endeavour to educate the

people, so that they may learn at least the two great principles of duty to God and man. The French people, blindly led by the impostors of the day, denied any duty to God, and only saw in their fellow-man the tyrant and oppressor of their race.

CHAPTER III.

Louis XV. at Metz, and at Versailles Thirty Years later.—His Dread of Death.—His End.—Remarks of Carlyle, of Rousseau.—Signal of the New Reign.—The Funeral.—Ill-starred Policy.

AT Metz, in 1744, when priests and people joined in one general supplication for his recovery, Louis XV. appeared before the world as the benefactor of his race and regenerator of his country. After a subsequent thirty years of misrule and abject indolence, he was taken from Little Trianon, his rustic home, to his château at Versailles, again to occupy another sick-bed; from which he was only removed to St. Denis, with no sound of mourning in the churches, or in the streets of Paris. The news of the King's illness had

been announced by official bulletins, but the people remained stoically indifferent. The only active mourners were Madame du Barry, and those who by her favour sat aloft in the sunshine of royalty. The Duc d'Aiguillon, the great-nephew of Richelieu—who, spite of his peculation in Brittany, was, through the influence of Madame du Barry and against the remonstrance of Parliament, appointed Commander of the King's Light Cavalry—stood trembling and ready to fly to Gascony, should the King's malady prove fatal. We must, therefore, place him amongst the mourners at Versailles. Near them was the stout-hearted Duc de Choiseul, the only man of mark, who until recently had stood so high in the King's confidence. He had been dismissed, but not disgraced—his place in the Council of the State being occupied by the Chancellor, respecting whom the King had said, "My Chancellor is a scoundrel, but I cannot do without him."

The King's malady daily assumed a more dangerous character. The doctors began to look grave: ominous whisperings were heard through the court; and at last the bulletins announced that the royal patient was suffering from a severe attack of confluent small-pox. His Majesty always entertained a great dread of death, with

just so much of religion in his character as to fear, without hope. As the end appeared to be drawing nearer, the King became importunate for the ministration of the rites and consolations of the Church. Here a new difficulty presented itself. No priest could be found to receive his confession and grant absolution to the King. He was hurrying on to death without a parting benediction, and with him the long line of kings who had stood the wear and tear of so many centuries. At last on the evening of the 4th May, 1774, the King dismissed Madame du Barry * and sent for his confessor, Abbé Moudon; to whom, in the course of that night, he made confession; and by six o'clock on the following morning the Cardinal Grand-Almoner of France stood by the

* Madame du Barry, after the King's death, was shut up in a Convent near Meaux. She was, however, subsequently released by Louis XVI. and allowed a pension, together with the use of the château at Luciennes, which Louis XV. had built for her. She made several vain attempts to obtain a recognition by the court, longing for the life of pleasure and frivolity she had left for ever. It is even hinted that she would have accepted a humble position in the service of Marie Antoinette, had such been possible to attain. The woman once so powerful passed away into retirement so profound that when the Revolution broke out, she was all but forgotten.

royal pillow. The Host was elevated, and the Cardinal administered the last sacrament of the Church to the dying King. This being concluded, the prelate turned round and declared to the bystanders, that his Majesty repented of any causes of scandal he might have given; and purposed, with the strength of heaven assisting him, to avoid the like for the future.

The King had no further opportunity vouchsafed to him of convincing the world of the sincerity of the repentance to which the Cardinal had referred. All that remained of Louis, the once well-beloved, but now the hated and despised, was a lifeless form of clay. Of him who had just departed Carlyle writes as follows:—"Louis would not suffer death to be spoken of; avoided the sight of churchyards, funeral monuments, and whatsoever could bring it to mind. It is the resource of the ostrich, who, hard hunted, sticks his foolish head in the ground, and would fain forget that his foolish, unseeing body is not unseen too. Or sometimes, with a spasmodic antagonism, significant of the same thing, the King would go—or stopping his court carriages, would send into churchyards and ask, 'How many new graves there were to-day,' though it gave his poor Pompadour the disagreeablest qualms when he did

so. We can figure the thought of Louis, that day, when, all royally caparisoned for hunting, he met, at some sudden turning in the wood of Senart, a ragged peasant with a coffin:

"'For whom?' inquired the King. It was for a poor brother slave, whom Majesty had sometimes noticed slaving in those quarters. 'What did he die of?' 'Of hunger,' was the brief reply; on hearing which the King gave his steed the spur and hurried off.

"Figure this same King's thoughts when death is clutching at his own heart-strings; unlooked for, inexorable! Yes, poor Louis, death has found thee. No palace walls or life-guards, gorgeous tapestries, or gilt buckram of stiffest ceremonial, could keep him out; but he is here, here at thy very life-breath, and will extinguish it. Thou, whose whole existence hitherto was a chimera and scenic show, at length becomest a reality: sumptuous Versailles bursts asunder, like a dream, into void immensity. Time is done, and all the scaffolding of time falls wrecked with hideous clangour round thy soul: the pale kingdoms yawn open; there must thou enter, naked, all unking'd, and await what

is appointed thee! Unhappy man, there as thou turnest, in dull agony, on thy bed of weariness, what a thought is thine. Purgatory and hell-fire, now all too possible, in the prospect: in the retrospect,—alas, what thing didst thou do that were not better undone; what mortal didst thou generously help; what sorrow hadst thou mercy on? Do the five hundred thousand ghosts, who sank shamefully on so many battle-fields from Rossbach to Quebec, that thy harlot might take revenge for an epigram, crowd round thee in this hour? Thy foul harem; the curses of mothers, the tears and infamy of daughters? Miserable man! Thou hadst done evil as thou couldst! Thy whole existence seems one hideous abortion and mistake of nature; the use and meaning of thee not yet known. Wert thou a fabulous Griffin, devouring the works of men; daily dragging virgins to thy cave; clad also in scales that no spear would pierce: no spear but death's? A Griffin not fabulous but real! Frightful, O Louis, seem these moments for thee. We will pry no further into the horrors of a sinner's death-bed."

The last rites of the Church having been administered to the King, the door of his chamber was shut against

all the royal family, under pretext of contagion: no one was allowed to enter there, but religion—and death.

The night having set in, all the citizens returned to Paris, patiently to await the coming dawn. Messieurs Rousseau and Marat sat upon a stone bench opposite the Palace at Versailles, looking stedfastly up to one of the windows, in which was burning a wax-candle in a little lantern—discoursing about the near approach of the King's death and the probable result of such an event to the nation at large. Rousseau is speaking, and says:

"The death of a man is always a misfortune for some one, and the death of a king is frequently a great misfortune for all. Mark well this night, young man. Behold what clouds and tempests it bears on its murky bosom. The morning which will succeed it I shall witness no doubt, for I am not old enough to abandon hope of seeing the morrow; but a reign will commence on that morrow which you will see to its close, and which contains mysteries I cannot hope to be a spectator of. It is not, therefore, without interest that I watch yonder trembling flame, which is placed there as a signal to mark the duration of the King's existence;

a signal which Louis XV.'s successor devours with his eyes from behind some neighbouring curtain. This signal, which shall warn the ambitious of the dawn of a new reign, informs a poor philosopher like myself of the instant when the breath of the Almighty sweeps away, at the same moment, an age and a human existence."

"Ah! exclaimed Marat, pointing to the window, which had suddenly become shrouded in darkness, "the light has gone out; the King must be dead."

Suddenly a chariot, drawn by eight fiery horses, started at full gallop from the court-yard of the Palace, where all the grooms and equerries had been, during the night, booted and spurred, waiting for some signal to escape from the house of pestilence. The chariot contained the Dauphin, Marie Antoinette, and Madame Elizabeth, the sister of the late King. The sky was overcast, and the rain literally descended in torrents, mid peals of thunder and flashes of lightning, which must have reminded them of that fearful wedding-night four years ago. In this condition they entered Paris. The whole court rushed to salute the new Sovereigns. "Hail to your Majesties!" "The Dauphin and Dauphiness are King and Queen!" Overpowered with many emotions,

Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette

they fell on their knees together, and with streaming eyes exclaimed: "O God! guide us and protect us: we are too young to reign." A prayer which time, alas! proved to have been but too prophetic.

The funeral obsequies of the late King occupied the first attention of the new one. The formality of court mourning had to be gone through; but they hurried poor Louis underground, in a most impatient way, on the second day after his death—his funeral appearing to have been conducted pretty much in the same fashion as Hood describes the pauper's of his day to have been. Substituting a king for a peasant, the same couplet would not inaptly describe the indecorous haste of the royal funeral :—

> Rattle his bones over the stones,
> He is only a *King* whom nobody owns.

A custom prevailed in France for the people, on the death of a king, to pay a tax to the new monarch. On the accession of Louis XVI. the national finances were in a very exhausted state : commerce was nearly ruined, the navy dismantled, the debt enormous, and a general famine seemed inevitable. Under these com-

bined conditions of distress the first acts of the new King added greatly to his popularity. He declined, on behalf of the Queen and himself, to accept the customary tax, and, in the formation of his cabinet, succeeded in attaching to him men of honest and at the same time liberal principles. The Parliament was recalled, and affairs began to assume a more favourable aspect. Unfortunately a feeling of jealous hostility towards England induced the Government of France to identify themselves with the Americans, and to assist them in throwing off their allegiance to the mother country. The result of this policy was a great misfortune to France, adding the cost and miseries of a prolonged war with a neighbouring Power to those burdens which had already grown intolerable.

The national bankruptcy in France, brought on by the assistance given to the Americans, was no doubt the principal cause of plunging that unhappy country into a revolution still more bloody. The change observed in the court by the removal of Louis XV. and his favourite—the substitution of a young, docile, and well-intentioned king, united to a queen, young, beautiful, and generous, who four years before had received a

people's homage—the substitution of honest Ministers instead of profligate abbés—all gave promise of a golden age, a re-union of parties, and the cementing together, in the bonds of common interest of the three great institutions of the State—the King, Church, and People. The purifying effects of virtue substituted for vice tended greatly to raise the tone and aspirations of the general public. Even the philosophers could find pleasure in returning to the society of Paris, and joined in the congratulatory addresses which poured in from every quarter.

The Queen for a short time moved in majestic splendour, her countenance beaming with joy; and, as though to crown her happiness, she became, after seven years of anxious expectation, the mother of a princess: —to be followed in due course by a son. The birth of another Dauphin gave cause for universal rejoicing. Alas! the son thus cradled in love and splendour, was ere long to find a dungeon for his nursery, a cobbler for his tutor, and a dose of poison for his requiem.

"A year had come and gone," observes Carlyle, "since Louis the XV.'s death: there have been masquerades, private theatricals, balls, and snow-statues raised for

the benefit of the poor during the hard winter. Still the heart of the struggling masses throughout France, during the year 1775, is rapidly giving way under the weight of sorrow and privation which they have been called upon to bear. They continue to struggle on, their hearts cheerless, their diet thin and poor. For them there appears little hope in this world, their faith is fast failing: and untaught, uncomforted, and unfed, they are sinking into despair. The corn-laws have been altered, but there is a great dearth of grain, and everywhere a scarcity of bread."

On the 2nd May, 1775, multitudes made their way to Versailles;—their sallow faces and ragged squalor presenting a petition of their grievances, traced as it were in human blood. The King showed himself on the balcony, and beheld their wretchedness. He spoke softly to them, and they fain had hoped that the prayers and tears of their little ones depicted in their haggard faces were heard and would be answered. Answered indeed they were: for being regarded as a lawless rabble, two of their ringleaders were seized and hanged, and the crowd driven back to their dens and hovels. A handwriting on the wall, this pathetic appeal of a

starving people should have foreshadowed the meaning of coming events, had there been, not a prophet, but a Minister of ordinary foresight, to interpret its meaning. Surely such an assembly was but a representation of millions of people, fashioned in God's image, whose inheritance it was to partake of the fruits of the earth by the sweat of their brow.

Old Marquis Mirabeau looked on the assembled multitude from his lodgings at the Baths of Mont d'Or, and thus soliloquized :—" You know not what it is you are stripping barer, or, as you call it, governing; what, by the spurt of your pen, in its cold dastard indifference, you will fancy you can starve always with impunity; always till the catastrophe come! Such government of blindman's-buff, stumbling along too far, will end in the general overturn."

We have already remarked that the assistance rendered to the Americans during their revolt against England was an important cause in bringing about those financial difficulties in France which resulted in the Great Revolution. Moreover, we read that on August 5th, 1785, a most terrific storm occurred which laid waste 131 entire villages, destroying at once all the

produce of the country through which it passed. This, of course, tended greatly to raise the price of all kinds of food, for which thousands had already been vainly clamouring at Versailles.

We have little doubt our readers will agree with us that all these conditions were exceedingly favourable for the production and growth of Shams; and accordingly we find that they flourished at the time we have described in great numbers, in almost all the departments of human affairs; but we will only take the liberty of presenting to the public one or two full-fledged specimens.

CHAPTER IV.

Dr. Frederick Antony Mesmer.—His Connection with Father Hell.—Mesmer's Visit to Paris and Reception there.—His Reputed Scientific Discovery.—Appointment of a Commission to Investigate it.—The Society of Mesmerists.—Object of Mesmerism.—Some of the Facts of Animal Magnetism.—A Second Commission.—Story of Prince Talleyrand.

AT such a time and in such a France appeared Dr. Frederick Antony Mesmer, who by his pretensions soon placed himself at the head of the Shams of his day. The system he introduced played an important part in subsequent events, especially in connection with that great lie of the eighteenth century, the affair of the Diamond Necklace. All men are free to select the

road on which to travel life's journey, and Mesmer, like so many others, chose that which ended in ruin and disgrace.

He was born in the little Prussian town of Marsberg in the year 1734, and showed himself too much of a quack ever to be regarded as a man of science. He studied medicine at the University of Vienna, where he took the degree of Doctor. He first attracted attention as the author of an essay on "The Influence of the Heavenly Bodies upon the Human Frame;" subsequently he appears in connection with Father Hell, who was at the time an assistant in the Jesuits' Observatory at Vienna. This Reverend Father was evidently a man of some mark, for in 1751 he was made Professor of Mathematics in Transylvania; and on his return to Vienna some years afterwards, he became the head of the Observatory in that city, which was erected after his own design. He travelled in Lapland, where he succeeded in making some important observations upon the transit of Venus across the Sun's disc, and died in 1792, having published several valuable works on Mathematics and Astronomy, many of which still survive as works of reference. Father Hell engaged with Mesmer in a series of attempts to cure disease by

means of the loadstone. They profess to have attained great success; but, like the thieves in Scripture, "they fell out by the way," and a violent controversy ensued between them. Hell wrote a work in which he assigned to Mesmer only the part of a humble instrument in the carrying out of his experiments. Mesmer, on the other hand, claimed for himself the distinction of being the originator of the system. The scientific men of Vienna sided with Hell, and Mesmer was obliged to quit the city branded as an impostor. On quitting Vienna, he travelled through several parts of Germany and Switzerland, everywhere pretending to work wonderful cures. After his exposure by Hell, and being driven out of Vienna condemned as a quack, he no longer made use of the loadstone, but professed to operate through the electrical agency of his own body. To this process he gave the name of "Animal Magnetism."

In 1778 Mesmer visited Paris, where he speedily became the most popular professor of the healing art. Thousands of people, from the peer to the peasant, flocked to his apartments for the purpose of being "Mesmerized." So great was his success, that he excited the rivalry of a French physician, M. Deslon, who embraced

his doctrines, and practised them with such success as to gain 100,000*l.* in fees from his patients. Mesmer finding the competition of M. Deslon too keen for him, applied to the French Government for a château and annuity, with permission to prosecute his studies in retirement. His application being refused, he left Paris for Spa, where he was followed by many wealthy patients. Whilst at Spa a subscription was set on foot, and the sum of 14,000*l.* subscribed for him; with this sum he returned to Paris, again to push his fortunes. He incurred some little disgrace by the exposure of his alleged cure of Mademoiselle Paradis, a celebrated popular singer, who was suffering from a convulsive affection of the eyes, and whom he falsely pretended to have cured. He solicited the Royal Society of England and other learned bodies to investigate his reputed scientific discovery. At last the French Government appointed a Commission, consisting of the most eminent scientific men of the day, to investigate and report upon the scientific claims of Mesmer and his new system. They reported that the so-called science of Animal Magnetism had no existence, except in the imagination of the operator and those operated upon; that Mesmer was a sham and impostor. This decision sent him once more a wanderer from Paris, after which he never

seems to have rallied from his disgrace, but to have passed the remainder of his life in obscurity.

The system introduced by Mesmer was not so soon disposed of. He succeeded in making many converts in France, and indeed in almost every other country in Europe, and among them some honest-minded searchers after truth. Others, like Cagliostro, heaped contempt upon the system, and the quackish pretensions founded upon it.

In spite of the adverse opinion expressed by the scientific men of his day upon Animal Magnetism, Mesmer succeeded in obtaining a large class of pupils whom he professed to instruct in the art of mesmerizing, and these established what was called the Society of Mesmerists. To the members of that society, rather than to Mesmer, may be attributed the fact that the subject of Animal Magnetism still continues to engage attention, without sinking back into oblivion like so many other marvels which every now and then spring up to blind the imagination whilst they confound the understanding.

Mesmerism sought to elevate man's reason to an equality with God, and to place the soul and body of

one individual under the control of the will of another. Further than this, it professed, through the medium of an individual, to possess the power of prophetic divination. This faculty of Second-sight was not professed by Mesmer, but it formed one of the chief grounds upon which subsequent believers in Animal Magnetism based their claims to be regarded as men of science. They asserted that they possessed new and important powers in the cure of disease, the annihilation of pain, the prophetic interpretation of events, the absolute control over the wills and actions of others, and, lastly, in our day, of direct communication with departed spirits.

We cease to wonder when we consider the condition of public opinion in France, and indeed throughout the whole of Europe at the time Mesmer made his appearance, that his extravagant pretensions should have obtained a large number of followers. The doctrines propounded by him and his disciples exactly suited the views of a people almost wholly given over to blind superstitions, or the shallowest infidelity.

We need not stop to make any further minute inquiry respecting the personal history of Mesmer. It is sufficient to know that he retired, as we have said, into

obscurity and adopted an assumed name, so that the precise place and date of his death are unknown, although it is probable that he died at Baden some time in 1815.

After this brief description of Mesmer, we propose to direct attention to some of the *facts* relating to Animal Magnetism. In doing so we include only those that have been observed and recorded by men upon whose integrity we can place reliance. Mesmer's method of operating upon his patients was so absurd that none but a Sham could have devised it. It was as follows: The persons to be operated upon were placed in a room, heated and perfumed to such a degree as to produce a feeling of somnolence, which was still further increased by the soft plaintive notes of an organ kept constantly playing. Each person had hold of an iron rod passed through a tub of water, and rounded off to a point. In this position the patients were detained, sometimes for three or four hours, until a feeling of languid torpor stole over them. At the right moment it was Mesmer's custom to rush through the room, applying a magnetic wand to the rod which each patient held in his hand; light and air being suddenly admitted into the room

and the organ striking up the liveliest music at the same time.

It is not to be wondered at that under such treatment the patients experienced an unusual sensation; but surely there was no science in such a proceeding; unless, as Mr. Barnum says, "Humbug" is worthy of such a designation.

Many of the phenomena produced by Mesmerism are due *entirely* to the condition of the person operated upon, apart altogether from any virtue given forth from the operator. The precise condition of the nervous system of persons in whom such phenomena have been observed, does not admit of explanation without travelling too far into the region of speculation to suit our present purpose. If you tell a person that by looking intently at an object, and following the particular motions of the operator, he will pass into the condition of Mesmeric sleep in a given time, the result expected may follow in certain cases. Whilst in this condition, it is maintained by some that the patient is completely under the control of the operator—that if he touches one bump on his head he will begin to laugh—another, to cry—another, to sing or play—although in the unmesmerized state he was incapable of doing

either. The following extract from the Report furnished by the Commission appointed by the King of France to investigate the claims of Mesmer and Animal Magnetism would seem absolutely fatal to any such pretensions :—"On blindfolding those who seemed to be most susceptible to the influence of this agent, all its ordinary effects were produced, although nothing was done to them, when they *imagined* they were being magnetized; while none of its effects were produced when they were *really* being magnetized, but imagined that nothing was being done to them. When brought under a magnetized tree, one of Mesmer's modes of operating, nothing happened if the subjects of the experiment thought they were at a distance from the tree; while they were immediately thrown into convulsions if they believed they were near the tree, although really at a distance from it. The effects produced were, consequently, purely the result of imagination."

This opinion cannot but be regarded as impartial, when we consider the men who formed the Commission. They were Benjamin Franklin, Levoi, Bailly, De Borg, and Lavoisier, Drs. Majault, Sallin, Darcet, and Guillotin. But whether they would have arrived at the same conclusion had it not been for the enormous pretensions

of Mesmer, may be a question open to considerable doubt.

In the year 1827 a second Commission was appointed, which, after sitting five years, was dissolved without agreeing upon a verdict. This second Commission did not confine their investigation to the pretensions of Mesmer only, but included in it the kindred subjects of Somnambulism, Clairvoyance, or Double-sight. They concluded their Report by stating: "We think we have communicated in our report facts of sufficient importance to encourage the investigations into the subject of Animal Magnetism, as a very curious branch of natural science." Undoubtedly this was a much more encouraging report for Mesmerists than the one previously made: nevertheless, since its publication Animal Magnetism has fallen considerably in public estimation, owing in a great measure to the practice of it having been almost wholly resorted to by charlatans of the lowest kinds.

On the subject of Animal Magnetism, the following story was once told by Prince Talleyrand: "I remember," he said, "upon one occasion having been gifted for one single instant with this unknown and nameless power. I know not, to this moment, whence it came,

it has never once returned; and yet, upon that one occasion, it saved my life: without that sudden and mysterious inspiration, I should not now be here to tell the tale. I had freighted a ship in concert with my friend Beaumetz. He was a good fellow, with whom I had ever lived on the most intimate terms; and in those stormy times, when it needed not only friendship to bind men together, but almost godlike courage to dare to show that friendship, I could not but prize most highly all his bold and loyal demonstrations of kindness and attachment to me. I had not a single reason to doubt his friendship; on the contrary, he had given me, on several occasions, most positive proofs of his sincere devotion to my interests and well-being.

"We had fled from France together, we had arrived at New York together, and together we had lived in perfect harmony during our stay there. So, after having resolved upon improving the little money that was left us by speculation, it was still in partnership and together that we freighted a small vessel for India, trusting all to the goodly chance which had befriended us in our escape from danger and from death, to venture once more together to brave the storms and perils of a yet longer and more adventurous voyage.

"Everything was embarked for our departure; bills were all paid and farewells all taken, and we were waiting for a fair wind with most eager expectation—being prepared to embark at any hour of the day or night in obedience to the warning of the captain. This state of uncertainty seemed to irritate the temper of poor Beaumetz to an extraordinary degree, and, unable to remain quietly at home, he hurried to and from the city, with an eager, restless activity which at times excited my astonishment, for he had ever been remarkable for great calmness and placidity of temper.

"One day, he entered our lodging, evidently labouring under great excitement, although commanding himself to appear calm. I was engaged at the moment writing letters to Europe, and, looking over my shoulder, he said, with forced gaiety, 'What need to waste time in penning those letters? They will never reach their destination. Come with me, and let us take a turn on the Battery; perhaps the wind may be chopping round; we may be nearer our departure than we imagine.'

"The day was fine, although the wind was blowing hard, and I suffered myself to be persuaded. Beaumetz,

I remembered afterwards, displayed an unusual officiousness in aiding me to close my desk and put away my papers, handing me, with hurried eagerness, my hat and cane, and doing other little services to quicken my departure, which at the time I attributed to the restless desire for change, the love of activity, with which he seemed to have been devoured during the whole period of our delay. We walked through the crowded streets to the Battery. He had seized my arm, and hurried me along, seemingly in eager haste to advance. When we had arrived on the broad Esplanade—the glory then, as now, of the city of New York, Beaumetz quickened his step yet more, until he arrived close to the water's edge. He talked loud and quickly, admiring in energetic terms the beauty of the scenery, Brooklyn heights, the shady groves of the Island, the ships riding at anchor, and the busy scene on the wharf;—when suddenly he paused in his mad incoherent discourse, for I had freed my arm from his grasp, and stood immovable before him. Staying his wild and rapid steps, I fixed my eyes upon his face. He turned aside, cowed and dismayed. 'Beaumetz,' I shouted, 'you mean to murder me, you intend to throw me from this height into the sea below. Deny it, monster, if you can!'

"He stammered a few incoherent words, and strove to pass me, but I barred his passage with extended arms. He looked vacantly right and left, and then flung himself upon my neck, and burst into tears. 'Tis true—'tis true, my friend. The thought has haunted me day and night, like a flash from the lurid fire of hell. It was for this I brought you here. Look, you stand within a foot of the edge of the parapet—in another instant the work would have been done!"

"What," inquired his companion, "was the motive of your first suspicion of the murderous intent of Beaumetz?"

"I know not to this very hour," replied the Prince de Talleyrand; "it was not his eye, for I was not looking at him at the moment: I was gazing at the sublime view which he himself was pointing out to my notice; —it was not in the tone of his voice either, in which lay the warning of my danger; it was a sudden and mysterious impulse, for which I have never been able to account—one of those startling and fearful mysteries which even the strongest minds are contented to accept without inquiry, being satisfied that such things are, and never daring to ask wherefore. Many persons, the *Illuminés*, for example, who ruled the monde philoso-

Prince Talleyrand and Beaumetz

phique for so long a period, have ascribed this sudden revelation of the hidden Truth entirely to the effects of Magnetism; and there are instances well known, wherein the great masters of the art have been able to produce the same effect at pleasure. Cagliostro, to whom I once mentioned the circumstance, said he had often obtained the same results by his wonderful powers of Animal Magnetism."

We would call our readers' attention to one or two of the circumstances of this story—supposing it to be true. A madman walking with Prince Talleyrand takes it into his head to fling the Prince into the sea, and one of the wiliest men the world ever saw penetrates the madman's design. Surely there was nothing so very wonderful in this. All the dramatic apparatus of the story goes for nothing, inasmuch as it is evidently meant for effect. That there are men, neither prophets nor apostles, who have had intuitions—sudden and instantaneous glimpses into their own futurity—yet, nevertheless, not recognizing them as intuitions until that futurity had passed by and the events had happened as foreshadowed—a personal apocalypse in fact—we may credit: but surely it is easy enough to account for such things, if we can only believe in a Divine Ruler of the

Universe, who may naturally be supposed to take considerable interest in the affairs of his creatures, without going all the way, like Talleyrand, to the magnetism of the *Illuminati* or the divinations of the Quacks. In the following chapter we shall pursue this subject further.

CHAPTER V.

Presentiments.—Reverie and Abstraction.—Glimpses of the Future.—Mesmer a Quack.—Magnetism.—Story of a Captain of Marines.—Spectral Illusions.—Instance mentioned by Sir Walter Scott.—The Percy Lion.—The Roué's Spectre.—Another Case related by Dr. Gregory.

WE now proceed to relate some curious cases of moral delusions, with which in their varying forms medical men are more or less familiar. We do not say that they did not happen; but we say that they were delusions nevertheless: and we relate them here because the charlatans have made them the basis of so-called sciences as visionary and fantastic as the delusions themselves. But here

we only assert what we have good reason to believe is a fact, that the men and women who lead intrinsically pure and moral lives, are usually free from such nightmare visions of the mind: and that in some cases there is hardly any limit to the number of the weird phantoms to be found in those frightful vaults—the chambers of an immoral soul. Upon these mysterious phenomena—for which it is useless to pretend that medical men can account any more than for some of the mysterious phenomena of the heavens—the Shams have built up Mesmerism and Spiritualism—both of which we regard as utterly absurd in themselves. But we relate these cases for what they are worth, and our readers will please to recollect that we relate them in our "Book of Shams."

Presentiments, for instance, have taken possession of people and been remarkably verified by subsequent experience. A whole book might easily be written about Presentiments, but the following case occurred so immediately under our own observation, and was attended by such a melancholy result, that it is worthy of being placed on record. A gentleman whose business required him occasionally to cross over to America, was preparing for one of his accustomed journeys. He

was of a lively, sanguine temperament, and had frequently performed the same voyage without expressing the slightest feeling of apprehension or alarm. On the particular occasion to which we refer, he was standing on the steps of a friend's house taking leave of him. All at once his voice faltered, and he appeared confused. The friend with whom he was talking, perceiving the change in his manner, drew him back into the house and inquired the cause of the sudden alarm which was depicted on his countenance. He exclaimed: "I shall never see you again!" As he was engaged to be married on his return to England, his friend tried to rally him by accusing him of being love-sick. To all such attempts he made the following reply:—"Just as I was speaking to you, I saw as visibly as though it was passing before my very eyes, the ship in which I am to sail sink under water, and every soul on board perish." No argument that the anxiety of friends could suggest had any effect in shaking his conviction, that the scene which thus so vividly passed in view before him would be verified. He became much depressed in spirits, and in consequence some friends accompanied him to Liverpool, hoping that the excitement attending his departure might have an effect in rousing him from what they regarded as a

state of morbid sentimentality. No such result, however, followed; and it was suggested that if the conviction was so strong upon him, he had better postpone his journey. He admitted that he would very much like to do so, and even went so far as to express a wish that some illness or unavoidable circumstance might detain him in England. At the same time that he expressed himself in so decided a manner, he said: "I have a feeling which impels me to undertake this journey, and it seems to overpower the dread I feel at taking it." At last he set sail, and had a very prosperous voyage. Having completed his business in New York, he was preparing for his homeward voyage in the best possible spirits. Previous to leaving America he formed the idea of going down South on a short visit to an old acquaintance, and took his passage on board one of the floating hotels, which are constantly descending the Mississippi. Before he had been twelve hours on board the steamer, she struck upon a rock in the river, and rapidly filling with water, sank to the bottom. Amongst those who perished was our unfortunate friend.

As we before said, we do not pretend to offer any explanation, or to suggest any theory to account for occur-

rences so mysterious. Such cases, however, are more or less familiar to most people, the charlatans being always ready to use them for their own purposes—pretending that by means of Animal Magnetism the mystery is made clear, and that similar events may be foretold by the aid of a *medium !*

Some people are occasionally subject to reverie or abstraction ; others, no doubt by a process akin to inspiration, can and do have momentary glimpses of the future ; which may result from strong internal or external suggestions, but what these suggestions spring from is beyond our present power to comprehend : we can only recognize their existence ; and whilst admitting facts, it behoves us to be careful to guard against embracing the crude theories which the Shams have built upon the scanty material at their command.

Whatever may be the amount of imposition practised by Mesmerists, Spiritualists, and Media of all kinds, the conditions of Somnambulism, Catalepsy, and Trance are, to a great extent, free from such objections. Doubtless the phenomena observed in each of these cases admit of being classed together, and will some day or other, no doubt, be found to depend upon the same cause

or causes. It seems desirable that ere long another Commission should be appointed to collect the *ascertained* facts relating to each of the three last-named phenomena, and, if possible, either to assign them a place among the existing sciences, or, if necessary, originate a new department and class them under it.

That Mesmer was a Sham there can, we think, be no doubt. He made use of the power he possessed in his strong nervous system to paralyze as it were for a time the weaker nervous power of those he operated upon. In the same way, by fastening a steadfast gaze upon a wild animal and fixing it immovably, the force of the strong brain of the man will in time subdue the ferocity of the beast. But there must be a difference in the amount of nervous power between the operator and the person operated upon to produce this effect. Indeed, we know by experiment that the difference between the condition of our bodies when exhausted by long-continued fatigue, and when exhilarated by sleep, is not due to anything imported into the system, but to a changed electrical state of the nerves. Sleep appears to be the appointed means for maintaining the natural equilibrium of the vital powers. If, then, one person

may be said to be in a negative condition and the other in a positive, no doubt the one might throw the other into a magnetic sleep. It, however, requires that these two conditions should exist in the two persons for any result to follow. This has been illustrated and advanced as an explanation of the power which attracts people together. Out of a large concourse of people, two will be attracted to each other by a force which neither reason nor will has had anything to do with in producing. What can that force be, unless, for the want of a better theory, we assume it to depend upon a difference in the magnetic condition of the two bodies? We never find that a weak, feeble person can mesmerize a strong one, let him attempt it under any conditions whatever.

It is of great importance to the success of a Sham that he should, by hard talking and constant lying, be able to befool himself into a belief in his own powers while he seeks to dupe others. If a man has, by constant practice, talked himself into the belief of a thing, he has at least half succeeded in impressing others with the same belief.

We once knew an officer, who by constantly telling the same tale, succeeded in talking himself into a

belief that he, instead of his friend, was the hero of the story. It related to an event which took place at the storming of Badajos under the Duke of Wellington in 1812, at which siege a brother officer of our captain's was engaged. It so happened that on the night before the battle something led him to examine a package recently received from England, in which was a small Bible; which he at once put into his pocket, intending to reserve the consideration of it for a "more convenient season." On the following day, whilst leading his company into action, he was struck by a musket-ball, which was, however, prevented entering his breast by the resistance afforded by the Bible in his pocket. This incident, together with what might be regarded as the romance of the siege, all went to make up a very pretty after-dinner story; which our captain of Marines was always reproducing and from time to time making sundry additions to it, until at length he began to tell the tale as a circumstance which had actually occurred to himself. By long practice in the same direction, he appeared to talk himself into a belief that what he was saying, was perfectly true, although everybody positively knew that he was quartered at Woolwich at the time, and never away from garrison.

We read of a great many remarkable instances of spectral illusion, but none more so than that which took possession of Cardinal de Rohan. He was not mad, but his brain was diseased—haunted by the ever-present vision of Marie Antoinette, whom he fancied he beheld smiling upon him and reciprocating the passion which was befooling his better jugdment. Some will, no doubt, be ready to exclaim that he was not so much a fool as a wicked, licentious priest, who sought to dishonour one of the first ladies in Europe. For our own part, we think he was labouring under a sort of spectral illusion, which, as in the case of a monomaniac, whilst it left him in perfect possession of his intellect and reason upon every other subject, deprived him of the power of reasoning himself out of the fatal delusion with which he was haunted, and which was no doubt fed by Cagliostro and Lamotte, and the other impostors among whom he was entangled.

Sir Walter Scott mentions an instance where the spectral illusion, though of a totally different kind to the Cardinal's, did, nevertheless, take such powerful possession of its victim as to lead to a fatal termination. The case occurred in the practice of the late Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh, the patient being a gentleman

of very high position in that city as a lawyer, who was entrusted with the property and private interests of a large class of influential clients, and whose conduct was, as a natural consequence, open to public observation and criticism. This lawyer bore the reputation of being a man of good moral character, sound sense, and unimpeachable integrity. At the time when Dr. Gregory first visited him, he was confined principally to his sick-room, sometimes to his bed, yet occasionally attending to business, and devoting his mind, apparently with all its usual strength and energy, to the conduct of the more important affairs entrusted to him; nor did there, to a superficial observer, appear anything in his manner, while so engaged, that could argue vacillation of intellect or depression of mind. His outward symptoms of malady indicated no acute or alarming disease; but slowness of pulse, absence of appetite, difficulty of digestion, and constant depression of spirits, seemed to draw their origin from some hidden cause, which the patient was determined to conceal. The deep gloom of the unfortunate gentleman—the embarrassment which he could not hide from his friendly physician—the briefness and obvious constraint with which he answered the interrogations of his medical adviser, induced Dr. Gregory to take other methods

for prosecuting his inquiries. He applied to the sufferer's family, to learn, if possible, the source of that secret grief which was afflicting his unfortunate patient. The persons applied to, after conversing together previously, denied all knowledge of any cause for the burden which obviously affected their relative. So far as they knew—and they thought they could hardly be deceived—his worldly affairs were prosperous; no family loss had occurred which could be followed with such persevering distress; no entanglements of affection could be supposed to apply to his age, and no sensation of severe remorse could be consistent with his character. The medical gentleman had finally recourse to serious argument with the invalid himself, and urged on him the folly of devoting himself to a lingering and melancholy death, rather than tell the subject of affliction which was thus wasting him. He specially pressed upon him the injury which he was doing to his own character, by suffering it to be inferred that the secret cause of his dejection, and its consequences, was something too scandalous or flagitious to be made known, bequeathing in this manner to his family a suspected and dishonoured name, and leaving a memory with which might be associated the idea of guilt, which the criminal had died without confessing. The patient,

more moved by this species of appeal than by any which had as yet been urged, expressed his desire to speak out frankly to the doctor. Every one else was removed, and the door of the sick-room made secure; when he began his confession in the following manner:—

"You cannot, my dear friend, be more conscious than I, that I am in the course of dying under the oppression of the fatal disease which consumes my vital powers; but neither can you understand the nature of my complaint, and the manner in which it acts upon me, nor, if you did, I fear, could your zeal and skill avail to rid me of it."

"It is possible," said the physician, "that my skill may not equal my wish of serving you; yet medical science has many resources, of which those unacquainted with its powers never can form an estimate. But until you plainly tell me the symptoms of your complaint, it is impossible for either of us to say what may or may not be in my power, or within that of medicine."

"I may answer you," replied the patient, "that my case is not a singular one, since we read of it in the famous novel of Le Sage. You remember, doubtless, the disease of which the Duke D'Olivarez is there stated to have died?"

"Of the idea," answered the medical gentleman, "that he was haunted by an apparition, to the actual existence of which he gave no credit: but died, nevertheless, because he was overcome and heart-broken by its imaginary presence."

"I, my dearest doctor," said the sick man, "am in that very case; and so painful and abhorrent is the presence of the persecuting vision, that my reason is totally inadequate to combat the effects of my morbid imagination, and I am sensible I am dying, a wasted victim to an imaginary disease."

The medical gentleman listened with anxiety to his patient's statement, and, for the time, judiciously avoiding any contradiction of the sick man's preconceived fancy, contented himself with more minute inquiry into the nature of the apparition with which he conceived himself haunted, and into the history of the mode by which so singular a disease had made itself master of his imagination, secured, as it seemed, by strong powers of the understanding, against so irregular an attack. The sick person replied by stating, that its advances were gradual, and at first not of a terrible or even disagreeble character. To illustrate

this, he gave the following account of the progress of his disease :—

"My visions," he said, "commenced two or three years since, when I found myself from time to time embarrassed by the presence of a large cat, which came and disappeared I could not exactly tell how, till the truth was finally forced upon me, and I was compelled to regard it as no household cat, but as a bubble of the elements, which had no existence, save in my deranged visual organs or depraved imagination. Still I had not that positive objection to the animal entertained by a late gallant Highland chieftain, who has been seen to change to all the colours of his own plaid, if a cat by accident happened to be in the room with him, even though he did not see it. On the contrary, I am rather a friend to cats, and endured with so much equanimity the presence of my imaginary attendant, that it had become almost indifferent to me; when within the course of a few months it gave place to, or was succeeded by, a spectre of a more important sort, or which at least had a more imposing appearance. This was no other than the apparition of a gentleman-usher, dressed as if to wait upon a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a Lord High Commissioner of the Kirk, or any other who

bears on his brow the rank and stamp of delegated sovereignty.

"This personage, arrayed in a court dress, with bag and sword, tamboured waistcoat, and chapeau-bras, glided beside me like the ghost of Beau Nash; and whether in my own house or in another, ascended the stairs before me, as if to announce me in the drawing-room, and sometimes appeared to mingle with the company, though it was sufficiently evident that they were not aware of his presence, and that I alone was sensible of the visionary honours which this imaginary being seemed desirous to render me. This freak of the fancy did not produce much impression on me, though it led me to entertain doubts as to the nature of my disorder, and alarm for the effect it might produce upon my intellect. But that modification of my disease also had its appointed duration. After a few months, the phantom of the gentleman-usher was seen no more, but was succeeded by one horrible to the sight, and distressing to the imagination, being no other than the image of death itself—the apparition of a *skeleton*. "Alone or in company," said the unfortunate invalid, "the presence of this last phantom never quits me. I in vain tell myself a hundred times over that it is no

reality, but merely an image summed up by the morbid acuteness of my own excited imagination and deranged organs of sight. But what avail such reflections, while the emblem and presage at once of mortality is before my eyes, and while I feel myself, though in fancy only, the companion of a phantom representing a ghostly inhabitant of the grave, even while I yet breathe on the earth? Science, philosophy, even religion, has no cure for such a disorder; and I feel too surely that I shall die the victim to so melancholy a disease, although I have no belief whatever in the reality of the phantom which it places before me."

The physician was distressed to perceive, from these details, how strongly this visionary apparition was fixed in the imagination of his patient. He ingeniously urged the sick man, who was then in bed, with questions concerning the circumstances of the phantom's appearance, trusting he might lead him, as a sensible man, into such contradictions and inconsistencies as might rouse his common sense, which seemed to be unimpaired, against the fantastic disorder which produced such effects.

"This skeleton, then," said the doctor, "seems to you to be always present to your eyes?"

"It is my fate, unhappily," answered the invalid, "always to see it."

"Then, I understand," continued the physician, "it is now present to your imagination?"

"To my imagination it certainly is so," replied the sick man.

"And in what part of the chamber do you now conceive the apparition to appear?" the physician inquired.

"Immediately at the foot of my bed; when the curtains are left a little open," answered the invalid, "the skeleton, to my thinking, is placed between them, and fills the vacant space."

"You say you are sensible of the delusion," said his friend; "have you firmness to convince yourself of the truth of this? Can you take courage enough to rise and place yourself in the spot so seemingly to be occupied, and convince yourself of the illusion?"

The poor man sighed, and shook his head negatively.

"Well," said the doctor, "we will try the experiment otherwise."

Accordingly, he rose from his chair by the bedside,

and placing himself between the two half-drawn curtains at the foot of the bed, indicated as the place occupied by the apparition, asked if the spectre was still visible ?

"Not entirely so," replied the patient, "because your person is betwixt him and me ; but I observe his skull peering above your shoulder."

It is alleged the man of science started on the instant, despite his philosophy, on receiving an answer affirming, with such minuteness, that the ideal spectre was close to his own person. He resorted to other means of investigation and cure, but with equally indifferent success. The patient sank into deeper and deeper dejection, and died in the same distress of mind in which he had spent the latter months of his life ; and his case remains a melancholy instance of the power of imagination to kill the body, even when its fantastic terrors cannot overcome the intellect of the unfortunate persons who suffer under them.

The impostures practised upon the credulous with regard to ghosts, spectral illusions, and supernatural revelations are many of them exceedingly ridiculous and amusing. Sir Walter Scott, in his book on

Demonology and Witchcraft, describes a scene at which he was present and an eyewitness. Happening to be in Trafalgar Square one night, he was attracted to an unusual crowd opposite Northumberland House. On inquiring what was the object that attracted the attention of so large an assemblage of people, it at length oozed out that some one for a lark had commenced muttering: "By heaven, it wags!—it wags again!" In a few minutes the whole street was blockaded, some concurring that they had absolutely seen the Lion of Percy wag its tail, others waiting patiently, expecting to witness the same phenomenon.

Shakspeare evidently had a correct appreciation of this subject when he planned the Ghost Scene in *Macbeth*. When spectral illusions are accompanied, as they occasionally may be, by supernatural sounds, the effect produced on the mind of the person by whom the phenomena are observed is still more striking. The appearance of spectres, apparitions, illusions, and hallucinations, apart altogether from insanity, are not uncommon to persons of a certain temperament, as the result of an altered condition of the blood circulating through the brain. Incipient apoplexy is often accompanied with spectral illusions of the most distressing

character. The "blue-devils," as they are called, in delirium tremens, depend upon a similar condition of brain. These apparitions sometimes continue permanent, and thus inflict retributive justice upon many a would-be repentant bacchanal. Among the many curious cases illustrative of the subject, the following is related by Sir Walter Scott:—

"A young man of fortune, who had led what is called a "gay life" so as considerably to injure both his health and fortune, was at length obliged to consult a physician as to the best means of restoring the former.

"One of his principal complaints was the frequent presence of a set of apparitions, resembling a band of figures dressed in green, who performed in his drawing-room a singular dance, to which he was compelled to bear witness, though he knew, to his great annoyance, that the whole corps-de-ballet existed only in his own imagination.

"The physician immediately informed him that he had lived upon town too long and too fast not to require an exchange to a more healthy and natural course of life. He therefore prescribed a gentle course of medicine, but earnestly recommended to his patient to retire to his own house in the country, observe a temperate diet

and early hours, practising regular exercise, and on the same principle avoiding fatigue, and assured him that by doing so he might bid adieu to black spirits, and white, blue, green, and grey, with all their trumpery. The patient observed the advice, and prospered. His physician, after the interval of a month, received a grateful letter from him, acknowledging the success of his regimen. The green goblins had disappeared, and with them the unpleasant train of emotions to which their visits had given rise; and the patient had ordered his town-house to be disfurnished and sold, while the furniture was to be sent down to his residence in the country, where he was determined in future to spend his life, without exposing himself to the temptations of town. One would have supposed this a well-devised scheme for health. But, alas! no sooner had the furniture of the London drawing-room been placed in order in the gallery of the old manor-house, than the former delusion returned in full force! The green figurantes, whom the patient's depraved imagination had so long associated with these movables, came capering and frisking to accompany them, exclaiming with great glee, as if the sufferer should have been rejoiced to see them, 'Here we all are—here we all are!'

"The visionary, if I recollect right, was so much shocked at their appearance, that he retired abroad, in despair that any part of Britain could shelter him from the daily persecution of this domestic ballet."

Certain drugs and perfumes are reputed to have the power of enabling persons submitted to their influence to conjure up at will all sorts of extraordinary phantoms. A fungus grown in Asia Minor, called the *Amanita Muscaria*, is said to possess this wonderful property. The late Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh was accustomed, when lecturing to his class upon the subject of spectres, to relate the following case:—

"I am in the habit," said a patient, "of dining at five, and exactly as the hour of six arrives, I am subjected to the following painful visitation:—The door of the room, even when I have been weak enough to bolt it, which I have sometimes done, flies wide open; an old hag, like one of those who haunted the death of Torresenters, with a frowning and incensed countenance, comes straight up to me with every demonstration of spite and indignation which could characterise her who haunted the merchant Abudah in the Oriental tale, she rushes upon me, says something, but so hastily that I cannot discover the purport, and then strikes me a

severe blow with her staff. I fall from my chair in a swoon, which is of longer or shorter duration. To the recurrence of this apparition, I am daily subjected. And such is my new and singular complaint."

The doctor immediately asked, whether his patient had invited any one to sit with him when he expected such a visitation? He answered in the negative; saying that the nature of his complaint was so singular, it was so likely to be imputed to fancy, or even to mental derangement, that he had shrunk from communicating the circumstance to any one. "Then," said the doctor, "with your permission, I will dine with you to-day tête-à-tête, and we will see if your malignant old woman will venture to join our company."

The patient accepted the proposal with hope and gratitude, for he had expected ridicule rather than sympathy. They met at dinner, and Dr. Gregory, who suspected some nervous disorder, exerted his powers of conversation, well known to be of the most varied and brilliant character, to keep the attention of his host engaged, and prevent him from thinking on the approach of the fated hour, to which he was accustomed to look forward with so much terror. He succeeded in his purpose better than he had hoped. The hour of six

came almost unnoticed, and it was hoped might pass away without any evil consequence; but it had scarce a moment struck, when the owner of the house exclaimed, in an alarmed voice: "The hag comes again!" and dropped back in his chair in a swoon, in the way he had himself described. The physician caused him to be bled, and satisfied himself that the periodical shocks of which his patient complained, arose from a tendency to apoplexy.

CHAPTER VI.

Cagliostro, the Great Type of Shams.—His Character, Birth, and Description.—Marriage.—Shams, the Offspring of certain Phases of Society.—Cagliostro's Travels.—A Proteus of Medicos.—His Wife.—His Imprisonment and Escape.—Visit to London and Return to the Continent.—Life at Paris.—Strange Story related by Prince Talleyrand.

WHILE Mesmer and his disciples were essaying their arts of deception, another Sham, even of greater mark, was already attracting to himself the wonder and admiration of a deluded public.

Many writers have attempted a history of the so-called Count Cagliostro, but all appear more or less to have failed; their principal difficulty arising from the

fact that he lived so much by deception—changed his sphere and mode of operation so frequently, and adopted so many aliases, that one becomes completely confused in separating the truth from the falsehood. All writers, however, have arrived at the unanimous opinion that he was the most unscrupulous, the most ingenious, and the most impudent impostor the world has ever known.

Cagliostro founded no particular system, and consequently left no disciples. His skill (for undoubtedly he possessed great skill) consisted chiefly in his knowledge of human nature, his power to deceive others, and his marvellous ability to adapt himself to the circumstances in which he was placed. The readiness with which he could seize upon and adopt any scheme which appeared for the time most likely to answer his purpose, was quite marvellous. His were many of the attributes which, some persons may think, if submitted to proper training, would have resulted in the development of a great man; but no training in the world, we are convinced, would have made him other than what he was —being as much a Sham born as Shakspeare was a poet; and it would have been just as easy to have changed the colour of the Ethiopian's skin, or the leopard's

spots, as to have wrought any change in him. Starting in life as a city Arab, he figured successively as a forger, as a novice among the Brothers of Mercy at the Monastery of Cartagerone, an apothecary's bottle-washer, an artist, an alchemist, an astrologer, a necromancer, a house-painter, a Freemason, a revolutionist, a prince, a Mesmerist, a clairvoyant, a quack doctor, an author; and lastly, when in prison at Rome, a general informer against all persons and systems which he had previously made use of as means to his end. The end proved, however, a vastly different one to what he had anticipated.

All men or women who become notorious, or whose names continue to be remembered by their fellow-men, whether for good or evil, ought to have the leading features of their lives chronicled and preserved;—in the one case as a guide to others, pointing to the foot-marks in the virtuous path of those who have done well and passed away;—in the other case, to serve as a warning to such as are too prone to deviate from the straight path and go headlong to a prison or the gallows. It is thus that the lives of noted criminals acquire their only importance, unless in so far as they reflect the condition of society in their day. We find, for instance, in

different parts of the world, as well as at different periods, that crime and criminals assume new and distinctive features. At one time they are characterized, as in our own country, by great daring, combined with a certain amount of courage and enterprise;—such as was evinced by Robin Hood, who is believed to have overrun the Forest of Sherwood and the neighbouring counties; and to have carried on his marauding adventures for more than fifty years, during which time he succeeded in escaping the vigilance of the justices who were ever on his track. We have again what may be called the age of Turpin, when crime and robbery were committed in the most daring and reckless manner upon the king's highways. Later on we have the low brutal age of crime and murder, when Hare and Burke, with their loathsome accomplices, lay in wait at every street corner prepared to do murder for gain. In fact Shams of all kinds may be said to be the peculiar development of the age in which they live; the public of their time being the rich and loamy soil from which they draw their nourishment and life.

The history of the world does not point to any country or age which evinced such thirst for blood and vengeance, as that which marked the period of the

French Revolution. It was during these years of violence that, as we have already seen, Cagliostro and his associates were enabled, especially by means of the so-called Egyptian Masonry, to practise upon the credulity of the French people. It seems almost a general law that the condition of society at certain periods calls into existence a certain class of characters bearing its stamp. Shams, for instance, abound in the present day, of the lowest and most ignorant class, greedy and avaricious, ready to sacrifice every honest principle to love of gain; but this, nevertheless, is not the age to produce a second Cagliostro. Had he been born in the year of grace 1843 and commenced his career in 1863, he would have found that the game had been played out a hundred years ago. Men are now past believing in alchemy, necromancy, and the philosopher's stone, and reject the lies which passed current in the last century, unless when varnished by a certain amount of truth. In science, for instance, the Sham now-a-days finds it convenient to build his pretensions upon some plausibly substantive basis.

The state of public feeling during what has been termed the Cagliostric period, was one of escape from superstitious dogmas and excessive formularism to one

of no creeds or forms, save those which floated on the winds of the time. This was exactly the condition of society favourable to the successful career of an impostor like Cagliostro. Fate appeared to throw in his way the exact kind of means best suited to accomplish the end and aim of his existence. He absorbed, as it were, the national faith, which for a while had broken its allegiance from the religion of the nation, and was seeking some fresh object of worship. Cagliostro found this principle in what he called the Egyptian Order of Freemasonry, of which he became, as we have already said, the Grand Copt, or Chief, and which was alleged by him to have been founded by the Prophets Enoch and Elijah—in order to make his dupes believe that the true principles and tenets of religion had been handed down pure and undefiled through a succession of Grand Copts, of whom he was the regularly appointed successor. This theory was made to appear as plausible as possible, and for a time it found favour with those who, having rejected the creeds in which they had been born, were prepared to accept whatever others might be offered in their stead. Thus for the nonce Egyptian Masonry absorbed the faith of the people, and until the bubble burst, they were led captive at Cagliostro's will. There is but one step between the sublime and

the ridiculous, and that step Frenchmen at the time we speak of did not hesitate to take.

In touching upon the career of Cagliostro, from the time of his expulsion from the Monastery at Cartagerone until his final capture by the Holy Inquisition, and safe custody in the Castle of St. Angelo at Rome, many persons and events will necessarily have to be passed in review, since he became identified during a period of thirty-six years with not a few of the characters which figure most prominently during that eventful period, and did much, as we shall see, to compromise the fair fame of one of the noblest queens in Christendom. Besides having found as an accomplice, in this affair, a Cardinal Prince of Rome, whose bosom friend he became, he seems to have secured the belief and admiration of many of the ablest men in France—among the number Prince Talleyrand. A man who could do all this simply by the force of his own wits, could have been no ordinary person, and his feats deserve to be recorded.

Cagliostro was born at Palermo in the year 1743; his real name was Joseph Balsamo, and he is supposed to have derived the title of Cagliostro from his god-mother. His youthful appearance has been described

as follows :—"A stout, thick-set, high-shouldered, clumsy boy, with an olive skin, broad flat nose, low forehead, large eyes, and long black greasy hair—with a squint in his right eye—noisy, turbulent, and overbearing, quick to quarrel, disliked and despised by his fellow boys. He was dismissed from the laboratory of the monastery at Cartagerone and scouted for his idleness and gluttony; his knavery and lying having become incorrigible." His father, formerly a small shopkeeper, had died, and his mother was now too poor to maintain him.

Our hero was very fond of the theatre; and when unable to obtain orders, had a happy knack of forging them. A boisterous, ragged, aggressive Arab, of whom all parents were in perpetual fear and dread, he spent his time in the streets, loafing and lounging with the most idle and dissolute.

The incipient charlatan's first great adventure appears to have been the cheating of a goldsmith of Palermo out of a considerable sum of money, under the pretence of discovering to him some hidden treasure. On this occasion, his life having been threatened, he was obliged to leave Sicily and go to Rome, where he married a young woman named Lorenza Feliciani—a person as

full of deception as himself—and who is described as "of *petite* figure, round-faced, even-featured, pretty, with fine eyes." Cagliostro *alias* Balsamo continued to reside with his wife's parents at Rome, getting his living by selling pen-and-ink drawings. These, however, were not what they appeared to be, but common prints, to which, with a little labour, Balsamo succeeded in imparting a look of originality and art.

Cagliostro derived a great advantage from the extent of his travels, having visited all the towns in the Mediterranean, besides paying several visits to Egypt, Asia Minor, and the Archipelago. No doubt, the knowledge he acquired of the manners and customs of Eastern nations afforded him great opportunities of pushing the pretensions of the so-called system of Egyptian Masonry in Europe. He was accompanied by a noted alchemist, named Altolas, during a succession of visits to Malta, Rome, and Naples, in each of which places he assumed a fresh title and plied a new trade. Alchemy seems to have suited his purpose best whilst at Malta, where by means of it he contrived to ingratiate himself with the Grand Master Pinto. Forgery and necromancy appear to have obtained for him the means of a precarious subsistence whilst at Rome and Naples. Everywhere he

pretended to possess a power to cure disease, either by the aid of magic, magnetism, or one of the many nostrums which he professed to have discovered. The so-called "elixir of life" was the joint swindle of himself and Altolas. The "cantharadic tincture," as it was called, was the most extravagant of his remedies. It was a cure of no mean order, inasmuch as he estimated the cost at 800*l.* a drop.

After his marriage with Lorenza Feliciani, he paid three visits to England. On the first occasion his wife appears to have been the cleverer cheat of the two, and is said to have obtained plenty of money by pretending that her husband possessed the wonderful power of removing all appearance of age from the faces of even the most ancient. As an instance of her cunning, she contrived to defraud a certain Quaker out of a fee of one hundred guineas, on the pretence of restoring to him the vigour and beauty of youth. The husband in the meantime having been convicted ten times for swindling, the pair found it convenient to fly to Paris; but here he was prohibited from practising as a physician. Many tales are told of attempts made by Lorenza Feliciani on this and other occasions to escape from her husband, owing to the dread she entertained of the great power he pos-

sessed over the wills and bodies of others. No doubt much that has been written about her escape to the Convent of St. Denis, and her subsequent capture by Cagliostro, may be untrue: nevertheless, the fact remains that to the very close of her career she longed for the repose and peace of the cloister, and never rested until she prevailed upon her husband to return to Italy. On her arrival at Rome she escaped to a convent, where she made confession of her own and her husband's misdoings, which was subsequently published.

Finding he was unable to pursue the profession of medico in the French capital, Cagliostro, under the title of the Marquis de' Pellegrini, visited Germany and the Netherlands, and was ultimately imprudent enough, at the solicitation of his wife, to re-visit Palermo. The old jeweller, Marano, whom he had swindled out of 60 ounces of gold, was not to be deceived a second time, but soon detected in the Marquis de' Pellegrini his old churchyard thief, Joseph Balsamo. The marquis was arrested and thrown into prison, where he would doubtless have ended his days had it not been for his wife—who, by winning the affections of a Sicilian prince, managed to obtain his release. The means which the prince took to gain his purpose are somewhat

remarkable. It is said he contrived to obtain Cagliostro's release "by thrashing the prosecutor's lawyer and intimidating the president of the court."

On his release from prison, our great Sham travelled in Italy and Spain under the name of Dr. Tischio, everywhere practising the profession of medico and exhibiting the usual characteristics of his class—who, as a rule, are exceedingly migratory, and seem to find continual change necessary to their existence. Mr. Lascelles Wraxall gives the following particulars concerning him about this time:—"In Spain he made a living by selling a "water of beauty," converting hemp into silk, making gold of mercury, melting small diamonds to produce larger ones, but chiefly by predicting lucky numbers in the lottery—a secret he would not have failed to benefit by himself, if he had been completely convinced of its efficiency." After leaving Spain he again paid a visit to London, where he was admitted into a Freemasons' lodge. Henceforth he only moved in the highest circles, living *en prince*, and by giving his intrigues a new and more brilliant character managed to obtain an extraordinary influence, especially over men and women of weak character. His portrait and that of Lorenza were worn

on fans, rings, and medallions, and busts were sold of him in marble and plaster, bearing the inscription *Divo Cagliostro*; which was the only name he thenceforth acknowledged.

At the Hague all the Masonic lodges rivalled each other in the brilliancy of the reception they gave him. Here he was even compelled to open a ladies' lodge, and advocated his new Masonic system, of Egyptian origin as he said, but did not succeed in getting it completely adopted till October, 1784, on the establishment of his grand lodge "for the triumph of truth" at Lyons. It was said that he got the first idea of his system when in London, from a MS. by one George Capston.

On leaving the Hague, Cagliostro spent some time in Venice, and then returned to Northern Europe. At Berlin he obtained no sympathy; so from there he proceeded to Mittau, and from thence to St. Petersburg—where he tried to pass off as a Spanish colonel; but the ambassador of that country protested against this assumption. Dr. Hugensohn, physician to the Empress, also displayed such determined scepticism of his pretensions, that the great charlatan found it useless to remain any longer in the

Russian capital: so he went by way of Warsaw to Frankfort, and thence to Strasburg, where he met with the most wonderful success. In speaking of him at this time, La Borde says: "I saw more than 5,000 sick people who owed their existence to him." It was at Strasburg that he first became acquainted with the Cardinal de Rohan, whom he subsequently accompanied to the French capital. Whilst at Paris he appears to have divided his time between presiding at revolutionary meetings of the so-called Egyptian Masons—banqueting with Cardinal de Rohan, the Countess de La Motte, and others; and holding seances, to which he succeeded in attracting dupes from all Europe—some out of belief in his marvellous powers of curing diseases, others from a feeling of curiosity.

At this time Cagliostro dealt largely in Mesmerism; maintaining with Mesmer that magnetism was capable of being transmitted like electricity through intermediate conductors, and by this means professing to supply his patients with medicines. The following incident is related by Prince Talleyrand—and seems a more than ordinary French gooseberry to our way of thinking:—"Among the many impostors who abounded at the time, none was more conspicuous than the famous

Cagliostro. He had arrived from Italy under extraordinary and mysterious circumstances; his coming had been preceded by rumours more strange, more surprising still, and his door was besieged at once by all the rich and idle, the marvel-loving portion of the population of Paris. Among the rest, I am ashamed to confess that I was one of the most ardent. I was very young at the time, and had not acquired that distrust of all pretension which years alone can give. Many months, however, had elapsed before I could obtain the audience I so much coveted. Thousands of persons had to pass by right before me, and it was said that, immediately on his arrival, his books were so filled with the names of the highest and mightiest, that, had he been just, and received them each in turn, the candidates at the bottom of the list would have known their future by experience long before he could by any possible means have foretold it.

"I myself knew an officer in the Regiment de Flandre, who, being quartered at Metz, and not being able to obtain from his colonel leave of absence, threw up his commission, in order to keep his appointment with Cagliostro on a certain day in Paris, so fearful was he of losing the valuable information concerning the future which the magician had to give him.

"I cannot even now repress a smile, when I remember the awe and terror with which I entered the presence of the conjuror. I had not dared to go alone; M. de Boufflers had kindly consented to accompany me; and yet my embarrassment was not wholly dissipated even with the prospect of his company; so fearful was I of missing the object of my visit, that I had wasted so much time in thinking of all the questions which I meant to propound to him, as to have even written many of them upon my calpin, with the intention of consulting it in case of need.

"It was already dusk when we were admitted into the awful presence of the conjuror; not quite dark without doors, yet sufficiently so within to require the aid of tapers. The ante-chamber was filled with impatient applicants, who railed at us as we passed through the door of the chamber where the wizard was holding his incantations. The whole scene was very like those introduced in the early Spanish dramas, and inspired one with the most awful forebodings as to what was about to follow.

"We found the magician in his study. He was just at the moment engaged in dismissing two poor patients, to whom he had given advice gratuitously. The one

was a crippled figure, whose distorted and haggard countenance formed a most fitting accessory to the scene of devilry; the other was an old mendicant friar, afflicted with the shaking palsy, whose restless limbs and hesitating speech made him appear as if under the influence of some wizard spell.

"As soon as we entered, Cagliostro led his guests to a door at the farther end of the chamber, which was veiled by a thick tapestry, and opening it without the slightest noise, ushered them through it into the passage beyond, and then, closing it again with the same attention to silence, returned to the spot where we were standing, and, placing his finger on his lips, pointed towards a still and motionless figure seated in one corner of the room, and which, from the obscurity that reigned around, we had not observed on our entrance. The figure was that of a female, covered from head to foot with a veil of black crape, so long and ample that it disguised even the form of the fauteuil on which she was seated.

"Cagliostro bade us take seats at a table covered with green velvet, upon which was placed divers mysterious-looking instruments of torture, sundry queer-shaped bottles and diabolical volumes, and then,

standing up before us, in solemn and biblical language, inquired wherefore we had sought him, and what it was that we desired to know. Such was the effect of the sudden questioning, the mystery of the interview, the silence and the darkness, that Boufflers, who was to have spoken first, was quite overawed by the whole scene, and could find no words to answer the summons, but sat stammering and hesitating, while I took the opportunity of examining slowly and at leisure the wonderous adept.

"Boufflers still remaining mute, the conjuror turned to me, and asked me, in a voice which had already lost much of its solemnity, and partook of something like harshness, if I also had come unprepared with a subject of consultation; as, if so, we had best depart at once, and leave the field to others, whose business might be of more importance, and who were waiting with such impatience without. The question roused all the courage which was left within me, for I began to fear that the magician might grow wearied, and dismiss us as he threatened, and I answered in a low voice that I wished to consult him concerning the health of a person who was dear to me.

"Cagliostro turned, and by a movement so abrupt

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and sudden that it made us both start to our feet, drew the fauteuil wherein was seated the veiled mysterious form of the female, who had remained all this time silent and motionless, across the floor, and still the figure moved not. The feet resting on a board attached to the bottom of the fauteuil, moved with the rest, producing an indescribable effect. At the present day, when the mysteries of Mesmerism have become common household talk, and somnambulism has been made a general voie-de-guérison for every complaint under heaven, all this will appear vain and puerile ceremony; but, at the period of which I am now speaking, they were familiar only to the initiated few, and Boufflers and I, poor ignorant novices, were struck with awe and wonder.

"'What is it you seek to know?' said Cagliostro, resuming once more his solemn and theatrical air; and, drawing a little aside the veil of black crape, he bent towards the ear of the female, and whispered a few words which we could not understand.

"I was so afraid at the moment of losing, as my friend Boufflers had already done, the memory of what I had to say, that I replied hurriedly, never thinking of myself, nor of the thousand and one questions which

I had predetermined to ask—'I wish to learn the cause of the migraine of my friend the Marquise de ——'

"'Chut!' interrupted Cagliostro. 'The name is of little import. What see you?' added he, in a loud deep tone, turning to the veiled figure.

"'I see a fair and beauteous lady,' replied a sweet soft voice from beneath the veil. 'She is attired in a dress of sea-green Padua silk, her powdered hair is wreathed with rose-buds, and she wears long and splendid ear-drops of emerald and topaz.'

"Boufflers caught my arm, with a smile, which the excitement of the moment had converted into a grimace, for he knew well enough the person for whom I was so anxious, and knew, moreover, that there were certain nights on which she wore the emerald and topaz suit, and that this very night was one of them. The veiled form continued, in the same low voice: 'The lady is pressing her hand to her brow at this very instant. Is it with pain, or is it with care? She is waiting for some one, for now she rises and looks at the clock upon the console, and now she goes to the small side-door to listen.'

"'Enough, enough!' said I, in my turn, growing impatient; 'tell me at once what it is that ails the lady, and what may be the remedy.'

"The figure spoke aloud no more, but whispered long in Cagliostro's ear, and the latter, turning to me, said, with ease and aplomb, 'The lady's migraines are caused by over-watching and anxiety—the cure is easy, and must be applied at once—the cause will be removed in time.'

"He pushed back the fauteuil into the corner whence he had drawn it; the veiled figure by which it was occupied remained still and motionless as death. He then opened a small door in the wainscot, belonging to a cupboard filled with shelves, containing bottles of all sorts and sizes, and drew from it a phial, which he filled from a jug which stood upon the floor, and having performed various 'passes' and evolutions over it, he handed it to me, bidding my companion and myself to lose no time in retiring, for others were waiting outside. His dismissal of us was as abrupt as possible; scarcely, indeed, consistent with politeness. 'You have told your ailments and your griefs—you bear with you the never-failing cure—now begone.'

"With these words he opened the same low door through which he had let out the two visitors whom we had succeeded; and Boufflers and I passed out, obeying without a word the gesture of the magician, which pointed towards the passage beyond.

"Such is the history of my first interview with the great Cagliostro. To you, who behold daily the strange and varied examples of magnetism, my story will perhaps appear poor and puerile; but you must remember that, at the time, the thing was new, and, notwithstanding all that has been discovered since, none has surpassed him; even to this very hour, the secret of Cagliostro has not been discovered. It is supposed that ventriloquism was much employed by him in his various tours-de-force. Perhaps it was made the agent of deception in my own case, and the figure veiled with black crape may have been a mere puppet set up to delude the credulous. The circumstance which would seem to favour greatly the suspicion of imposture is, that as Cagliostro never employed twice the same agency, the consultant could never come prepared to watch and detect the machinery of his experiments, and in fact, being always taken by surprise, had no leisure to think of anything else than the consultation

he had come to hold. Again, how could the adept have known, by natural means, that the Marquise de Br——, whom he had not suffered me to name, was young and beauteous—that she possessed ear-drops of emerald and topaz—which mixture of jewels was peculiar—and that she would wear them on that very night? All these reflections completely bewildered me, as I hastened on to the Opera, certain that the Marquise would be there, full of curiosity to see if her dress and appearance would correspond with Cagliostro's description. Boufflers could not help me, nor suggest a single idea to solve the mystery, so absorbed was he in the memory of the strange scene he had been witnessing—so completely wonder-struck by the silence and mystery of the whole proceeding.

"We arrived at the Opera just as the curtain was about to rise. I shall never forget the performance, so linked is it in my memory with that night's adventure. It was Gluck's opera of *Alceste*. Boufflers and myself took our places in the parterre, immediately below the loge of the marquise, which was empty, and remained so for some time; and I can assure you that, when, in the midst of one of the most pathetic scenes of the opera, I heard the door of the box open, and a valet-de-chambre

announce, as was the usage among the fashionables of the day, 'Madame la Marquise de Br——,' we both turned sharply round. She entered, muffled up to the chin, and evidently suffering greatly from her old enemy, the migraine, for she held a screen before her eyes to shield them from the glare of light, and bent her head upon her hand as soon as she had taken her seat.

"'Look! she has roses in her hair,' exclaimed Boufflers, all aghast.

"It was true enough the roses were there; and I could see even more, for the ear-drops of emerald and topaz caught the light of the girandole in front of her box, and played before my eyes in a most tantalizing manner.

"Presently the marquise, overcome by the heat, withdrew her cloak and muffles, and stood revealed to us in the full light, exactly as she had been described to us so short a time before. The dress of sea-green Padua silk, looped with roses, seemed completely to choke poor Boufflers, as he stood gazing on her in mute amazement. So far, the wizard had told us the truth."

Since Talleyrand's day, the same experiment has been repeated, and in thousands of instances has succeeded. No doubt many people have some little story of a similar kind to tell, and even more striking and interesting than the one above related, but the sequel of the anecdote, we think, is unique, so completely did the adventure jump from the sublime to the ridiculous at a single bound.

"At the conclusion of the piece," continues the narrator, "we both repaired to the box of the Marquise de Br——. She was suffering greatly from her migraine, and greeted me ironically, observing that I was 'bien aimable et bien galant'—that she had waited for me to escort her to the Opera, and had been compelled to depart from home alone. After the performance, we all adjourned to her hotel. I had completely reinstated myself in her good graces, by the promise of a complete cure for her migraine. The gentlemen of the company, however, all voted that a glass or two of champagne should be tried first, before the dear marquise was put to pain and torture by any of the diabolical remedies of the sorcerer, Cagliostro. The vote was carried, and the marquise compelled to submit to their subscription first, which she did with the

greatest grace and good humour, using every effort to appear gay, although evidently suffering much pain at the very moment.

"I will not attempt to record all the good things which were uttered at the petit souper, nor all the idées folles to which the champagne gave birth. Boufflers was quite himself again, and had recovered all his wonted vivacity, all his mad gaiety, and kept us in a roar of laughter by his wicked sallies and pointed jokes concerning our visit to Cagliostro. He counterfeited with such excessive humour the whole scene as it had passed before his eyes, that no one could have imagined him to be the same individual who had sat quaking in fear and awe before the very man whose power he was now deriding in such exquisite glee.

"Of course the phial and the contents became soon the objects of attack, and I was petitioned on all sides for a view of them. By the permission of the marquise herself, I yielded to the clamour, and it was handed round amid the commentaries of the laughing guests, until Boufflers proposed that the remedy should at once be tried in the presence of us all, so that, if it failed, we might at once go and give Cagliostro the charivari

which he would so richly deserve; and, if it succeeded, we might publish its virtues and the compounder's skill throughout the world.

"It was not till I had uncorked the phial, and was about to pour it into a glass, that it all at once occurred to me, that, in the hurry of our dismissal from the presence of Cagliostro, I had entirely omitted to ascertain whether the liquid was to be taken as a medicine, or to be applied externally. To the eye, it was nothing but pure water from the fountain, it possessed neither smell nor colour, and the greatest curiosity was excited to behold its marvellous effects. At length, by the suggestion of the marquise herself, who was growing weary of our badinage, it was decided that there would be less danger in misapplying it externally than in swallowing it, should it prove pernicious; and as I was chosen to be the operator, I poured a small quantity of the water into the hollow of my hand, which Boufflers guiding, so that not a drop was spilt, I placed gently as possible over the forehead of the marquise, pressing it there, but certainly not with violence, and, supporting the back of her head with the hand that was free, held her thus, awaiting the result.

"The marquise closed her eyes, but uttered not a

word, and there was a moment's silence among the clamorous group, bending over her with such eager curiosity to witness the effect of the miraculous cure: when suddenly it was broken by a loud convulsive shriek from the marquise herself, which was almost echoed by many of those present, so sudden and startling did it burst from her lips. 'Take away your hand! For God's sake, take away your hand!' exclaimed she, in a voice of agony; and, starting to her feet, she endeavoured, with all her strength, to pull my wrist downwards. But, strange to tell, not all the efforts of the marquise, nor those I used myself, could tear away my hand from her forehead! No words can describe the sensation of terror with which I found myself, not only deprived of the faculty of withdrawing my arm, but drawn by some powerful attraction closer and closer still, until it almost seemed as if the fingers were about to bury themselves in the flesh.

"At first, as you may suppose, it was imagined by those present that the whole event was a jest, and the piteous shrieks of the marquise, and my own supplications for assistance, had at first been greeted with roars of laughter: but when it was found that the affair was serious, the company began to take alarm.

It was not, however, till the unfortunate marquise sank back in her chair, fainting and exhausted, that the Duc d'Argenton, recovering from the consternation in which the discovery of the extraordinary event had thrown the whole assembly, seized my wrist in a nervous grasp, and tore it by main force away, drawing with it large patches of skin from the forehead of the marquise, upon which the imprint of my touch remained in bleeding characters. My hand was torn and lacerated likewise, and the pain was unbearable. I bound it in my handkerchief, and gave all the assistance in my power towards the recovery of Madame de Br——, who was conveyed to bed, still in a deep swoon. We all remained in the saloon, which had so lately been the scene of our mad gaiety, with downcast looks and subdued voices, waiting the report of the surgeon who had been sent for to apply the proper remedies to the wounds of the marquise, who was not pronounced out of danger till towards morning. We then dispersed, with the firm determination of having the mystery cleared by Cagliostro himself as soon as possible. Boufflers instantly repaired to M. de Sartines, the head of the police, and he furnished us with two officers, and with all power to make search at the magician's house, or take any steps which we might deem necessary.

"Cagliostro received the visit with the greatest sang-froid, and, without the slightest resistance, allowed the officer to prosecute his search among the various tools and utensils which he employed in his calling. The large jug from which he had taken the liquid contained in the phial which he had given to me, still stood in the same place as on the preceding day. There remained but a few drops, for his patients had been numerous: but these the officer poured into a bottle and conveyed to the nearest chemist, who laughed in the man's face, and pronounced them to be clear water. To my bitter reproaches and angry exclamations, Cagliostro replied, with perfect calmness, that the liquid was pure and innocent when he placed it in my hands, and that if it had grown pernicious it must have been owing to the guilty passions or to the evil sympathies of those who had used it. No further explanation could be elicited, and the affair, which made a great noise at the time, remains a mystery to this hour. As for me, I lost an amiable and valued friend, for the Marquise de Br——, either through fear of the ridicule which attached to the adventure, or from memory of the pain which she had suffered, could never endure me to approach her after that. She would not even grant me an interview in order to express my regrets at the

strange accident which had happened. She avoided me when by chance we met in public, scarcely even returning my salutation, but by a cold and formal acknowledgment. She refused all the efforts of our mutual friends at effecting a reconciliation, and, wearied with my importunities (for I really felt anxious to do away the unjust impression), she ended by returning my letters of apologies and supplications unopened."

The marquise carried the mark of this adventure to her grave, in the shape of a long, narrow scar, which all the art of the coiffeur could not disguise. The corner of one of her exquisitely traced eyebrows, too, had been torn off, and never grew again; but she replaced it with a peculiar contrivance, which she wore there for ever after. The sequel is told by Prince Talleyrand in the following words, which sufficiently indicate the reality of the whole story:—"The girandole ear-drops of emerald and topaz she not only wore no more, but had the cruelty to bestow upon her maid, who adorned herself with them at the next Opera ball, whither she was sent by her mistress to *intriguer* me, while the lovely marquise replaced them at times with long pendants of snowy pearl, emblem of innocence and simplicity, and I soon began to observe, with bitterness,

that, on these occasions, whether I proposed opera, ball, or play, Boufflers always had some 'particular engagement' which prevented him from joining our party."

CHAPTER VII.

Story of the Diamond Necklace.—The Jeweller Boehmer and his great Work.—Cardinal Prince de Rohan.—A Sham's Laboratory.—Strange Dialogue.—Countess de Lamotte.—The Baroness D'Oliva.—Curious Account of her Introduction into the Conspiracy.—Supposed Sale of Boehmer's *Chef-d'œuvre.* —Its Delivery and Disappearance.—Arrest and Trial of the Conspirators.

WHEN Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette commenced their hopeless task of governing France, the national exchequer was exhausted, the people were starving, the seeds of revolution had already been sown by hundreds of pamphleteers, and revolt and civil war appeared inevitable. All society

was in travail, and a great national upheaving of the people was at hand. The ungovernable will of an oppressed and down-trodden nation was about to burst like a volcano, destroying and overturning everything in its course. Happy would that young King and Queen have been had patriots, not sham politicians, been at hand to counsel and advise them how to direct aright that mighty power—"a people's will."

The only expedient the genius of M. Calonne, the Controller of the State, could devise to replenish the exhausted treasury, and thereby to appease the anxious inquiries of the King and Queen, was the creation of loan upon loan. By this means he appeared to sustain the national fabric, although at a cost of something like 50,000*l.* sterling daily, and by bland smiles and fair words succeeded in winning the applause and approbation of the court, and those whose prosperity had for its foundation the flourishing condition of the Stock Exchange. Unfortunately such a state of things could not long continue; loans would not make up deficits: so when the national credit, as well as the national treasury, was exhausted, Monsieur Calonne could find no better road out of the difficulties into which he had steered the ship of state, than by suggesting the

assembling of a convocation of notables—a course that had not been adopted for one hundred and sixty years previously.

It was during these years when France was in a tottering condition from financial exhaustion, that the affair of the Diamond Necklace brought the State to the very verge of ruin, into which it was destined sooner or later to tumble. The history of this world-famed necklace is to be found distributed in the Memoirs of Madame Campan, the Abbé Georgel, the State papers referring to the Affaire du Collier, also in the fourth volume of Carlyle's Miscellaneous Essays. The latter of these works we have chiefly consulted, and are greatly indebted to that distinguished author and critic for much of the information contained in these pages.

During the early and middle part of the eighteenth century there flourished in Paris a celebrated court jeweller, M. Boehmer. He had acquired considerable wealth and celebrity by the prosecution of his calling, but still he cherished an ambition to produce a work which should establish his fame. The idea once formed, his whole life became devoted to its realization. The work was to consist of a necklace of diamonds, which

should eclipse everything of the kind that had been previously made: so that whilst all beholders envied the neck which it encircled, the maker, Monsieur Boehmer, should be regarded as the most wonderful of court jewellers. The design was furnished by M. Taunay. According to Madame Campan, the jewel was originally intended for the Countess du Barry; but be this as it may, the work was not finished till some years after her retirement from court, consequent upon the King's death. This appears to favour the supposition that her retirement was more abrupt than had been anticipated, and that had events been couleur de rose, the countess's would have been the first neck arrayed in the chef-d'œuvre of M. Boehmer.

Plans and models having been prepared, and the costliest diamonds procured, the happy jeweller rejoiced in the completion of his work, the cost of which was estimated at 90,000*l.* sterling. A jewel so costly was only fit for the neck of some Sultana; none such, however, could be found with sufficient money at command to purchase it. It had been offered to Marie Antoinette and declined. The condition of her starving people demanded bread, not stones, which could only dazzle the eye without satisfying their hungry cravings.

At length a purchaser was found in the person of the Cardinal Prince de Rohan.

The Cardinal de Rohan was Bishop of Strasbourg, and had been sent as ambassador to the court of Maria Theresa to negotiate the marriage of her daughter with the Dauphin of France. Whilst performing this delicate service for his royal master, he became enamoured of the beautiful Princess. She had, however, learnt from her mother to dislike and despise the red-coated cardinal; nevertheless, she was obliged to travel to France under his protection. On their arrival he was called upon to supply the place of his uncle, the cardinal archbishop, and to support the trembling young Dauphiness on her first public appearance in France. During his residence at Strasbourg, he had made the acquaintance of Cagliostro; also, it would appear, he had acquired an ascendancy over the pretty, witty, designing Countess Cagliostro; but as the friendship subsisting between the sham doctor and, as he may with truth be styled, the sham cardinal, suffered no diminution in consequence, we may infer that the fair medium was on this, as on other similar occasions, used as a means to work out the problem of her husband's future destiny. From some cause or other, or, perhaps

it would be better to say, from a combination of causes, the Cardinal failed to impress the fair young Princess in his favour. There was about him an expression from which she instinctively recoiled. Upon one occasion, returning from Vienna, he brought a letter from Maria Theresa, but the Dauphiness would not see him, and ordered the letter to be sent to her; while her husband briefly signified that he "would be asked for when wanted."

Cardinal de Rohan had not sufficient faith in the God whom he professed to serve to bear up against the despair which, under circumstances so trying, filled his heart. A strong idea took possession of his mind that the Queen might at length be brought to recall her decision, and with this idea he determined at all risks to see and be recognized by her Majesty. He accordingly stationed himself in the gardens of Trianon, where the chariot containing the Queen passed him by: he was recognized certainly, but only to be laughed at. In this dilemma he consulted Cagliostro, then practising his art in Paris. The Cardinal was, in the first instance, induced to consult the great Sham on account of his pecuniary embarrassments, since Cagliostro pretended to have studied alchemy so satisfactorily as to have succeeded

in the enterprise which all men of his calling were then engaged in, viz. the transmutation of metals. Introduced into his laboratory, while the furnaces were in full operation and the crucible being filled with amalgams, De Rohan was brought to believe that he witnessed the conversion of the baser metals into the true auriferous ore. Supplied with the money he needed, the Cardinal was about to take his leave, but Cagliostro had already penetrated his secret, *i.e.* the unholy passion he entertained for Marie Antoinette. The knowledge of this fact at once placed the Cardinal in Cagliostro's power—a power which, as we shall shortly see, was exerted to some purpose over his clerical dupe.

De Rohan, by way of exhibiting his gratitude to the man who in so marvellous a manner had replenished his purse with gold to the amount of a hundred thousand crowns, was warm in his expressions of gratitude and promises of future assistance if in his power. "Prince," said the Sham, "since your Highness proposes to serve me, I would ask you of what nature might those services be, which your Eminence proposes to render me?"

"Why, in the first place, my credit at court."

"My lord, my lord, you know too well that that credit is much shaken; in fact, I should almost as soon accept the Duke de Choiseul's, and yet he has not perhaps a fortnight to hold his place. Take my word for it, Prince, and as far as credit goes, depend on mine. There is good and sterling gold. Every time that your Eminence is in want of any, let me know the night before, and you shall have as much as you like. And with gold, my lord, cannot all things be procured?" "Not all," murmured the Cardinal, sinking into the grade of a protégé, and no longer even making an effort to regain that of patron.

"Ah, true! I forgot that your lordship desires something more than gold—something more precious than all the riches of the earth. But in this, science cannot assist you; it is the province of magic. My lord, say the word, and the alchemist is ready to become the magician." "Thank you, sir; but I want for nothing more—I desire nothing further," said the Cardinal, in a desponding voice.

Balsamo approached him.

"My lord," said he, "a prince, young, handsome, ardent, rich, and bearing the name of Rohan, ought not to make such a reply to a magician."

"Why not, sir?"

"Because the magician reads his heart, and knows to the contrary."

"I wish for nothing—I desire nothing," repeated the Cardinal, almost terrified.

"I should have thought, on the contrary, that your Eminence's wishes were such as you dared not avow, even to yourself, since they are those of a king!"

The Cardinal started at this open mention of the secret which he thought lay hidden in the innermost recesses of his heart, not even suspected by another.

Cagliostro possessed at least one great talent which no doubt mainly contributed to his success, as it enabled him to half discern the Cardinal's secret, and by assuming a complete knowledge of it, to bring the owner under his power. This was the faculty of rapidly and accurately reading human nature. Herein he was more than a match for the Cardinal, who at length confessed the passion that was burning within him, and inquired of Cagliostro whether he could tell if this love was the love of a madman or not. The great Sham promised to give proof upon this subject if the Cardinal could furnish him with something which had

been placed in contact with the person who inspired his passion. A lock of hair was all that was stipulated for, and this the Cardinal promised to obtain.

The ringlet was procured through the connivance of one of the Queen's waiting-maids, and submitted to Cagliostro—who professed to possess a power of second-sight, by which, with the aid of his wife, whom he used as a medium, he pretended to foretell coming events. Lorenza was able to discern that the hair had been taken from an illustrious head, and that it belonged to one who was married to a husband she did not love. Cagliostro communicated to the impatient Cardinal that the medium had said there was room for hope. "It said so—did it?" exclaimed the Prince.

"Draw your own conclusion," observed Cagliostro. "The oracle said that this woman did not love her husband."

"A thousand thanks," exclaimed the Cardinal; "I never can repay you." And in a transport of joy he took his leave, to ponder over the words of a designing woman, prompted by an artful impostor.

Although it may appear incredible that a man of the Cardinal de Rohan's pretensions should have had

his senses so completely addled by an impudent mountebank; it is nevertheless an historical fact, involving as it did the Queen's honour, happiness, and even her life.

For two years the Cardinal lived upon the promises of Cagliostro, passing his time alternately between Paris and Saverne, and utterly neglected by the Queen. Although forty-nine years old, and with the snows of winter beginning to whiten his brow, he yet clung to his foolish passion with the tenacity of youth. During the whole of this time, M. Boehmer had been endeavouring to effect the sale of his necklace. Tormented by importunate creditors, he at length managed to invade the Queen's retirement, and flinging himself at her feet implored her with passionate tears to do one of two things: either to buy his necklace, or to grant him her royal permission to drown himself in the Seine; but her Majesty indicated a third course which was open to him, namely, to take his necklace to pieces—adding in a tone of rebuke, that if he desired to drown himself, he needed not her permission to do so.

About this time the Countess de Lamotte appeared upon the scene. She was an irregular off-shoot of

royalty, tracing her genealogy back to Henry II. Her father, the last male descendant of the house of Valois, had fallen into dissolute habits, and literally died of starvation in the Hôtel Dieu. Jeanne de Salois (afterwards the Countess de Lamotte) was thrown at the age of twelve years, together with a younger sister and brother, upon the streets of Paris. Attracting the attention of one of the ladies of the court, she was fortunate enough to obtain a pension of thirty pounds per annum from the public purse, and subsequent employment as a dressmaker in the court. At length she married M. Lamotte, a gendarme of no particular pretensions, except such as might arise from his relations with the confraternity of swindlers and black-legs. Four years after his marriage, Lamotte laid down his arms and donned the character of civilian, assuming as well the title of Count de Lamotte. While the husband pushed his fortune at the gambling-tables in the subterranean purlieus of Paris, the Countess his wife took a garret at the Belle Image at Versailles, there to await the course of events. She had often heard during her gossipings at court of Monsieur Boehmer and his celebrated necklace, as well as of Cardinal de Rohan's insane passion; and she conceived the idea that she might improve the occasion for herself by means of

false personations, and by inditing letters purporting to come from the Queen. The Cardinal had for years been the dupe of Cagliostro, and had learnt from him to believe in the discovery of the philosopher's stone, the power of animal magnetism over the souls of men, and other atheistical doctrines with which the world then abounded; and he was thus prepared to give credence to any mysterious tale the Countess de Lamotte might invent, which seemed to favour the success of his passion. Early in January, 1784, the Countess paid her first visit to the Cardinal, and, under the sworn seal of secrecy, informed him that she had worked a way to the ear of the Queen herself. The design of the Countess was to unite in one common bond all the persons we have here introduced. Thus the court jeweller had a marvellous necklace to sell, which the Queen had prudently declined to purchase whilst so many of her subjects were starving. The Cardinal de Rohan was in love with the Queen, and his passion it was one of the designs of the conspiracy to foment by means of forged autographs pretending to emanate from her Majesty. As the affair progressed it became necessary to procure the services of a new character to personate the Queen in her supposed secret interviews with De Rohan.

This rôle being undertaken by the self-styled Baroness D'Oliva—a woman bearing a strong resemblance to Marie Antoinette, it was next made known to the Cardinal, by means of the forgeries and personations of Lamotte, that the Queen desired to purchase the necklace, but was unable owing to the poverty and meanness of her husband. De Rohan was but too ready and willing to mortgage his estates, and render himself liable for the amount if the Queen sought his assistance—a little difficulty which was easily overcome by the counterfeiting hand of Lamotte. So the terms were arranged to the satisfaction of M. Boehmer, who was referred to De Rohan, and the latter in turn sought an interview with the Queen, in order to present her with the casket containing the necklace. The Queen, as it was supposed, granted the Cardinal a private meeting, and received from his hands the precious casket, which she directed her attendant to follow her with to her apartment. Who this attendant was, what became of the necklace and those engaged in the plot, as well as what led to its detection, it is now necessary to relate.

The Countess de Lamotte, as we have said, contrived to make it appear to De Rohan that the Queen desired

to possess the necklace, and would even pay for it by instalments, but feared to acquaint her husband with her desire. It was also given out that her Majesty declined to appear in the business herself, but would be grateful to any one to transact it secretly in her stead. Still delays seemed to threaten the success of the negotiation, owing, as the Countess de Lamotte averred, to the Queen's unacquaintance with business. At last the following course was suggested:—M. Boehmer was to write out his terms, which were as follows:—Sixteen hundred thousand livres to be paid in five instalments; the first, six months after the date of the agreement, and the others every three months till all the money was paid.

To this agreement, M. Boehmer and the Cardinal attached their signatures as consenting to the contract. The Countess de Lamotte pretended to take the paper to the Queen for her signature. After great difficulty and many days pretended to be spent in overcoming the royal scruples, the document was brought back, with the following note attached:—"*Bon. Marie Antoinette de France.*" It only remained now for M. Boehmer to hand over his necklace to the Cardinal, who gave him a receipt for the same, and then sought to transfer the

treasure to her Majesty's safe custody. De Rohan went to the apartment of the Countess de Lamotte the night after the bargain was concluded with Boehmer, followed by an attendant bearing the casket, who, after depositing it, withdrew. Shortly afterwards, according to arrangement, the Queen (D'Oliva) entered, attended by her valet, and the Cardinal presented to her the casket containing the necklace : it was received by the valet, who immediately retired with a respectful bow, bearing his precious string of eighty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds.

The individual who acted the part of valet, as our readers may easily guess, was no other than the Count de Lamotte—who at once hurried with his treasure to England, in order, no doubt, to fulfil the advice of the Queen to M. Boehmer: " Dépécez votre collier." Lamotte's career had only just begun, and we shall have an opportunity of seeing more of him by-and-by.

The necklace having now been disposed of, and the Queen supposed to have placed herself under an obligation to De Rohan, the Cardinal became impatient because her Majesty did not openly receive him at court. But the Countess Lamotte showed herself equal to this emergency. The 3rd July was close at hand,

when M. Boehmer was to receive his first instalment of 320,000 livres. Cagliostro was in Paris, and to him the Countess applied for advice. Fifteen hundred pounds was all that could be squeezed out of the Count de Lamotte, although one jeweller, named Jefferys, of Fleet Street, London, had already purchased diamonds of him to the amount of 10,000*l.*—diamonds which, the pseudo-count assured Mr. Jefferys, had been given to his wife by Marie Antoinette.

On the 19th July M. Boehmer was informed that it was not convenient for the Queen to pay the 320,000 livres, but he is requested to accept the 1,500*l.* as interest. M. Boehmer declined to accede to the proposal, and threatened to seek redress in a court of justice. This was an awkward dilemma for the Cardinal, who stamped and raved, comforting himself, however, with the conviction that the "Queen had committed herself, and that she should be brought to terms."

July 30th had come and gone, and Boehmer, almost maddened with fright, was driven hither and thither without any sign of the promised payment. He again intruded himself into the presence of the Queen, and his surprise and terror may be conceived when her Majesty declared to him, that so far from having had

any transactions with the Cardinal de Rohan relative to the purchase of the necklace, she had not even seen it. Insanity mercifully saved poor Boehmer from a knowledge of the fate of his necklace.

On the 15th of August, the Feast of the Assumption, the Cardinal de Rohan, as Grand-Almoner, had to lead the service which was to be celebrated on that day. He received a summons to the royal apartment, from whence, after a conference of unusual duration, he rejoined the nobility in the galleries at Versailles, waiting the arrival of the royal personages, for the service to commence. Instead of the King and Queen entering, the Minister of Police made his appearance, attended by the officer on guard, and arrested the Cardinal in the name of the King, and forthwith conveyed him to the Bastille. In the course of a few days he was followed by the Countess de Lamotte, the Baroness D'Oliva, and the Counts Cagliostro and Lamotte. Not all Europe—scarcely all the world—could have furnished so consummate a bevy of Shams as were thus lodged together under the roof of the state prison of France.

Their trial lasted nine months. On its termination in May, 1786, De Rohan was exiled from the French court, and betook himself to Brussels, where, it is to be

hoped, in later years he found leisure for a wise repentance. Cagliostro crossed over to England; and the Countess de Lamotte, being convicted as an impostor and swindler, was ordered to be confined in a mad-house, to be whipped, and to be branded with the letter V on the back of each shoulder. At length she contrived to make her escape to London, where she published her lying Memoirs. Worn down by dissipation, anxiety, and poverty, she took refuge in a small lodging-house in Lambeth, where the law officers of the Crown followed her on another charge of robbery. To escape them she flung herself, or was thrown by her associates, from the window, to be borne thence to an unhonoured grave.

The Count de Lamotte, after the death of his wife, returned to Paris, where he was again imprisoned in the Bastille. At the time of the September massacre, he was still in prison. It is reported by Maton that "at one o'clock on the morning of Monday, September 3, the gate leading to our quarters was opened. Four men in uniform, holding each a naked sabre and blazing torch, mounted to our corridor, a turnkey showing the way, and entered a room close on ours, to investigate a box, which they broke open. This done, they halted

in the gallery; and began interrogating one Cuissa, to know where Lamotte was; who, they said, under pretext of finding a treasure, which they should share in, had swindled one of them out of 300 livres, having asked him to dinner for that purpose.

"The wretched Cuissa, whom they had in their power, and who lost his life that night, answered, all trembling, that he remembered the fact well, but could not say what had become of the prisoner. Resolute to find this Lamotte and confront him with Cuissa, they ascended into other rooms, and made further rummaging there; but apparently without effect, for they were heard to exclaim: 'Come search among the corpses, then; for we must know what is become of him.' Among those mangled human forms they found the object of their search; Lamotte was already murdered."

The pseudo-Baroness d'Oliva was acquitted, and subsequently married a man named Beausire, formerly a captain of the National Guard. Monsieur Beausire became a spy in the service of M. Boyenval; but having incurred the enmity of Fouquier Tinville, was, by his order, guillotined. The baroness, his widow, from this time sank out of public notice.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mystery of the Diamond Necklace still unexplained.—Curious Suspicion.—Ill-fated Procession.—Trial of Marie Antoinette.—Retrospect.—Her Journey to France.—*A la Mort.*—Strange Episode of the Revolution.—Progress of Ideas.—Absurd Customs.—Effects produced by the Revolution.

THERE is not a little mystery still hanging over the affair of the Diamond Necklace; not the least part of it being, that of the five hundred diamonds composing it, all brilliants of the first water, cut and worked in a peculiar manner, so as to admit of easy recognition, not one has yet been discovered by the dealers in such articles. We suppose this element of mystery is one of the causes that has made the story of this necklace always so exceptionally attractive.

The following circumstances related by Prince Talleyrand, though confirmed and authenticated as referring to one of the oldest and most distinguished families in France at the time of the occurrence, has never, as far as we are aware, been satisfactorily explained. M. Talleyrand says: "During the time I held the portefeuille of Foreign Affairs, I received a letter from our ambassador at one of the Northern courts, wherein he announced to me, with great excitement, the arrival at his court of the Count de M—— and his wife. They had been presented by himself to the Sovereign; for, although they might, strictly speaking, have been considered *émigrés*, not having returned to France during the reign of Napoleon, yet, as the Count was not at that time the head of his family, and had never meddled in politics, he had a right to claim the protection of the ambassador of his country. The lady had chosen for her début at court the occasion of a royal birthday, and she had made her appearance laden with all her jewels; and 'upon her neck,' wrote the Baron, 'she wore a necklace of the exact pattern of that, concerning which all Europe had been roused before the Revolution —that is to say, the only difference being, that the three scroll ornaments which are so remarkable, and to which I could swear as being the same, are held by a

chain of small rose diamonds instead of the *rivière* by which they were joined before.

"The letter gave us all great diversion at the time, from the excitement in which it was written; but the Emperor, to whom I of course communicated the fact, took it more gravely, and begged me to ask for a drawing of the necklace; which the ambassador found means to obtain, and which was seen to correspond with that preserved among the *pièces du procès* in the Archives. Moreover, on its being submitted to young Boehmer, he declared his full and entire conviction that the jewel was the same, from the remarkable circumstance of a mistake having occurred in the execution of the middle ornament, one side of the scroll containing two small diamonds more than the other, and which, he recollected, had much distressed his father, but which could never have been discovered save by a member of the trade. It was then remembered, and by the Emperor himself first of all, that the lady's mother had been attached to the person of Marie Antoinette, and that she had retired from court and gone to reside abroad soon after the trial of Madame de Lamotte."

The Nemesis of wrong-doing is slow, but sure, in the execution of its decree; but rarely has history recorded

anything so complete as the retribution in the instance of the persons concerned as *dramatis personæ* in the plot we have just been relating:—One was banished from his country; a second, ruined and obliged to fly to England; a third, escaped from a mad-house and thrown from the three-story window of a miserable house in Lambeth; a fourth, massacred, and his body buried amongst the corpses in the Bastille; a fifth, an outcast in the Palais Royal, having seen her husband led to the block as a felon; and last, though saddest of all, a beautiful Queen (how little complicity soever she may have had in the plot) exposed to the malice of a lawless mob, and as a criminal conveyed to the place of public execution, there with her life to pay the terrible penalty of having been connected, though only in public suspicion, with such a fraternity of Shams.

Four years after the trial of the Diamond Necklace conspirators, which all historians agree did the Queen and Royal Family of France incalculable damage, we find that on the 4th of May, 1789, their Majesties formed part of an important procession. The insurgents had forced themselves into Versailles, and compelled the King and his household to return with them to Paris, in order to attend the assembly of the States

General. Had the King only possessed courage, the time had come for him to turn his back for ever upon France and Frenchmen; but unfortunately for him he did not do so, and the procession being formed, Louis with his court brought up the rear: he appeared cheerful and full of hope, and was saluted with plaudits, as well as Necker, his Minister. Not so, however, the Queen; on whom hope seems to shine no more. "Ill-fated Queen! Her hair is already grey with care and trouble; her first-born son is dying; falsehood has ineffaceably soiled her name—ineffaceably while this generation lasts. Instead of *Vive la Reine*, voices insult her with *Vive d'Orleans*. Of her queenly beauty little remains, except its stateliness; not now gracious, but haughty, rigid, silently enduring. With a most mixed feeling, wherein joy has no part, she resigns herself to a day she hoped never to have seen. Poor Marie Antoinette; with thy quick noble instincts, vehement glancings, visions all too fitful, narrow for the work thou hast to do.

"Oh, there are tears in store for thee; bitterest wailings, soft womanly meltings, though thou hast the heart of an Imperial Theresa's daughter. Thou doomed one, shut thy eyes on the future!

"And so, in stately procession, have passed the Elected of France: some towards honour and quick-fire consummation; most towards dishonour; not a few towards massacre, confusion, emigration, desperation: all towards Eternity.

"On Monday, the 14th of October, 1793, a cause is pending in the Palais de Justice, in the new Revolutionary Court, such as those old stone walls never witnessed: the trial of Marie Antoinette. The once brightest of queens, now tarnished, defaced, forsaken, stands here at Fouquier Tinville's judgment-bar, answering for her life! The indictment was delivered to her last night. To such changes of human fortune what words are adequate? Silence alone is adequate.

"Marie Antoinette, in this her utter abandonment and hour of extreme need, is not wanting to herself, the imperial woman. Her look, they say, as that hideous indictment was reading, continued calm; 'she was sometimes observed moving her fingers, as when one plays on the piano.' You discern, not without interest, across that dim revolutionary bulletin itself, how she bears herself queenlike. Her answers are prompt, clear, often of laconic brevity; resolution,

which has grown contemptuous without ceasing to be dignified, veils itself in calm words. After two days and two nights of interrogating, jury-charging, and other darkening of counsel, the result comes out: sentence of Death. 'Have you anything to say?' The accused shook her head, without speech."

What a marked contrast to the royal procession twenty-three years ago, when the young Archduchess left her mother's side to link her fortunes with the heir-apparent to the throne of France! Weber was an eye-witness of the departure of the Princess from Vienna, and thus describes the scene:—"The whole city crowded out; at first with a sorrow which was silent. When she appeared you saw her sunk back into her carriage, her face bathed in tears, hiding her eyes now with her handkerchief, now with her hands, several times putting out her head to see yet again this palace of her father's, whither she was to return no more. She motioned her regret, her gratitude to the good nation, which was crowding here to bid her farewell. Then arose not only tears, but piercing cries, on all sides. Men and women alike abandoned themselves to such expression of their sorrow. It was an audible sound of wail in the streets and avenues of Vienna.

The last courier that followed her disappeared, and the crowd melted away."

"The young imperial maiden of fifteen has now become a worn, discrowned widow of thirty-eight; grey before her time: this is the last procession. A few minutes after the trial ended, the drums were beating to arms in all the sections: at sunrise the armed force were on foot, cannons getting placed at the extremities of the bridges, in the squares, crossways, all along from the Palais de Justice to the Place de la Révolution. By ten o'clock numerous patrols were circulating in the streets; thirty thousand foot and horse being drawn up under arms. At eleven, Marie Antoinette was brought out. She had on an undress of piqué blanc: she was led to the place of execution in the same manner as an ordinary criminal, bound on a cart; accompanied by a Constitutional priest in lay dress; escorted by numerous detachments of infantry and cavalry. These, and the double row of troops all along her road, she appeared to regard with indifference. On her countenance there was visible neither abashment nor pride.

"To the cries of 'Vive la République,' and 'Down with Tyranny,' which attended her all the way, she

seemed to pay no heed. She spoke little to her confessor. The tricolour streamers on the house-tops occupied her attention, in the Streets du Roule and Saint Honoré; she also noticed the inscriptions on the house-fronts.

"On reaching the Place de la Révolution, her looks turned towards the Jardin National, whilom Tuileries; her face at that moment gave signs of lively emotion.

"She mounted the scaffold with courage enough; at a quarter past twelve, her head fell. The executioner showed it to the people, amid universal, long-continued cries of 'Vive la République!'

"This brave woman only survived the fate of her husband about nine months. During her trial, and after her condemnation, she bore herself right queenly, and looked forward with joy to the termination of her sufferings, and the near approach of an immortal crown."

Among the many tragic incidents which marked the career of Marie Antoinette, we cannot forbear giving the following, which is taken from Colmache's *Life of Talleyrand*;—

"One of the most striking examples of the vanity of human wishes may be found in the history of Eugène

de B——, who had been my fellow salver-bearer during the visit of the Bishop of Bordeaux to St. Sulpice. This was considered an office of honour, and bestowed upon the two best wranglers of the season. My companion was one of the handsomest young men I ever beheld: tall and dark, with all the fire of the south in his black eye and swarthy complexion, and the impress of high descent stamped upon his features. He was the natural son of a nobleman holding a high office about the court, and might hope through this channel to rise to the loftiest dignity and honour in the Church. It was not known who his mother was, but it was whispered amongst us that she must have been either a Jewess or Bohemian—a belief to which his singular and chiselled features gave rise. He was of a proud, impassioned character, violent and indomitable; one with whom his teachers and those in authority were obliged to pause before they ventured to rush into open warfare. Neither punishment nor reprimand had ever been able to tame his violent, irascible nature, and, on more than one occasion, had it not been for the great honour which his learning and acquirements conferred on the establishment, he would have been expelled.

"His fiery soul revolted at the idea of entering the

Church. I have seen him shudder with disgust as he donned the black serge dress which denoted his calling, and absolutely refuse to walk in his rank in the processions, which, at certain festivals, formed part of the ceremonies of the day. His dreams were all of a military life and military glory. He told me himself, that, proud as he was, he had *knelt* to his father to beg him to suffer him to embrace the profession of arms. He would have been a knight of Malta—a volunteer—even a private soldier—anything, so long as he might be permitted to follow the bent of his inclinations, and join the army; but his father had said coldly, that his interest in the army was all swallowed up by his other sons, and besides, that he disapproved greatly of this clashing of interests between young men of the same name, who yet bore it under circumstances so different; that he would not countenance any change of profession; that he might rely on his protection so long as he continued obedient to his commands, and that a fortune, such as would satisfy his most ardent ambition, awaited him on the completion of his studies, if he would remain content in the calling which his relatives had chosen for him.

"From such reasoning there was no appeal, and poor

Eugène remained at the *Séminaire*, cursing his fate, and nursing his bitterness against the existing order of things, which thus left him helpless and without defence, the slave of another's will, to follow the very calling he so much despised. You will readily believe that, with these sentiments, he was one of those who yielded the most readily to the influence of the new doctrines which the philosophers of that day had begun to preach with so much success. He had frequently been severely reprimanded, and sometimes even harshly punished for his undisguised approval of the new tenets; for among his class-fellows he sought not to conceal his sentiments, but proclaimed aloud his contempt for the aristocracy, his hatred of the oppressors of the people, his opinion that the King would one day be taken to task for his weak administration; and, above all, his tongue waged loudest war against the Queen, poor Marie Antoinette.

"He left the *Séminaire* with these feelings still existing; he was much younger than myself, and I lost sight of him for some time; I only heard accidentally that he had been appointed to serve one of the chapels of Notre Dame, merely while awaiting a vacancy to occur in some rich prebend or fat abbey, to which his

father might have credit to get him appointed. Meanwhile, the Revolution broke out, and Eugène became free to take the path from which he had been forcibly excluded while dependent on his father's will. Of course, after what I knew of his character, it did not in the least surprise me to learn that he had thrown his frock *aux orties*, or that he had chosen to enter the army; but what really did surprise me to a great degree was the astounding information which was given me by his brother the Marquis de B——, that he had attached himself to the broken remnants of the *gards du corps;* that he had followed them most pertinaciously as a volunteer; that he had twice been severely wounded in defending the Queen from the fury of the mob; and that he was the individual who had carried the Dauphin, at the very risk and peril of his life, across the Allée des Feuillans, on the day of the memorable attack!

"'And what became of him after this?' inquired I of his brother, already in my own mind anticipating the answer, for there were but few of those who had made themselves the least conspicuous in the like manner who escaped.

"'Why, he was of course arrested,' replied the marquis, 'and thrown into prison, but was discharged

on suspicion of madness, although he was not more mad than I am. He remained in Paris without seeking concealment during the hottest period of the *terreur*, and by a most extraordinary chance, was suffered to go unharmed, doubtless protected by the same suspicion of insanity. My father and myself had joined the armée de Condé, and would then have been glad of the acquisition of such a bold, brave spirit to the cause. With the view of his passing the frontier, we succeeded, by dint of the greatest privations, in raising a sum of money, which we had conveyed to him. He thanked us sincerely, but said *he could not desert his post nor join us till his task was fulfilled!* With alarm we heard of him again at the execution of the Queen, when he made himself remarkable by his conduct at the scaffold. It appears that he threw himself beneath the wheels of the cart in which that unfortunate princess was transported to her doom, and narrowly escaped being torn to pieces by the infuriated *poissardes* for his loud and outrageous denunciations of their cruelty. He escaped, however, by his extreme good fortune once again, and we were once more appealed to for money to 'procure him a passage out of this horrid country,' wrote he, 'where neither innocence nor beauty could find favour in the sight of men more savage and cruel than the beasts of

the field.' He refused to tell us in what manner he had disposed of the immense sum we had already, at great risk and inconvenience, sent him for the same purpose. Nevertheless, so great was our anxiety for his safety, and so great the desire that was felt throughout the whole *armée de Condé* for the acquisition of so valuable a member to its ranks, that a subscription was raised among us, poor as we were, and once more was the sum required despatched to this *enfant prodigue*, while we awaited in terror his safe arrival.

"The marquis paused in his narrative, and then added, 'And from that hour to this I have never beheld him, although he was living, until lately, not far from my own château in Brétagne.'

"'Why, then, came he not to join you?' said I. 'Did he escape from the country?'

"'He did.'

"'And what became of him after this?'

"'He became a monk,' replied the marquis. 'With the money we had raised at so much toil and pains, he left the country and went to Italy; but, after the Restoration, finding the rules of his order not severe

enough, he returned to France, and entered the monastery of La Trappe. It is but a few months ago that I received a letter from the superior of the convent, informing me of my brother's death, and mentioning that, although it was against the regulations of the order to admit of the bequeathing of any legacy to the laity, yet, in consideration of the marvellous piety of Brother Eugène, he was willing to forward to me, according to his dying wish, the bequest which he had made me. This letter was accompanied by a small sealed packet, which contained about a yard of narrow black ribbon, and a receipt in due form for a sum of money, which I instantly remembered was the exact amount despatched in the first instance to my brother from the armée de Condé! The writing was in the hand of *Henri Samson, the executioner*, signed by him, and bearing witness that the money had been received on delivery to the Citizen Eugène B—— of the black ribbon which had bound the forehead and held back the hair of the Citoyenne Capet, on the morning of her execution.

"'It was all stained, and stiff with drops of blood. There were a few lines hurriedly written on the back of this paper by the hand of Eugène, wherein he said

that he wished not to leave behind him the suspicion that he had disposed in an unworthy manner of the money which we had with so much difficulty raised. He desired I should become possessor of this relic, and that, if possible, it should be preserved in the family from generation to generation. He then merely added that he felt sure, from the knowledge of my sentiments, that I should cast no reproach upon his memory for having spent the sum in the acquisition of this treasure —this memorial of one who, from having been a martyr upon earth, was now a saint in heaven.' "

The death of Marie Antoinette carries us to that point in the history of the French Revolution, which formed a turning point in the reign of the Shams. It is not our desire to follow to its close that succession of events which ended in the final overthrow of Napoleon the First, and the elevation to the throne of the citizen-king, Louis Philippe. In the interval which elapsed between the death of Marie Antoinette and the election of Louis Philippe, many and important changes took place. The citizen-king was not, as formerly, chosen, by the grace of God, King of France, but by the will of the people, "King of the French." A marvellous change is included in the alteration of title and mode of elec-

tion. The old French kingship expired with the death of Louis XVI., never again to be revived. It broke down, not because the people had become wearied of rule, but because they had ceased to believe in the Shams by whom they had been so long misruled.

Not only France, but the whole world, had become changed, and much that had seemed strong and vigorous was fast sinking into decay. On the other side of the Atlantic a new light had begun to dawn : a Congress had assembled in Pennsylvania, and men of all nations and creeds were rushing thither to raise the standard of the star-spangled banner, and to inaugurate the birth of a new democracy. How great a contrast does this new order of things present to that described by Carlyle, who says : "Time was when men could, of a given man, by nourishing and decorating him with fit appliance to the due pitch, make themselves a king, almost as bees do ; and what was still more to the purpose, loyally obey him when made. The man so nourished and decorated, thenceforth named royal, to implicitly obey (was to be) called loyal." So firmly had these two ideas grown up as the only ones necessary to constitute a sound government, that when Louis XIV. was remonstrated with for too great an interference in the

affairs of State, he silenced all inquiring spirits with the exclamation of "L'Etat c'est moi."

Upon a certain occasion the old Abbé Siéyès quitted the Cathedral of Chartres and repaired to Paris, to ask and obtain an answer to the three following questions: —"What is the Third Estate (*i.e.* the people)? Answer: Everything.—Question: What has it hitherto been in our form of Government? Answer: Nothing.—Question: What does it want? Answer: To become something."

While the good Abbé was propounding these plain matters of fact, the nobility were engaged discussing their supposed grievances. They presented a solemn memorial to the King, in which they urged that "if such visionary sentiments as those enunciated by the Abbé Siéyès were listened to, the privileges of the nobility and monarchy, of the Church and State, were all in danger."

In after years, when this great struggle of the French Revolution was ended, and men began to understand the lesson they had learnt under such hard task-masters, Mirabeau uttered these words:—"Above all things, my friend, slight not public opinion. Listen with open ears

to public clamour;—for remember the voice of the people is the voice of God."

Instead of listening to the voice of the people, which gave warning over and over again of the danger that threatened the State, the nobles, who with the King then constituted the "State," when not actually engaged in plundering and tyrannizing over the people, were given up to all sorts of foolishness in the way of dress, the extremes of etiquette, &c., which caused them to be regarded alternately with abhorrence and contempt.

One of the absurd customs prevalent at the time was to send a little note *(petit billet)* of inquiry every morning to the person beloved, who was expected to send a written reply. M. Colmache says: "I was once thoughtless enough to rally a lady upon this custom, when she replied, angrily, 'Monsieur, although Monsieur le Comte and myself may not choose to live together, yet our mutual position, and the rank we both hold in society, prevent our enjoying the privilege of dispensing with the common customs and formalities of the circles in which we have both been bred. In renouncing all idea of love for each other, we have not renounced good breeding.' The same ceremonial

billet was, according to custom, sent to Talleyrand every morning by the Princess, whose story in connection with Cagliostro has already been told, although he never encouraged her absurdity by sending a written answer.

"One evening the Princess had retired earlier than usual, and, shortly after, just as the company was breaking up, a note was handed to the Prince by her page. We were all rather alarmed at first, fearing that she might have been seized with illness; but presently the billet was handed about amid roars of laughter; there was nought to fear; it ran thus: 'Cher Prince—How are you this morning? I myself am far from well, having passed a wretched night, although when I *did* sleep, I dreamed of you, which was some little consolation amid all my agitation and restlessness.' The note bore the morrow's date, and had been delivered by the careless servant some twelve or fourteen hours too soon! Upon inquiry, it proved to be the habit of the Princess to write these little billets over-night, to avoid being disturbed in the morning; they were laid on her toilet-table, whence the servant had taken the one in question, without inquiry and without reflection."

These and many similar absurdities were swept away

by the Revolution; which, if it caused many hardships, did at the same time show men a more useful career than that followed during the heyday of the Pompadours, the Du Barrys, the Cardinals de Rohan and Abbé Georgels. Shams, like other evils, still continue, and men are as ready as ever to cheat and be cheated; but such a career, as history teaches us, is sure to bring misery to the deceived, and sooner or later ruin to the deceivers. In no instance has it proved otherwise in relation to those we have already considered, and further investigation would but confirm this result.

CHAPTER IX.

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The Age of Reason.—Vincent Priessnitz.—Dr. and Mrs. Hahnemann.—Helen Berkeley's account of her visit to them.—The Quack Doctor.—The *Dispensary*.—The Legal Profession.—Religious Shams.

THE French Revolution swept away the follies of Alchemy, Necromancy, Astrology, and many of the old-world forms of imposture; but men at the same time gave up worshipping God, and took to worshipping science and reason instead: so that every new theory required to be built upon some sort of scientific

basis; the teachings of the Fathers in Physic as well as in Religion and Politics, no longer retaining the confidence of the public. We find as a natural consequence that novel systems were introduced in the treatment of diseases; and being trumpeted forth with the loudest scientific pretensions, secured hosts of believers. For it was the age of reason, which it is our firm conviction is often an exceedingly delusive faculty. Take for instance any of the opinions which for a time governed mankind: Manichæism, Arianism, Donatism—had the followers of these no reason for their belief: and does not the reason of Mohammedans point to a belief in their prophet, and of the Mormons to a firm trust in theirs?

We will give you a Catholic, a Protestant, High Church or Low Church, a Calvinist, and a Unitarian, all equally honest, educated, intelligent and reasonable, and you must certainly marvel at the widely different goals to which their reason leads each of them. Their reason told the vast majority of the Jews that Christ was a devil; and at that time we have no hesitation in believing there lived men among them as keen, clever, and intelligent as any among ourselves now. Therefore, as we have said, it is our firm convic-

tion that in the matter of all highest belief this mere human faculty of reason is not to be depended upon, and often serves only as the barometer to gauge the tendency of the will, unless when moored to some immovable holdfast beyond man's visible horizon. On this principle we may account for the delusions into which history shows that the worshippers of mere reason have ever been betrayed. The rejection of old beliefs by the French people opened the door as it were for new systems; men's reason rather than their imagination had to be appealed to, and everything was required to have a smack of science for its foundation. Free-thinking and religious cant took the place of superstition and priestcraft in religion, and water and globules took the place of Mesmerism and the cantharadic tincture.

The great water-curer was Vincent Priessnitz, of Grafenberg—the son of a small farmer in Austrian Silesia. Whilst recommending for the treatment of his patients, fresh air, exercise, plain diet, and cheerful society, he professed above all to accomplish his cures by the aid of water. So long as people were contented to place themselves in a condition most favourable to health, and left nature to her unguided

efforts, they usually, if free from organic disease to begin with, derived benefit from the treatment; but all the other advantages would have been of no avail unless some special agent was put forward as the panacea on which to rest their faith. This, as we have said, was water, and assuredly no remedy could have been made use of which was less injurious. So long as the water does not get into men's brains, and lead them to become the dupes of the Shams,—who, without possessing any medical qualification, take up with Hydropathy as a trade, and profess, through its agency, to cure all diseases—we may not regret the introduction of the system by Priessnitz, although he was a Sham, pure and simple.

Hahnemann, the founder of Homœopathy, was born in 1755, just in time to take the field with his theory of globules, and to occupy the pinnacle of fame from which Cagliostro and Mesmer were shortly to be ignominiously hurled. After a life of varied fortune, and expulsion from Leipsic as a Quack, Hahnemann settled in Paris, where he divided his labours with his wife, and lived in a state of ostentatious splendour only equalled by Cagliostro himself. Helen Berkeley, describing her visit to the establishment of Dr. and Mrs.

Hahnemann, at Paris, speaks in glowing terms of the palatial style of their residence. The liveried footmen at the door, the gorgeous furniture of saloon after saloon through which she was conducted by relays of men in plush and powder, caused her to exclaim: "I already knew something of Hahnemann's celebrity, but my opinion of his skill was marvellously fortified by the magnificent splendour of the apartments through which I was conducted." Of course, the display was made in order to dazzle the eyes and flatter the vanity of those who were seeking the great man's presence. Just as in the present day on visiting the establishment of one of the fashionable West-End quacks, the patient is conducted upstairs and downstairs, through gorgeously furnished drawing, dining, and billiard rooms, and finally ushered into the penetralia of the owner, where he is left to wonder like Helen Berkeley at all the wealth displayed before him. The effect of all this show, so unlike the modest apartments of the honest practitioner, is to make the patient feel he is about to be ushered into the presence of some great Hakim, and to reconcile him to the fee that is about to be demanded of him.

England has been designated the "Quack's Paradise,"

and well it may be when we consider that 700,000*l.* is annually spent in patent medicines alone—a sum larger than is expended upon the support of all the hospitals and dispensaries in the Metropolis—institutions devoted to the alleviation of human suffering, whose inmates receive the gratuitous services of medical men occupying the highest ranks in their profession.

To return to Helen Berkeley's account of her visit to Dr. Hahnemann. After waiting several hours admiring the magnificent furniture, paintings, and sculpture, she was conducted through a second series of state-rooms, and ushered into the presence of this modern Æsculapius. She gives the following account of the interview:—

"I stood in the presence of Monsieur le Docteur and Madame Hahnemann. The chamber I now entered was more simply decorated than any I had visited. In the centre of the room stood a long table; at its head a slightly elevated platform held a plain-looking desk covered with books. In front of the desk sat Madame Hahnemann with a blank volume open before her, and a gold pen in her hand. Hahnemann was reclining in a comfortable arm-chair on one side of the table. They rose to receive me, and I presented to Madame Hahne-

mann a letter of introduction with which I had been furnished.

"While Madame Hahnemann was glancing through the letter, I had an opportunity of taking a survey of Hahnemann's person, for he had not yet resumed his seat. His slender and diminutive form was enveloped in a flowered dressing-gown of rich material, and too comfortable in its appearance to be of other than Parisian make. The crown of his head was covered by a skull-cap of black velvet; from beneath it strayed a few thin snowy locks, which clustered about his forehead, and spoke of the advanced age which the lingering freshness of his florid complexion seemed to deny. His eyes were dark, deep-set, glittering, and full of animation.

"As he greeted me, he removed from his mouth a long painted pipe, the bowl of which nearly reached to his knees; but, after the first salutation, it was instantly resumed, as I was apprised by the volumes of blue smoke which began to curl about his head, as though to veil it from my injudicious scrutiny.

"Madame Hahnemann gracefully expressed her gratification at the perusal of the letter, read a few lines

of it to her husband, in an under-tone, and made several courteous remarks to me, while the doctor bowed, without again removing his pipe. It was evident that he did not immediately recognize the name of the writer, and he was too much accustomed to receive letters of introduction to pay any attention to the contents.

"Madame Hahnemann placed herself at the desk, with the doctor on her right hand and myself on her left. I stated the principal object of my visit, attempting to direct my conversation to Hahnemann, rather than to his wife. But I soon found that this was not *selon la règle*. Madame Hahnemann invariably replied, asking a multiplicity of questions, and noting the minutest symptoms of the case as fast as my answers were given. Several times she referred to her husband, who merely replied, with a pipe between his teeth, 'Yes, my child;' or, 'Good, my child, good!'

"And these were the only words that I as yet had heard him utter. After some time spent in this manner, Madame Hahnemann accidentally asked, 'Where was your friend first attacked?' 'In Germany, I replied.'

"Hahnemann had been listening attentively, although he had not spoken. The instant I uttered these words

his whole countenance brightened, as though a sunbeam had suddenly fallen across it; and he exclaimed, in an animated tone, 'Have you been in Germany? You speak German, don't you?' The conversation had hitherto been carried on in French; but the ready 'Certainly,' with which I answered his question, apparently gave him unfeigned pleasure.

"He immediately commenced a conversation in his native tongue, inquiring how I was pleased with Germany—what I thought of the inhabitants, and their customs—whether I found the language difficult—how I was impressed with the scenery, and continuing an enthusiastic strain of eulogium upon his beloved country for some time.

"I was too much delighted with the doctor's animated and feeling remarks to change the topic. Yet I felt that he had lost sight, and was fast inducing me to do the same, of the primary object of my visit. Madame Hahnemann, however, though she smiled and joined in the conversation, had not forgotten the host of good people who were taking lessons of patience in the antechambers. She finally put an end to the discourse by a gentle admonition to her husband, warning him

that he must not fatigue himself before the hours devoted to business were half spent.

"Turning to me she apologized for the interruption, saying they received their friends in the evening, and would be happy to see me; then immediately returned to the subject of my friend's indisposition.

"After a few more inquiries I received some medicine from her hands, with special directions concerning the manner in which it was to be used. She also presented me with a paper, on which the different kinds of food, vegetables, seasoning, and odours which counteracted the effects of homœopathic remedies were enumerated."

From this scene the reader may form an estimate of Homœopathy as practised by Dr. and Mrs. Hahnemann. The motto they assumed to designate their system was, "Similia similibus curantur," which might be literally interpreted to mean, "old women curing old women."

Truly has Carlyle remarked, "O my Brother! be not thou a Quack! Die rather, if thou wilt take counsel; 'tis but dying once, and thou art quit of it for ever. Cursed is that trade; and bears curses thou knowest not how long—ages after thou hast departed, and the

Dr and Mrs Hahnemann.

wages thou hadst are all consumed; nay, as the ancient wise have written,—through Eternity itself, and is verily marked in the doom-book of God."

A Quack is designated in our dictionaries as "A boastful pretender to medical skill which he does not possess;" Quackery is designated, "The boastful pretentions or mean practices of an ignoramus, particularly in medicine." We have endeavoured to show that in addition to the above there are other kinds of quacks.

To the antiquarian, the description given of a quack doctor by Sir Thomas Overbury, in the year 1626, may not be altogether without interest. The book is somewhat quaint in its style; and must have been looked upon as an oracle in its day, for it passed through twelve editions. It was entitled—"His Wife: with additions of new characters, and many other witty conceits never before printed. It contains many original expressions, which cannot fail to amuse the reader. The poem of a wife is followed by characters, or wittie descriptions of the properties of sundry persons." After describing a "good woman," a "dissembler," a "courtier," and a "virtuous widow," he devotes a chapter to an "ordinary widow," which is followed by the character of the Quack, which Sir Thomas illus-

trates as follows: "Hee is a mountebanke of a larger bill than a taylor; if he can but cure by names enow of diseases to stuffe it with, 'tis all the skill he studies for. Hee tooke his first being from a cunning woman, and stole his black art from her while hee made her sea-coale fire. All the diseases sinne brought upon man, dothe he pretend to be curer of; when the truth is, his maine cunning is corn-cutting. He hath put out more eyes than the small-pox; made more deafe than the Cataracts of Nilus; lamed more than the gout; shrunk more sinews than one that makes bow-strings. To one that would be speedily cured, hee hath more delayes and doubles than a hare or a law-suite. He seeks to set us at variance with nature, and rather than he shall want diseases he'll beget them. His especial practice is upon women; hee labours to make their minds sicke, ere their bodies feele it; and then there's work for the dog-leech."

Medical impostors invariably set down their patrons as simpletons for consulting them. This is not at all to be wondered at, for however successful they may be in deceiving others, they cannot deceive themselves. They know, of course, that they do not possess the knowledge they pretend to; and their greatest wonder

is how people fail to detect the imposition practised upon them. The tale is told of a celebrated London surgeon who was unable to get into practice, although a man of undoubted ability and learning, and who possessed in the highest degree the confidence of his professional brethren. Happening to be called upon to attend a notorious quack who lived in his neighbourhood, and who was driving a prosperous trade, the surgeon inquired whether he could give any reason as to how it happened that he was left almost without a patient, while his neighbour the quack had carriages and patients at his doors all day long. The quack replied by asking the surgeon the following question: —"How many out of the hundred people passing by at the present time, do you think, would be set down as wise enough to judge between the merits of us two?" The surgeon suggested that, judging by their physiognomies, he should estimate ten as the outside of the proportion who would decide in his favour. "Then," said the quack, "you take the wise men, and give me the fools, and the chances of success will be nine to one in my favour."

In the year 1718 a little book was published called the *Dispensary*, which contained a description suitable

to the quacks of those days. As we have before said, the quack adapts himself to the ever-changing conditions of the times; and so the style of 1718 would hardly come up to the requirements of the present day. Poor and illiterate people have ceased to supply the class from whom the quacks derive the greatest amount of their gains. They have now more aristocratic patients to deal with, to whom the following style of a quack's establishment would come rather amiss:—

"Long has he been of that amphibious fry,
Bold to prescribe and busie to apply:
His shop the gazing vulgar's eyes employs,
With foreign trinkets and domestic toys.
Here, mummies lay most reverently stale,
And there the tortoise hung her coat o' mail.
Nor far from some huge shark's devouring head,
The flying fish their finny pinions spread.
Aloft in rows large poppy-heads were strung,
And near, a scaly alligator hung:
In this place, drugs in musty heaps decay'd,
In that dry bladders and drawn teeth were laid.
An inner room receives the numerous shoals
Of such as pay to be reputed fools.
Globes stand by globes, volumes on volumes lye,
And planetary schemes amuse the eye,
The sage in velvet chair here lolls at ease,
To promise future health for present fees."

Perhaps the most absurd belief in the efficacy of a

quack remedy was that associated with Sir Kenelm Digby's "sympathetic powder." This nostrum had a very successful run, and was supposed to heal all manner of wounds by being applied to the weapon with which the wound was inflicted. In the present day such an instance of popular credulity excites in us a contemptuous smile at the weakness and folly of our ancestors. Sir Walter Scott makes the following allusion to it in the third canto of his "Lay of the Last Minstrel:"—

> "But she has ta'en the broken lance,
> And washed it from the clotted gore,
> And salved the splinter o'er and o'er:
> William of Deloraine in trance,
> Where'er she turned it round and round,
> Twisted as if she galled his wound;
> Then to her maiden she did say,
> That he should be whole man and sound."

The only one of the three learned professions, as they are called, that has succeeded in keeping itself free from *external* quackery is the Law. No one ever heard of a quack lawyer. The great influence the members of the legal profession have acquired in both Houses of Parliament has enabled them to fence themselves round so effectually, and to cast such a barrier of protection about their calling, that no one can assume the duties

and practice of the law without having previously obtained a legal qualification entitling him to do so. In this respect a man cannot pretend to possess a title without having given guarantees to society of his fitness to bear it. Whereas, unfortunately, any ignoramus may assume a medical title, and by means thereof swindle and kill the public without being amenable to any punishment, except the very doubtful one of being denied payment for his pretended services in a court of justice.

The high-minded and honourable lawyer commands our highest admiration and respect, as all will bear testimony who have been fortunate enough to find such a man for their adviser. The doings of men like Quirk, Gammon and Snap, who are introduced as having charge of the affairs of Tittlebat Titmouse, Esq., and of Dodson and Fogg, the speculating Old Bailey lawyers, who figure in the imaginary trial of Bardell *v.* Pickwick, excite the disgust of their profession. Nevertheless, all the dark deeds—all the mean, dishonourable actions, which, rightly or wrongly, are imputed to lawyers, either have been committed by one of their own order, or they have not been committed at all. So we are not quite convinced of the advanage of

excluding outside impostors from the legal ranks. Many a case of hard-hearted cruelty—of wanton and disreputable *mala fides*, have now to be borne, as the deliberate doings of men educated to a high and noble calling. The honest lawyer (the majority are of that class, although the public seem to doubt it) can never cast from him the stigma which attaches to his calling, by saying such things were done by the outsiders, the mere quack pretenders, for in the law no such order exists.

The subject of Shams, in the broad acceptation of the term, is almost of universal application. There appears to be more or less of what is commonly called "humbug" in every walk of life. Sad indeed is it to think that even sacred things are sometimes profaned by the impostor, and the road to the altar made to point the way to fortune. We have seen how the great church dignitary, Cardinal de Rohan, made use of his high position to endeavour to carry out a design as base and wicked as ever entered into the heart of man. A picture has been presented to us in the Pickwick Papers of another class of Clerical Sham, in the person of the Deputy Shepherd, Brother Stiggins. The particular kind of brotherhood over whom Stiggins assumed the

pastorate is not stated; the description, however, given by Dickens is so perfect a photograph of the class from which it is taken, that we feel no apology is needed for introducing it here:—

"He was a prim-faced, red-nosed man, with a long thin countenance, and a semi-rattlesnake sort of eye—rather sharp, but decidedly bad. He wore very short trousers, and black cotton stockings, which, like the rest of his apparel, were particularly rusty. His looks were starched, but his white neckerchief was not; and its long limp ends straggled over his closely-buttoned waistcoat in a very uncouth and unpicturesque fashion. A pair of old, worn beaver gloves; a broad-brimmed hat; and a faded green umbrella, with plenty of whalebone sticking through the bottom, as if to counterbalance the want of a handle at the top, lay on a chair beside him; and being disposed in a very tidy and careful manner, seemed to imply that the red-nosed man, whoever he was, had no intention of going away in a hurry. To do the red-nosed man justice, he would have been very far from wise if he had entertained any such intention; for, to judge from all appearances, he must have been possessed of a most desirable circle of acquaintance, if he could have reasonably expected to

be more comfortable anywhere else. The fire was blazing brightly, under the influence of the bellows; and the kettle was singing gaily, under the influence of both. A small tray of tea-things was arranged on the table; a plate of hot buttered toast was gently simmering before the fire; and the red-nosed man himself was busily engaged in converting a large slice of bread into the same agreeable edible, through the instrumentality of a long brass toasting-fork. Beside him, stood a glass of reeking hot pine-apple rum-and-water, with a slice of lemon in it; and every time the red-nosed man stopped to bring the round of bread to his eyes, with the view of ascertaining how it got on, he imbibed a drop or two of the hot pine-apple rum-and-water, and smiled upon the rather stout lady as she blew the fire."

The principle upon which the Rev. Mr. Stiggins proceeded was to obtain an influence over a portion of the family into which he gained admission, and then to perpetuate it by extolling the virtues of those whom he intended to convert, while he deprecated in good set terms what he described as the "obderrate bosom of the man of wrath."

Such was the method of proceeding adopted in the case of Mrs. Weller, and, doubtless, many deputy-

shepherds are still doing the same work amongst the unsophisticated families of the Wellers. It is sincerely to be hoped they may all share the same fate as did Brother Stiggins at the hands of the senior Weller. Nor must the dying declaration of the poor deluded Mrs. Weller be passed by unnoticed. It contains a moral to be met with in many a household, though dressed up in language peculiarly its own. "Veller, says she, I'm afeard I've not done by you quite wot I ought to have done; you're a wery kind-hearted man, and I might ha' made your home more comfortabler. I begin to see now, she says, 'ven it's too late, that if a married 'ooman vishes to be religious, she should begin with dischargin' her dooties at home, and makin' them as is about her cheerful and happy, and that vile she goes to church, or chapel, or wot not, at all proper times, she should be wery careful not to con-wert this sort o' thing into a excuse for idleness and self-indulgence. I *have* done this, she says, and I've vasted time and substance on them as has done it more than me; but I hope ven I'm gone, Veller, that you'll think on me as I wos afore I know'd them people, and as I raly wos by nature."

"Susan," says Mr. Weller, "you've been a wery

good vife to me, altogether; don't say nothin' at all about it; keep a good heart, my dear; and you'll live to see me punch that 'ere Stiggins's head yet." "She smiled at this, Samival," said the old gentleman, stifling a sigh with his pipe, "but she died arter all!"

Reflections similar to Mrs. Weller's have no doubt passed through the minds of many a weak and credulous woman, when she came to reckon up how little substantial good she had derived from the teaching of men whom she finds out but too late to have been only religious shams: who have helped to make shipwreck of her happiness here, and failed to impart that substantial comfort at the last, which only the true shepherd can do.

Of the causes which led to the enormous growth of Shams towards the end of the last century and the beginning of the present, perhaps the chief of them was, as we have seen, an over-weening confidence in the infallibillty of human reason, a disregard of the old-world principles of morality and faith, and a blind worshipping of cold philosophy and spurious science. We have seen that mere philosophy and reason are of themselves but blind guides, unless piloted by faith in God and love to man: true faith, that, honestly and

humbly cherished as a gift from beyond us, is capable of winging the little child over the floundering philosopher's head, up into the presence of Him who has said to Babel-building men: "Thus far shall ye go, and no farther."

The absence of faith is the eternally unchangeable test of a bad moral life—a life which would seek to shun the light and hide itself in congenial darkness; and this test, rightly applied, will let in a flood of knowledge upon the leaders of the French Revolution, as well as upon other pseudo-leaders of men, whom it is occasionally given to each of us to see lording it in high places. Among such rulers of darkness, Shams, as we have endeavoured to show—and these not medical only—hold a prominent place.

We have already seen into what a demons' dance of death the French revolutionists were led by pure reason, as it is called, yet marked by a credulity, grovelling and abject, that would have done no honour even to the old priests of Baal. Some of the moral aspects of society upon which Shams feed, shall be touched on in our next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

On some current Shams.

IN the preceding chapters of our little book we have endeavoured to present to our readers some remarkable phases of imposture, not in any precise or methodical way—indeed it would have been difficult, if not useless, to have applied any method to such a subject—but altogether in the discursive and spontaneous manner in which they occurred to our mind. Our readers will perceive that most of the characters we have here introduced have had more or less to do with the Great French Revolution, and in the legacy they bequeathed to their descendants through that event, are,

to our way of thinking, not irresponsible for the present disastrous state of the affairs of our gallant neighbours. For instance, the present Franco-Prussian war we regard as the legitimate offshoot of the wars of the first Revolution and first Empire; and the promoters of those famous quarrels as responsible for the recent slaughter round Sedan, as they were for the carnage of Leipzic or Waterloo. Under these circumstances we think that it will not be uninteresting to many readers to renew their acquaintance with some of the characters who figured in the first French Revolution; and it is therefore with the less hesitation that we have determined to give our little book to the public. We have called it "A book about Shams," inasmuch as nearly all the characters introduced in it were Shams pure and simple; but as regards most of the other persons who figured in that great drama, we ourselves confess an inclination to believe that they were all more or less infected with the endemic shammery of their time. Far be it from us to insinuate aught against the present leaders of the French nation; we believe and hope that there are honest men among them who will make no little sacrifice to stop the carnage which has lately been disgracing the Continent, like the baleful tail of the red comet which swept over it during the latter end of

the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries,—and now that they have flung their Jonah overboard, that their boat may sail more safely and gallantly for the future.

In preparing our little book it had not originally been our intention to do aught more than present our readers with a few light and salient sketches—sketches that a man might run and read and digest as he runs. In looking back at the previous sheets, however, we were forcibly reminded of the famous Hidalgo's dinner, which consisted of no meat but lots of tablecloth: of Father Prout's advice to Thackeray—

> "Nor set, like Shakspeare's Zany, forth,
> With lots of sack,
> Of bread one pennyworth;"

and of Thackeray's own table, which with jellies for those who liked them, he made it a point of furnishing with plenty of solids for senior stomachs as well. These considerations, then, determined us to furnish our readers, if possible, at least with one penn'orth of solid pudding. Many of the thoughts contained in the present chapter were suggested by a friend, who found the previous sketches a little too light for his digestion. We hope the diet here supplied will be sufficiently sus-

taining for those, who like our friend, regard Shams and Shammery only from a moral point of view.

In looking at Shams from the moral point of view, we neither propose to preach a sermon—for of sermonizing in general we have a horror—nor do we presume to give good advice, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred we have always found to be a sham of itself; neither do we preach from the Bible—the only effective preaching from which is the leading a good life, the preacher himself being dumb,—nor from partisanship of any sort, which of its own nature is everlastingly false, deluding poor human beings into idolatry of their fellow-men and away from the worship of abstract eternal truth, in which there is no more partisanship than there is in the clouds of heaven above our heads. But in this following chapter we merely propose to treat of some matters—the matters themselves may sometimes be poetical and sometimes rough; but we shall only endeavour to enunciate stern facts—using rough and poetical language, not for the sake of the one or the other, but only where roughness or poetry appear to us the exactest vehicles for the expression of our meaning—in this chapter we propose to treat of matters in connection with Shams and

Shammery, which have fallen within the experience of our own life; and nothing more. The rest we leave to our readers' own intelligence—praying them to try the facts which we here put forward by the teaching of their Bible and of their own lives; each man's life who has lived for more than a few years, if rightly interpretated—so runs our firm conviction—being fraught with lessons, for good or for evil, as terribly important as those contained in the national history of the Jews.

And to one fact we would earnestly beg our readers' attention, namely, that the men who have led from the beginning, or who have turned away into the purest and noblest lives, are always the men who think in a way the farthest removed from the current ideas of their time; which, for the most part, are ephemeral, and pass away with the occasions which give rise to them, bearing away the shams who trust in them to the goal of their own doom. Our thought is made plain by that terrible French Revolution; during which millions of men fought with, and murdered each other, for ideas which had enslaved them like tyrants, and which the lapse of a few years proved to be utterly false—ideas which passed away into the tomb of their own falsehood, but bore with them upon their journey, never-

theless, the souls of innumerable men. The more particularly do we refer to the French Revolution, and the incidents and persons connected with it, inasmuch as we regard that great event as the most virulent outburst of Shammery which has occurred in the history of the world, Pagan or Christian, ever since history began; and because it appears to present to us the most favourable standpoint from which to take a survey of the peculiar natural phenomena with which we here presume to deal. Look, for instance, at that sham Most Christian King, Louis XV., reared in an atmosphere of lies, taught by his sycophants and harlots to believe himself a god, graduating slowly but inevitably into an *anima stuprata*, whose wicked old life at length succeeded in limning death in those tints of ineffable horror which immorality alone can temper upon its palette. Surely not political, nor diplomatic, nor historical, but Moral science alone can teach us to gauge the proportions of such a Sham as that.

The same may be said of the Cagliostros, the Mesmers, the Fouquier Tinvilles, the Marats, the Robespierres, and the other monsters who came uppermost in that awful deluge—not of waters, but of shams: the bale-lights thrown highest from that frightful volcano, whose

preparatory fires, it is our belief, must have gone down hundreds of years into the subterranean chambers, not of French history only, but of the world's history at large. But this we say merely in passing; for here it is only our design, taught by the few salient sketches which have just been gathered together for us, to speak of some matters in connection with shams and shammery possessing a living interest in the present day.

And here at the outset we beg to disclaim the remotest intention of speaking one harsh word against any of our fellow-men, Protestant or Catholic, Pagan or Jew, who honestly think differently from us; for we revere and love them all as members of our brotherhood of the human race—vast though it be when regarded from our lowly standpoint, but only a little struggling foolish family of men—to whom God nevertheless has thought well to show the marvellous riches of his light and love—when regarded from the Angel standpoint in the far heavens. It is merely our design to speak against Shams from the platform of Morality alone—a platform where we believe that all the sections of the Christian family may meet us and shake hands. Also we beg to protest at the beginning that against the great army of the press we have no designs—unless it may be against

those portions of it which preach fine-flowing morality in one column, and advertise the filthiest immorality in the next, showing an angel face and a devil's hoof;—we have no designs upon the honourable portion of the press—an army which we believe mainly fights for good; but we know it is an army which must needs be kept at its full strength by the accession of raw recruits, who frequently fire their popguns at random, to the danger less often of their enemies than their friends. Only against the stereo'd shams which these raw recruits keep propounding as gospel do we design to direct our attack,—believing, from what we know of them, that for so doing the veteran soldiers of the press will delight to thank us. It is our desire, then, to teach these youthful tirailleurs to fight like manlier and nobler men, and not with lies as weapons: for if the intelligent reader will consider that every man who tells a lie is a sham, in so far as he is a liar, he will at once perceive what valid cause we have for our warfare. Indeed, it may be safely asserted that immediately from their creation men commenced to tell lies and be shams, until the realm of shams and lies grew and is growing into dimensions which it is perfectly bewildering to contemplate.

This position of ours is clearly unassailable; but one

remarkable point of it has more frequently than others presented itself to our minds, namely, that the old patriarchs had evidently a clear conception of God, and who He is: but that this conception, in process of time, and as their children migrated east and west, the Shams laid hold of and marred into the nightmare horrors of Pagan mythology. Let us take the serpent-worship of India for instance, of which we have lately heard so much: what is it, if not the paganized formula of some higher belief that was lost—the belief that the soul of man has a great spiritual enemy to contend with, of infinite cunning: the pike of little fishes in the stream supernatural? And say, O iconoclast of old beliefs, have you not yourself ever felt the serpent coiled round your heart, and been fascinated as a bird in his awful gaze? If not, we can only respectfully assure you of your exceeding great verdancy. In the east, then, and the west, the shams have been triumphant from the beginning, deforming and besliming the old-world apocalypse of One who should crush the serpent's head into adoration of the sloughy reptile, the loves of Jupiter, and the Prometheus Bound,—and erecting an empire of astounding dimensions, in which truth is a foreigner, jeered at and despised, without a home, without a refuge, or a place to rest its head.

It is upon this enormous realm of the Shams, then, that we here propose to make a descent, and to bombard a few of their prominent fortresses at a closer range. No doubt, to some of our friends, our expedition—filibustering if you will—will appear marvellously quixotic, the fight being so terribly unequal; but we have rare confidence in this fine old weapon of ours, the Naked Truth, which has roared grandly upon some great occasions in the world's history, but which in this age of civilization and conventional tenderness for shams, is seldom unmasked. And here we feel ourselves in a much stronger position than the eloquent preacher, who is obliged by the necessity of his case to be tender of his hearers' prejudices—those thieves of the human soul—and to expend his eloquence in æsthetical palaver, the meat and drink of shams, for fear of preaching to empty walls. And even more strongly still does our position hold good of the teacher for fame: for if you teach for glory, you must tickle the shams with their own doctrine, that your name may be known and cherished as long as there is a Sham to feel that you are a man after his own heart.

But, "Here," interposes the keenly intelligent reader,—"Here is another babbler about 'the truth.'

The teacher to the right, and the teacher on the left, and the teacher at the street corner and round the street corner—they have all got it; and a pretty muddle they are making of it!—crying, 'Come buy, come buy!' like loud-tongued butchers in the market—'Come buy of me, that other shop sells trash!' If we were to judge from her teachers, Truth must be some crazy, inconsequential creature, who could be no ornament to our homes, and had better be left in her native skies. But I bet you my life that none of them have got it at all:—if you look into their eyes—that is, if any one looks who can see—you will find *there* the sharp human intelligence, and nothing more: not a ray of that light which descended out of the heavens upon the world, about the world's mid-age, and has not gone back yet. And you, O babbler, how are we to know that even you are not a sham—evolving what you consider truth out of the depths of your consciousness, which after all may only be a storehouse of wind and lies? Show us your credentials."

Well interposed, intelligent reader. At all events you are no sham. But if you possess a spark of that light that never was on sea or land (and you can test the matter by the reign of peace within), our words,

we promise you, shall carry their own credentials to your heart. Yet let us whisper in your ear that Truth must always be laboured for by each man, as miners dig for gold; the implements of labour being honest effort, and prayer, and noble lives. We mean that the knights of Truth must win their spurs in action, and not talk; like Him who wheels his sun through the heavens, and his earth along the fields of space, and says never a word about it. Suppose He were *only* to talk about it, and not do it, what would become of you, O Shams? But take courage, honest reader, for the labour is full of delight; for the Truth whom you follow shall know how to place flowers and beautiful resting-places along your march, flooding your soul with light and sweetness and love for your fellow-men, giving you a home in your heart more lovely and joyful than a palace, even were you dying in a hovel, and shall lure you in ecstasy of joy upward to the eternal hills. But even this is not all that she shall do for you. If you will take honest service under her to fight her battles—and mind you, her battle-field lies altogether within your own soul, and not against your neighbours—she shall unrobe for you the awful mystery of Death, before whom men hide their heads in abject terror; and she shall cast her lantern behind him, and open for you

such a wonderfully lovely vista, that you will long to pass into it as a city of refuge from this world of shams. But this is only between you and me, O reader. Few are the knights who win this Victoria Cross, and almost as few who believe it possible to be won.

Such are our credentials, honest reader; but how shall we present them to the Shams? We shall do nothing of the kind—seeing that the sham is a man who will look the truth in the face and swear it is a lie, and will look a lie in the face and swear it is the truth —knowing no better; who *feels* in his heart that he cannot live (and he is perfectly right), and by consequence denies the immortality of the soul; while the honest man feels in his heart that he cannot die (and he is perfectly right), and by consequence asserts it. What is the use of parley between these?

But here, officers, enough of this manœuvring,—unmask that gun—our terrible mitrailleuse! There shall be a great fluttering and noise of shams that have been winged, but fear them not: for armies of honest men shall successively take their place upon our battery, and our gun shall roll its eternal music until shams have disappeared.

And hear, ye officers, keep a sharp look-out to the front, for stragglers who may desire to take refuge with us from the enemy's country, and do not fire upon them if clothed in a single rag of honest or noble purpose. Since it is our good pleasure to receive such refugees, to clasp them by the hand, to kneel down and kiss the dust off those honest shams' feet, and to robe them with robes of honour, and enrol them as of us. For our war is not against flesh and blood, nor human hearts; but against that tremendous Spirit, impalpably insidious, and only not omnipotent in its insidiousness, which makes and is the father of shams, and against which poor raw and untrained humanity is available as the wax is in the flame; whose active messengers are those infernal shepherds, Pride and Lust and Vanity, driving men into the dreary pit, like butchers driving calves; which whispers into its victims' ears that they are gods, until it lures them over the precipice, and then laughs at and mocks them—those poor Monboddo-men crawling upon all fours, who were taught to believe that their heads were among the stars.

It is our will, officers, therefore, to deal tenderly by those poor shams, and to help them, so far as we may, or as they themselves will permit us to help them, to

make good their escape from Shamdom :—for we know it is no easy task for them, and that the master whom they worship will take good care that they should seldom be exposed to the temptation of an humble thought or generous aim ;—but that they should live in an atmosphere of flash sentiments, inflated imaginings, and pleasant prophesyings, to which every event in God's world day by day gives the lie. Here, for instance, is a poor sham, clothed to appearance in all sleekness ; but look sharp at him, and you will find his feet slipshod, his hair dishevelled, and his loins ungirt. "Opinions for a soul unzoned ? It has lately been dropsical, and your articles seem to suit." "Yes, sir, here is exactly the thing we knew you would want. The texture is fine and loose, and will fit you easy as a Nessus' robe. We shall meet you again." And our friend of the dishevelled soul goes home, learning by the way, to his infinite joy, that Nero was as good as Socrates, Iscariot as Christ, and that the butcher who blasphemes in the market is the favourite child of God, and shamdom his peculiar empire. But the Nessus' robe did its work : they met again.

And here is a poor sham, radiant with the toil and sweat of men, and ready for the vermil feast of Sybarites. But look sharp at him, and you will find

him clothed in a strait doublet, his eyes in a bandage and his feet in cramps. "Opinions to prove whatever is, is right, and should always remain so?" "Yes, sir, here is the very article we knew you would want. There is no doubt wrong is consecrated by time, and becomes holy right; and because men will have it, God *must* yield." And a messenger passed out from behind the counter and hitched that sham's doublet tighter, and closer bound his bandage, and wedged his cramps; and Jeshurun went his way, glorifying the freedom of Shamdom. But we tell you what happened that night. Another messenger, of scarcely mortal mien, came to the corner of Jeshurun's house and sounded his sharp signal; and terrible men, like pursuivants, sprang like a lightning stroke from round the four corners of the house, and burst resistless in and rifled it; all his sweat and toil of men, and trappings for the vermil feast, not being the right coin to pay those shadowy brokers. Pray what became of Jeshurun?

Messieurs to the right, and on the left! Have you no healing for a soul diseased, except your Nessus' robes, your bandages and cramps? For this is the silent piteous cry of all humanity, and yet a cry to which men are ashamed to give loud utterance,—

"Medicine for a soul diseased!" We know what you will say, that you do not believe in such things, and we know that it is hard for you to believe in a liberty you have never known, or oppression from which you have never escaped. But we pray you to entertain, if only for a moment, the suspicion that long, long ago, you may have lost out of your souls some delicate vital energy, which clothes for the man possessing it the heavens and earth with joy and hope and unseals the mystery of his Bible for him,—or transforms for him who has lost it God's universe into a howling wilderness and that other Bible into a sham—we mean the vital energy to see and to believe. But you look out upon this fair Poem of the Creation, and you triumphantly ask if there is anything there but what speaks of freedom and hope and love for all. And this is true: ay, more: for all this boundless wealth of power is day by day being expended in the creation of such as you—of souls that, once finding a limit to this infinite loveliness of space, would fall back upon themselves and die. But, Messieurs, is there anything there that tells you to play truant and disorderly children with soiled garments—to be shams? for look again: and as well as the freedom and beauty and love, do you not find something reigning there among those suns and

stars—an empire after all not an inch of which is yours —that speaks of Order the most unbending—planets, like well-ordered families of men and nations, wheeling in utter obedience to the behest of their suns; and suns, it may be, wheeling in the same obedience to their farther centres: no revolutionizing, no republicanizing, or planet-tongued oratory to the effect that the Sun is a tyrant and unfit for his high position, and that it would be better for the solar family if Jupiter were promoted to his place. And pray, Messieurs, how could even God govern his empire without such inflexibility, and is not such inflexibility even a mercy? But look at home—at home within the universe of your own heart; and can you undertake to affirm that it is an ordered star-spot, fitted to shine eternally in unison with the Empire around us:—or is it a blotch—a blotch, which can only be got rid of by wiping it out?

"Those heavens and stars," said the philosopher, "how beautiful, but ah, so sad!" Are they so sad, Master Philosopher? Wert thou not gazing upon the firmament of thine own soul, and not upon that of God? How so sad, O philosopher? Go and get rid of the dead men's bones out of your sepulchre, and worship God instead of murderous and cruel men, and we pledge

you our word of honour that the whole heavens shall put on marriage-robes to bid you joy. Ah! these dead men's bones, what a vengeance do they not wreak upon you, ye shams!—upon the philosopher spinning his fine theories and the barrow-man wheeling his cabbage-heads—bowing you down into the dust in shame and fear, so that no man dare cry out against them. Ah! these dead men's bones, what a vengeance do they not wreak upon you!—filling our reformatories and lunatic-asylums, enriching the quack doctors, who pretend to heal the soul by vamping the body, to stop an eclipse by beating a drum. Ah! these dead men's bones, unescapable is their vengeance, O shams!—enlarging our prisons, reddening the fair face of earth with carnage, stifling our streets with immorality, crowding the public-houses with men on fire as they walk along. But here, officers, load that gun with a brimful charge. . . . There was far into the night the noise of an excited and brawling crowd. We went in the direction of the noise; but when arrived at the place whence it came, the crowd had all gone, leaving as it were the sound of their departing behind them. But in a lonely corner of the street there was a tavern, lit withinside by a darksome light—a tavern which we seemed to recognize, and yet never to have seen before. We entered, and

the drawer, in a mask of shadow, came out from behind the bar, and opened the counter from beneath the tap ;—and from the floor to the top of the counter, and all around it, was filled with bundles of burning cigars. When we looked again, the cigars had changed into the shapes of bundles of burning men. The landlord was not there, but his servants: *he* seemed to have been away for his long vacation at his country-house in Hades! . . . . . .

Ah! these dead men's bones, the scourges of the fractious children of God!—eating your schemes and philosophies off the face of the earth—filling you brimful of delusions, your Mesmerisms and Spiritualisms—libelling Death with a horror which he possesses only for the shams—chasing you like hunted animals till you know not what is the matter with you, or where to rest your weary souls:—and so jump madly into eternity, forgetful that they may even chase you there. And not the least awful part of this awful mystery is this:—that you *will* cling to your cruel torturers, as if there were no pleasure in all the universe without them; and kiss the rods that weal your backs—slaving before your secret skeletons with an abject worship, forgetful that your skeletons shall

each of them one day run away with you upon his back. But you comfort yourselves with the saying that such things must be: that so it has been appointed in the course of nature. We say emphatically NO! We say that He who sent you here has more than vindicated his eternal mercy, by making you infinitely more than equal in the fight—able, if only willing, to live with souls like open palaces before heaven and before God, and placed the power within your hands—but you will not use it, for you do not love it—to fling your dead bones to the four winds and pitch your skeletons downstairs.

But come, Messieurs, let us descend with you into your own arena, and struggle with you there. You say that you are the cream of all humanity, and that the myriad stream of men that have traversed this world before you, and to whom the same God gave intelligence and life that is giving them to you, scarcely rose above the high-water mark of fools. But let us call up a spirit of the by-gone time—one of your ancestors say—and hear what he shall tell you:—"My children, God has most certainly given you wonderful gifts, that make you little less than the Angels in power: for He has enabled you to make the lightnings of heaven your

eager servants, and the vapour of the earth to do your will. But you will please to remember that there are no gifts without their responsibilities, rising *pari passu* with the gifts. And here, my children, you are no better off than we were, who lived so many ages ago, and were found unworthy of the gifts that had been given to us, because with them we did not worship God alone. To us, too, the world showed its signs and its wonders, to judge us for weal or for woe, as we judged them, in humbleness or pride. To us, too, time showed its marvellous events, having the most vital significance for us; but because we interpreted them out of our own poor pride of intellect, and wrung from them the meaning that we wished to wring, our interpretations—when the events had rolled away and us with them, and left behind them only the significance of historical finger-posts—were found to be all wrong; the few who might have told us their right meaning having been unheard and despised. And as to your civilization, my children—your latest fashion of fig-leaves and skins—the less boasting of it the better: for it may be a nice question whether or no its main work has been the teaching of human tongues to lie more smoothly and pleasantly, the investing of pride and lust with irresistible piquancy, the garlanding of dung-hill foun-

tains of literature—spouters of filth—with roses; so that souls may be tempted to drink and become candidates for the deodorizing flame. But, at all events, when touched by the pin-test of wounded ambition or pride, your civilization, no less than our savagery, delights to paint itself with human blood, and listen to the music of weeping widows and starving children, and the groans and horror of dying men. Do you need the proof? You have not far to look for it afield, where two of your leaders have so lightly laid the world by the ears, like drunken roués mauling each other in a street-row:—so that an Angel watching from the far heavens might sneer at you as at us—if Angels might sneer and not always be loving and pitying—might sneer at you as the faction-fighting children of the Earth—those vendettists among the realms of God. And as to your signs of civilization, O children, one question I would ask you before I go. Is your railway director an emblem of honesty, does your telegraph tell *no* lies, and have your penny priesthood taught you an easier way of keeping the Ten Commandments than was known a thousand years ago—when I lived? Yet not railways, nor telegraphs, nor penny priestcraft, but these Ten Commandments are the ONLY laws of civilized life. Farewell!"

Yes, O Spirit of the by-gone time, these Ten Commandments are for us still, even as they were for thee, the only laws of life: and in so far as we are unfaithful to them, we are no better than those who in all the ages of the world have gone before us. For be pleased to remember, Messieurs, that these are the invisible angels —not your ab-extra reforms and philosophies—sent out through all time, upon the face of all the earth, to educe order out of its chaos, and send men home down the shelving precipice, or up the mount of God—to where your railways, nor telegraphs, nor penny priesthoods may go. We have said invisible angels, and yet hardly are they invisible: for if you look out over your cities and kingdoms, you may trace them at their work —flashing along your streets, lightning round your street-corners, lifting humble and faithful men heavenward, or mowing down into the dust the myriads who will not wrestle for the purity of their souls, and grow strong, like babies learning to walk. For to the old man as to the child, this wrestling is the glory and the necessity of life; nor need we wonder at it: for pray would you be worth having for the military service of the Great King, if you will not learn to fight for him;—the scene of his battles lying within your own soul, and your Moabites and Philistines violating its borders—ay, perhaps,

defiling the inmost recesses of his sanctuary, his holy of holies in your heart. And here we use no figure of speech; these battles being stern matter of fact—ay, infinitely sterner matters of fact, and fraught with more tremendous consequences to you and to me, than those other battles of lust and greed of power now being joined upon the Rhine.* Yes, Sires, you call Him your God of battles—a heathen Mars to be invoked at will by squabbling Christians: you pray Him to go forth with your armies, and become your servant to give you victory, to enrich your paltry nests with plunder and empurple them with blood—your German or French pin-specks in his own realms: you beseech Him to worship *you*, and to give you honour and glory: ay, Sires, it is no less than this:—you appeal to the Lord of Heaven and Earth that He would be pleased to become, for your own ineffable sakes, the particeps criminis in the murder of your fellow-men and of his own creatures,

* Some friends, whom we sincerely thank, have suggested that our remarks on the Franco-Prussian war are too strong. Is it possible that any language can be too strong for the authors of such butcheries as that of Sedan? We wish to state that this essay, for the most part, was written when no one surmised that the Seine and not the Rhine was to be the theatre of the war. But no corrections are needed, because Rhine or Seine makes no difference to the argument.

whom He created in love and whom He loves still—Frenchmen or Germans alike. Hear ye, Sires, is this well of you? But you say, Our peoples compel us to it, and vox populi is the voice of God. Nay, nay, Sires, vox populi *cannot* be the voice of God, seeing that vox populi upon a certain great occasion nailed Christ himself to the Cross, and would do it again. "These are our peoples' battles," say you? Ah! for shame. Have you not taught them to worship Glory—that horrid idol smeared with blood? Have you not taught them to worship the unity or squaring of your paltry acres at your neighbours' expense—the building of a wider sty for yourselves: though but one unity is possible, which you take good care shall never be accomplished as long as the world lasts—the unity of love with your fellow-men, whether bounded by the Rhine, the Tiber, or the Thames. O Vaterland of Tipperary, and O Patrie of Clare, were your leaders, instead of pounding in their people's skulls, to construct a pontoon bridge—the material being of Christian fellowship and love—across your Shannon-Rhine, you should both of you be victorious, and God should whisper into your peoples' hearts that they had fought well, and won his Victoria Cross. Look, ye Clare and Tipperary kings to it. If ye cannot rule your fellow-men in peace and love, and

teach them to fight only the battles that bring joy to their homes, and heaven down into their hearts, it were eternally better for you to starve in exile, or die upon the throne-stool of an honest conscience in a ditch.

Take care, therefore, ye leaders of men, that He *is* the God of these battles—these butcheries of his creatures that ye mean. But we would hint to you the battles that He is the God of, and the campaigns that you may safely wage, without any misgiving that his hosts shall go before you in the fight, and conquer for you, not the peace of a few years, but a peace eternal, if you only appeal to Him in the proper way. The battles that we mean are those against your own pride, your own lust of aggrandisement, your own paltry vanities, your scorn and hatred of your fellow-men, *i.e.* scorn and hatred of God, whose Spirit is giving them life and light as He is giving them to you. These are the battles upon which you should implore a blessing—not in the inflated spirit of statesmen, diplomatists, and philosophers, to whom He seems to entertain an objection; but in the spirit of little children, whom He delights to hear. And be pleased to recollect that these hosts of his are no poetical figure, but, with all your paraphernalia, infinitely grander and sterner than yours. For you might

see them if you would, or cared to fight his battles and not your own: see the valleys and the mountains clothed beyond the farthest hill-tops with clouds of armed men, of horse and foot, gleaming in flashing armour and raining their red-hot hail,—marching and counter-marching, and bursting forth into lightning charges of terrible cavalry, before whom your Chasseurs or Uhlans were available as grass before the wind. But this was a battle that was fought for the prize of the human will. The shots from those far marksmen were keenly aimed; but they reached to the heart and lips, and fell down spent: for oh! that Trooper whom we worshipped, he rode and fought so well! . . .

Now, Messieurs, of these faction-fights in Lorraine—how say you? That He whose battles lie altogether in a different direction—in the direction of eternal peace and order for each human soul—can have any hand, act, or part in them as a partisan upon either side? How say you of our civilization? One thing it has certainly done for us: it has taught us to murder more rapidly and surely; but the old-world cause of our murdering it has in nowise lessened or removed. For ever since history began these leaders of men—in obedience to nothing but the behests of their own pride, and

like dark invisible spirits of hate—have been laying their peoples by the ears to fight—for what? For inches of this earth—not one inch of which, in stern matter of fact, is it possible to win, even by the murder of the whole human race—for inches of this earth, which in seeming mockery of those blood-seeking leaders and their followers, drank them all up into its secret chambers, and hid them away in shame, as it is hiding them still. Yes, Messieurs, those sham leaders are at their old tricks. All the plains of Asia and Europe, since men began to live, have been reddened with the hecatombs of human victims, that those heathen high-priests have been offering to their lying, filthy idols; and even now, in the world's old age—when it ought to know better from sad experience past—those same high-priests are able to secure believers, and mock heaven and degrade the human race by their sacrificing still. But it is consolatory to know—and it needs no prophetic spirit to know it, but only a keen appreciation of the onward march of events, and an outlook upon the world and upon life from the unclouded atmosphere of the little child, not from the troubled waters of the man who has been too clever for heaven, for earth, and for himself—to know that those high-priests shall not mock God for ever. Although they have made, and shall continue to

make, on into the end, a jarring chaos of the human race, those who die and live again shall wake—roused by those ten invisible angels whom we have named,—into a world of ordered harmony, in which pride and hatred, and devil's seed-sowings and harvests, have ceased to exist and confusion reigns no more.*

But as to these faction-fights in Lorraine, let us tell you a tale, sirs, which applies as sternly to men as to nations and to the world at large:—Upon a time there was a drunkard, who finding the consequences of his getting drunk, occasionally very tiresome, entered into a league with other persons of his class that they should only get drunk upon proper occasions. Accordingly he went home and began to abstain from drinking,

* "Stirb und werde!
Denn so lang du das nicht hast,
Bist du nur ein trüber Gast,
Auf der dunkeln Erde."—*Goethe.*

Quoted by Mr. Matthew Arnold; and which may be almost literally translated thus:

"Die, and come again to life!
For aye, ere winning through this test,
Thou'lt wander but a stranger guest,
In a darkling world of strife."

We wish to state that in this essay we mean no unkindness to Mr. Arnold; on the contrary, we desire to be regarded as amongst his admirers.

but to cultivate other pleasant and apparently less troublesome vices, in the place of the one he had given up. But in time his new vices effectually darkened and troubled his mind, and commenced appealing to heaven against him: so the command went forth that he should be called out into the street and confess his shame before all the passers-by. In his trouble he fled for refuge to his old enemy, who comforted him for a time with great adroitness; but suddenly turning round upon him and sending one of his strongest servants against him, laid them both by the ears in the public way. Both of them appealed to God, professing, the one, that he fought against the pride of a too powerful adversary: the other that his struggle lay against the principle of a man's liberty to get drunk and annoy his neighbours. In the end the strongest of the belligerents effectively crippled the other: and the passers-by, according to each one's good fancy, applauded, or not, this public confession of shame—taking heed only of the professed, not of the invisible but real causes which led to it. Now pray, sirs, could you undertake to draw before God the distinction between the man drunk with pride and drunk with wine, or between him armed with a cudgel and armed with a mitrailleuse—except that the former is the more merciful weapon of the two.

And you, O drunkard, who crushed your antagonist's head,—we beseech you not to rejoice over-much: for it is a law eternal that your own head shall pay its cudgel-score by-and-by.

And now, Sires, before you appeal to your God of battles, we counsel you to be careful, for one or two reasons: first, because your German unity or French preponderance is not worth one drop of human blood; next, because one of you was too forward to declare battle and the slaughter of his fellow-men, and the other had too little self-control not to accept it—in so far both of you being equally dishonest before God; again, before you could fight your duel, ye two had to pass beyond the frontier of the Lord of peace and love—ay, sirs, far into the realms of the great Sham, the sweetest organ-notes of whose worship are the wailing of widows and children, and the groans of human wretchedness and shame,—into his realms who shall feed you with your own pride and carnage up to the top of your bent, and force you to shower broadcast another seed-crop of hatred, which shall ripen in quick time for your children, as La Rothière, Leipsic, and other seed-sowings have ripened for you now. This is what ye are doing, ye sham-Christian leaders of

men—to whom heaven entrusted its message of peace and good-will; but which ye invest with your own meaning of pride and hatred and carnage—so far as in you lies, marring it into the guise of an angel out of hell—and then turn round, your degraded selves and followers, and charge God himself with the consequences of your own crimes: for be pleased to remember that there may be Judas Iscariot nations as well as Judas Iscariot men. No, Sires, ye have long passed out of His realms, whose "empire is peace" without any fiction, and permit us to assure you, that by slaughtering, and not by forgiving and loving each other, ye shall never get back.

But "Oh," interposes the dapper Philister Spirit, the great Idea of the time, "we have heard something like this before. No doubt Morality is very good, if the world could only be governed by it; but the world never has, and never will. Let the preacher preach whatever he may, the only principle that can ever govern us effectually is the principle of Self-interest, personal or national: Expediency being the commander-in-chief of our armies the best fitted to bring into subjection the opinions of men. With these principles of Self-interest and Expediency when Morality interferes,

it had better be laid up in store for a better day—say the millennium, whenever that shall be."

And here, O dapper Philister Spirit, we respectfully doff our hats to you, acknowledging that in a measure you are right. Were the world ruled by Morality alone, each man would be his own governor and his own king, loving his neighbour as himself, and would have no need of your commanders-in-chief and standing armies; but this has never been, and we concede to you never will be, so long as the human race shall last under its present conditions. Nevertheless, O great Idea, we would hint to you, that upon your principle the world is not governed at all; but presents before heaven and before God a vast seething mass of anarchy and human volcanoes—emblem of material chaos that once reigned here—out of which the Morality you reject, the principle which, like God, works from within the heart of each man outwards, shall evolve order by and by, without your leave.

We would hint to you, too, that you and your cousin-german Spirits may bowl for many years—a score it might be, or hundreds—and that other invisible bowler whom you despise, and who can so well afford to give you great odds, shall come bowling after you;

and just in the supreme moment of your triumph and glory, shall bowl you into the ditch :—where you shall remain, while earth and heaven go on in their smilingly indifferent course—you shall remain, O Philister Spirit, a monument for ever of too clever bowling. For if you look afield, there where the aristocracy of Hades have been holding their grand battue of human grouse in Lorraine—the enormous "bags" of those shadowy gentlemen reported with unmeasured triumph in the leading journal there below—you will find rare vengeance exacted from some fine bowlers for neglecting the very principle you despise.* And we speak from no pretended prophetic spirit, but from the text of current

* We have been told that this is too strong; and therefore beg to put into court the following remarks of the MM. Erekmau-Chatrian upon the battle of Ligny :—"J'ai vu là des choses qu'on ne peut presque pas croire : des hommes tués au moment de la plus grande fureur, et dont les figures horribles n'étaient pas chaugées ; ils tenaient encore leurs fusils, debout contre les murs, et rien qu'en les regardant il vous semblait les entendre crier : 'A la baïounette ! Pas de quartier !' C'est avec cette pensée et ce cri qu'ils étaient arrivées d'un seul coup devant Dieu ! J'en ai vu d'autres à demi morts qui s'etranglaient entre eux. Et vous saurez qu'à Fleurus il fallait séparer les Prussiens des Francais, parcequ'ils se levaient de leurs lits ou de leurs bottes de paille pour se déchirer et se dévorer! La guerre ! Ceux qui veulent la guerre, ceux qui rendent les hommes semblables à des animaux féróces, doivent avoir un compte terrible à régler là-haut." And look at the accounts of the Sedan. Surely to the most rose-water optimist that battle must have seemed nothing less than a demons' carnival.

events,—whose true meaning does not always lie upon the surface;—but down deep you will have to dive if you would grasp it to any purpose. For be pleased to remember that in all the events since the world began there are two currents, each of them often running contrary to the other:—the current which is seen and appreciated by the shams and leads them upon the rocks, and the current perceptible only to the deeper vision of honest men, constraining them to struggle with opposing forces—which show themselves to be lies and vanish when nobly encountered—that they may win a securer resting-place in the end.

You are incredulous, O Philister Spirit; but let us endeavour to exhibit our meaning a little more clearly.* There have been some great events that happened in the history of this world, and we would ask you how many men lived at the time of those events who rose into the higher atmosphere of their true meaning? How many of the antediluvians, for instance, rightly apprehended

* It is needless for us to disclaim all feeling of irreverence in writing of Scriptural events as we have done here. We have merely reported the spirit of writers who lived near the time—Tacitus, for instance, who stigmatizes Christianity as an "exitiabilis superstitio." What we have said, is said in supreme reverence.

the purpose for which the waters came; or, of the Jews, who truly grasped the significance of that great world-reforming meeting, once held upon the famous Jewish Hill? "Oh!" says the Philister Idea, "but those men were blinded by their sins." True: but have we no sins to bind their bandage round our eyes now, and hide the significance of our own events from us?

Let us take that great reform meeting, we have named, which was held upon the Jewish Primrose Hill. The Philister Spirit has sent out its messengers to report the meeting for its worshippers;—and, accredited to Pilate or to Caiaphas, or to some loud-tongued, ode-trolling Sadducee (pray could you have accredited them to any one else?) we know what their report would have been. "Within the last few days great commotion has been caused in the capital by the execution of a man, who had secured great popularity among the common people by his pretended miracles —his followers asserting that he was not only able to cure the sick, but to raise the dead to life. But these people are the most superstitious of men. So the authorities at length got hold of him, and took him before the Governor; when he was condemned for his crimes. The execution took place last Friday out-

side the city; great consternation being caused by an eclipse which happened at the time, and which these people, frightfully ignorant as they are, and having no knowledge of the scientific causes of the event, regarded with terror as something supernatural. P.S.—Dining with the high-priest the other night, he assured me that the Governor has gained great popularity by liberating the patriot, Monsieur Barabbas; and that he has entered into a contract with the Philistines for the construction of a railway from Jerusalem to Jericho. This is the measure of an enlightened ruler, and is fraught with hope of national improvement for the Jews, who cannot long remain behind the nations around them in the march of civilization."

This, O Philister Spirit, would infallibly have been your report. Therefore, we pray you, Messieurs les Tirailleurs, to be more careful in passing judgment upon the floods and crucifixions going on before your eyes, and to see, each of you, before firing, that your popgun is loaded at least with some small pellet of truth.

Alas, for our battle! Here is the printer at our doors, telling us to cut it short, so that he may at once report the result to the public. Yet our horn, like Roland's, could rattle on till sunset: for we could tell

you many things, O dapper Philister Spirit, which to your present way of thinking might not come amiss.* We could tell you, for instance, how to get rid of hell, and to take vengeance on the Athanasian Creed: for you may erase the one and the other out of your formularies, and hell shall still be there, and the terrible Creed bear witness against you, so long as you have the courage to do what is wrong. But erase sin out of your heart, and we undertake to promise you, that hell shall vanish out of your horizon, and the Athanasian Creed shall change into a pillar of light. You start, O Spirit, telling us 'tis a thing of faith; but what of that bandage we see across your brows?

Ah! this faith,—what is it? A new-lit star in a dark sky, like that which travelled over the hills and plains of Asia long ago, and floods with strange and living light every text of your Bible for you, from Genesis to Revelation. Ah! this faith, what

* In speaking of the Athanasian creed, we have had chiefly in mind the meeting of a certain City vestry to petition the Bishop of London to do away with it—a proceeding which seemed supremely ridiculous. For the Creed was either false or true. If false, the Bishop had no need to trouble himself about it, as it was null of its own self. If true, all the bishops of Christendom might knock their heads against it in vain.

is it? A mystic instinct, planted within the highest reason, running away with it up before the throne of God, where otherwise it could never reach. "There lives more faith in honest doubt," writes the poet. Very beautiful; but a lie tricked out in crinoline and chignon, while the truth is obliged to go in limp garments and a poke-bonnet, and is jeered at as she goes. But go back, Messieurs, upon the chain of your life, and look upon that little mass of half-animate human flesh in the cradle; and have you no eyes to see the awful Infinite Power that is around us, nursing the little baby: sending cargoes of immortal life down the five rivers of its Eden; thrilling through its touch, breathing into its mouth and nostrils, whispering eternal lullabies into its ears, shining in deathless light through its eyes into its little soul, hurtling and whistling through the forest on its head, and lifting—lifting—lifting it into the vision of this awful House, gleaming with suns and stars, and built by the Carpenter of Galilee? An imperfect vision, it is true; but are eyes of clay the proper material through which to gaze upon the face of God? Surely, to the reader of intelligent insight, there is no room for faith that is honest doubt here. Now pray, Messieurs ye philosophers, can you identify Him who died upon the Jewish Primrose Hill so long

ago, with Him who gives life to the little baby? No. Then seek, and seek, and seek for the key of this wonderful riddle, and we pledge you our honour that the seeking of a long lifetime will be well and nobly spent.

But what becomes of the little baby? Refusing, it may be, to stop at home, and keep the house that is erecting for him in order, he goes gadding after the whisperers of "pleasant things;" so that when the Angel builder shall have carried his last brick and his last can of water to the roof, and prepares to take this scaffolding away, it is doubtful what the fashion of the building may be: ringed round with jewels like those écheloned along the heavens, and clothed with eternal sweetness and light, "the garb of the virtues three," or marred into utter shame and nakedness and death, by the Sham who had enthroned himself within. Yes, O philosopher of sweetness and light, men may rail at you, but after all you are not so very wrong. But one question we would reverently ask of you: Where are we to purchase those attributes of the skies? Is it from mathematics and grocers' science—those wet blankets of a warm human heart; or is it from philosophy, which may, for aught we know, be the delusions of foolish

men? Shall we culture ourselves by becoming more intimately acquainted with the liars and the shams, who for the most part have always come uppermost in the history of the world: with Alexander drunken with his harlots in Persepolis, or Napoleon as the hero of Marengo, a battle which he never won?—For a series of circumstances—which, instead of being commanded, commanded him, mocked him and buffeted him, and then turned round and gave the victory into his hands, to teach him what a sham he was. Nay, nay, sir; go back upon your science and begin again. And that you may not begin in vain, we would whisper into your ear privately, If you want your garden cultured with sweetness and light, be pleased to direct your attention to the Gardener who showed himself to Magdalene: for these things are in the possession of Him alone—who floods his gardens often with such deluge of softest light and love, that you might dream and dream and never dream the like,—and who weeds them often in a mystery of pain:—but if you once saw the marvellous effect for beauty and loveliness of the weeding, you would be weeded a thousand times a day. And in this matter of sweetness and light, we have known ignorant people who have had it in over-abundance: in this lore of sweetness and light, we have

known coster-women who were senior wranglers and *savants* who were wooden-spoons. But go on, thou philosopher of sweetness and light! thou hast caught a truth by the tail, and by pulling it well, thou mayst yet have it all.

So what became of the little baby? Frightened, it may be, at the disorder of his own home, he goes out a truant child upon the face of all the earth, in search of the footsteps of God; but none of his footsteps are to be found. He climbs the hills and hits the rocks for comfort; but little comfort is to be got out of them. Friend, a word with you! You are hitting the wrong stone. First of all, address yourself to that primeval flint which you carry within your own breast, and which bars your gate into eternity, O baby-smiter of rocks. And if you hit it boldly, we dare to promise you such a thrillingly ecstatic vista, that you shall love us and thank us for the suggestion for evermore. For there is imminent peril that when the Great Geologist comes to examine the material of his kingdoms, and while you are looking after things that have small concern for you, your own "formation" may be found to be of the wrong sort; and that "vanities," "pleasant vices," £ *s. d.*, and a thousand other evanescent things, may be scored in continuous

strata from cap à pie of your soul. Pray, Messieurs, is there any good reason why such a flimsy formation should last, in the dissolving light of the Eternal Sun? Ah, thou hast caught it, O Sham!

"Der Geist der stetz verneint!" cries the dapper Philister Spirit:—"you throw down, but you build not up. Therefore the spirit of the devil is yours," We beg your pardon, sirs; we throw down but the card-houses of the shams, and that only to get a clearer view of the marvellous proportions of yon eternal building,—which you may see, friend Philister, if you only take the trouble to look, and appeal to Him who sent you here in the proper way—as a little child, or a man dropped out of Jupiter or the moon, having left his luggage behind him. And you, O Plebs, worshippers of the Philister Spirit, and yet whom God seems to love with a love that would appear unjust, if He were not God, to his other creatures—a word with you: not that we are foolish enough to believe that any great number of you will ever adopt our suggestion; a few of you may; and those you shall hunt and despise, on the same principle that the antediluvians laughed at Noah, and the men of the doomed city jeered Lot. Nevertheless, a word with you. You want your reforms, and to scale

your millennium with a *coup de main;* your reforms and millennium meaning the devil's liberty to do whatever you like. And if you *will* have it, O plebs, it shall be given to you: you shall break your Hyde Park palings, and you shall have your devil's liberty, but—you shall pay your devil's price, bound round your screaming orators; and *that*, permit us to assure you, O plebs, upon our word of honour is no joke. And be pleased to remember that this sort of thing you have been at for these three thousand years, from Timoleon to Gracchus, and from Gracchus to Odgers; and it is within the mark to say that even now you have just arrived at the place whence you set out. But if you want a reform that is worth the name, we would indicate to you the way in which it is to be found. Begin at home—in the realms of your own heart; dethrone the sham kings who reign there, and who persecute you with demon cruelty—whispering all the while that your torturers are your neighbours—whose riches entail upon them as many troubles as your own poverty, O plebs, upon you. Then pass your reform-bills in those realms where God should reign: appoint a sweeping commission of inquiry into the rotten boroughs and corrupt practices that exist there, and go and lay the report of your commission before your Great King, whom you will find as radical

a reformer as you—appealing to Him for help. And He won't harangue you in fine-sounding platitudes, but He will do for you whatever you need, and in manner that you shall marvel at the divine simplicity of it: making you walking editions of heaven upon earth, so that, unless in love and pity for your kind, you shall not care if a million of Neros governed the affairs of men. And He will lead you into the truth, and set you upon David's high hill, which you will wonder to learn, O plebs, is a sterner matter of fact, and higher by many yards, than your own sweet Hill of Primrose—He will lead you into the truth, and teach you the reason you despised and rejected it was only because you were—Shams.

Messieurs, we take off our hats to you, and send no shot into your boat: but pray that ye reach the land, and fare well.

J. DERRY, PRINTER, NOTTINGHAM.


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