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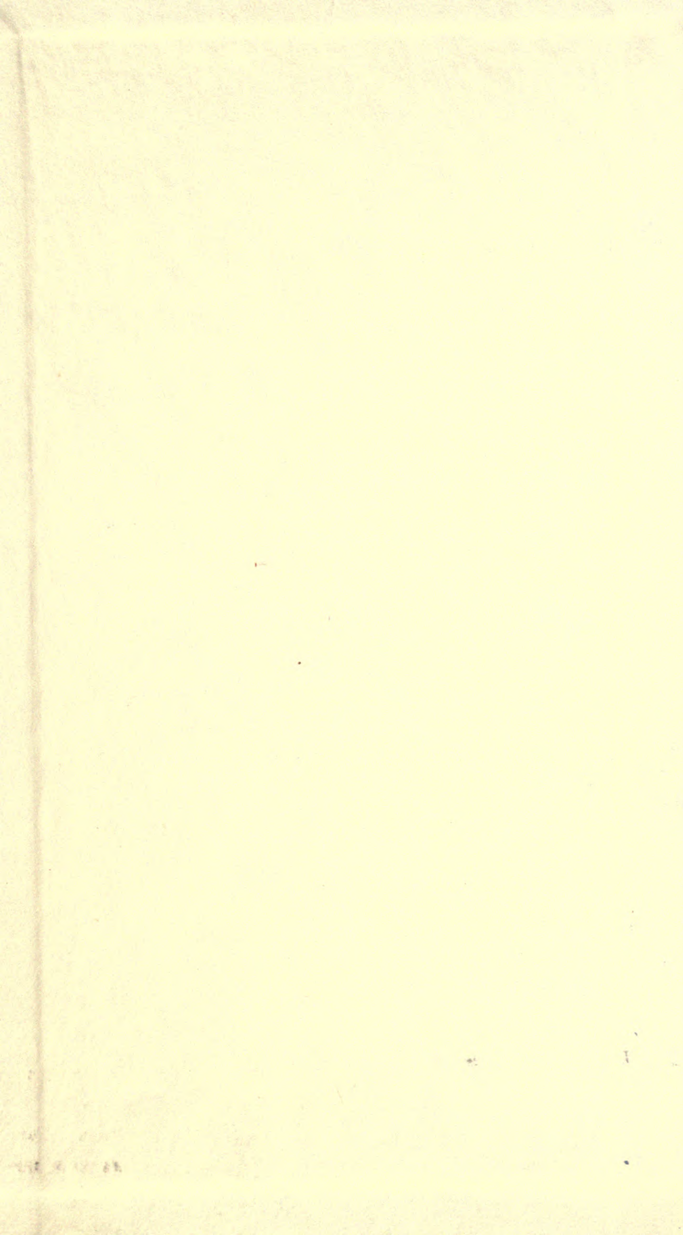

CLARA FANE.

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OR,

THE CONTRASTS OF A LIFE.

Trau. Schau. Wem.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL II.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1848.

LONDON:
W. OSTELL, PRINTER, HART STREET, BLOOMSBURY SQUARE; AND
BURLINGTON MEWS, REGENT STREET.

CLARA FANE.

CHAPTER I.

Now, sir, have I met you again?
There's for you.

Twelfth Night.

Mr. Ben and Mr. Jack Goldspin were seated in a private room in the hotel, at Bakewell, having accepted the invitation of two Cambridge friends to pass the evening with them, in a manner which was by them emphatically termed "being jolly."

Both Mr. Ben and Mr. Jack were proofs of the great advantages young men may derive from a learned education, how salutary it is to be nursed in the lap of science and to be surrounded with all that can ennoble and exalt the mind. At both our Universities this end can be attained, and considerate parents and guardians do well to secure such invaluable opportunities of improvement

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to those under their care. Aspiring youth may acquire habits and manners at these institutions, capable of fitting them for the most exalted society in the kingdom, independently of the stores of learning with which their conversation cannot fail to be enriched, if they choose to avail themselves of the supply they have always at their disposal.

A person thoroughly impressed with these truths who might, in order to enjoy a quiet intellectual treat, have concealed himself in a corner and listened to the discourse of the four University men, assembled on the present occasion, would probably have been somewhat startled at what he heard, when, between whiffs of tobacco smoke and the long draughts of a potation which appeared particularly satisfactory to those who imbibed it, the students imparted to each other the result of their experiences.

In the first place, the auditor might have doubted whether he was listening to his native tongue, so "nice a derangement of epitaphs," as Mrs. Malaprop has it, was introduced to his observation, and so many terms totally unfamiliar to ears polite poured forth.

As there has not yet appeared any translation of this style of language, notwithstanding the efforts of modern literature to make it known,

and it might puzzle the general reader to comprehend the *langue d'Argot,* which these friends employed, their conversation must necessarily be deprived of more than half its spirit, and it would be, perhaps, difficult in the garbled version given to recognise the startling wit which caused such riotous merriment amongst them.

There appeared to be so much more than ordinary meaning in every word they uttered, that it was only necessary to repeat a few phrases to elicit the applause sought; every second sentence being pronounced a capital joke, and every anecdote, however flat it might seem to the uninitiated, creating the highest enthusiasm.

"Well," said Mr. Ben Goldspin, in a voice considerably interrupted by the attention he paid to the perfumed weed, whose breath he was inhaling, "I think I've knocked up that affair of Stanny Brixton's and her flashy captain, a puppy that told me one day to hold his horse, taking me for a stable boy at this very house. The old woman won't stand a carpenter's heir for her son-in-law, and he may carry his gold lace to some other market, I fancy, after this. I said I'd be even with him, and odd enough I found out by mere accident, that old Brighty was a pianoforte maker in Fleet-street, where one of the sons

superintends the mahogany at this moment—you may see the shop any day you like."

"If I thought the old fellow would lend me a few hundreds I'd not be ashamed to make his acquaintance," answered one of the guests, "by the by, Jack, you're as rich as a Jew, you know, I wish you'd help a poor fellow like me, who hasn't a stiver to bless himself with till next quarter—can't you or Ben, for one's as rich as the other, just open your purse strings for once in a way for our benefit; I owe Tom Holford here fifty, or he'd come down with more; but he's as hard up as I am."

A cloud came over the faces of the two brothers at this sudden demand on their friendship, and both protested that they were kept so short that they had neither money nor credit, and were at that very time trying to raise some cash to meet current expenses.

The two friends glanced at each other as they resumed their cigars, and the look explained that this was but one of the jokes they were in the habit of slyly indulging in, at the expense of their miserly companions, of whom it was customary, amongst their particular friends, to say, that they showed their money as little as their wit, though they had more of the first than the last.

"Are you making up to Kate Brixton?" asked one of the friends, "you seemed doing the amiable the other night."

"I!" exclaimed Mr. Ben, "do you think I care for any such humbug as that! I wouldn't marry the best gal in England, to be tied to a wife's apron strings and made a jerry of, I despise 'em as they deserve and just teaze 'em a bit, that's all I do; they don't catch me in a hurry; I've a good many better pipes than that to smoke yet!"

"Capital!" cried the friends, "here! let's drink the health of all free companions, and confusion to matrimony."

"What should a man marry for, I can't think," said Mr. Jack Goldspin, who seldom expressed his sentiments otherwise than by loud laughs, or deep yawns; his eloquence being of that kind which may be called explosive, "except its for money: there's something in that—all the rest's gammon."

"Ha! ha!—capital!" cried the friends, "and," added Mr. Holford, "if one can't get money that way, for there's no use in life, you know, without it—that's what we were born for, to enjoy ourselves, and make away with the tin—why, if we can't get it by marriage nor any other slight of hand, I don't see where's the harm of turning

highwayman. I've serious notions of doing so—it used to be the fashion in our great grandfather's time, and why the deuce it shouldn't be now, I can't see."

"The only reason it went out," said his friend, "was because of the roads being so good and the country so well cultivated, but there's a chance now for us all—for since rail-roads, you know, there are plenty of by-roads left to be robbed; farmers must come from market, and squires from farms; what's to prevent the good old times from coming back, when a gentleman could replenish his purse in an evening and no harm done. Facilities are greater even now than then, for there's the rail as a means of escape ready at hand. I wish I'd lived in the days of jolly highwaymen. Let's drink their health, and I'll give you a song to the purpose."

Their glasses being replenished from a large jug on the table, the friend, who was familiarly called Peter, struck up a song, in the refrain of which all joined, knocking the table with their fists at the conclusion of each stanza.

HIGHWAYMAN'S SONG.

Fill, comrades, a cup that success may attend us,
  And fortune, our mistress, be prosperous soon—
The heath is inviting, and night to befriend us,
  Has shut up the stars and has muffled the moon:

Our pistols, whose mounting with silver is bright,
Are more true than the best shaft in Cupid's whole quiver;
Our steeds are the swiftest of any whose flight,
Served the hero whose password is Stand and Deliver!

Let us drink to the health of the trav'ler benighted,
Who toils o'er the hill and who speeds o'er the lea,
Whose horse by some will o' the wisp is affrighted,
When he meets, by good luck, such brave fellows as we:
He is arm'd to the teeth and his bearing is bold,
But we read him a lecture on taker and giver,
And we show him how easy the transfer of gold
To the hero whose password is Stand and Deliver!

Fill, comrades, a cup to the bright eyes of beauty,
Whose light is our beacon wherever we rove,
To pursue is our choice, to protect is our duty,
The girl who is worthy a highwayman's love:
We have conquest before us wherever we ride,
At our names the scared townsman may shake and may shiver,
But where's the free maiden would not be the bride,
Of the hero whose password is Stand and Deliver!

The mirth had, after this song, become fast and furious, and the four friends were in the very height of their intellectual enjoyment, when the door suddenly opened and two strangers appeared, who, approaching the table, begged to know if Mr. Ben Goldspin was not in company.

As that worthy gentleman did not deny his identity, the persons who addressed him, not

having the appearance of officers of the law, but of those in Her Majesty's service, one of the strangers advanced towards him and delivered a sealed note.

"I am a friend and brother officer of Captain Brighty, who is, I believe, well known to you, sir," said he, "and I am directed to receive your answer to the letter I have the honour of delivering."

Mr. Ben, with dazzled eyes, glanced at the writing, and started as he read the contents; when he had done so, he put the letter on the table, and, thumping it with his fist, exclaimed in an angry tone—

"And suppose I don't choose to submit to this sort of humbug, what then? As for fighting and that sort of thing, my father's a magistrate, and he's not going to allow of a breach of the peace in his district, so you may go back and tell Captain Brighty so much from me, for that's all the answer he'll get."

"You will, of course, apologise then for the derogatory expressions you have permitted yourself to use towards my friend," remarked the officer who had presented the letter, in the tone of one who believed it likely that the half-drunken squire intended to do so.

"I don't know what he means," said Mr. Ben,

"I am not obliged to recollect everything that may have been said by chance about him, and I will have nothing to do with the affair."

"Pardon me," replied the officer, "do you mean then to deny that you have spoken in terms of insult of my friend, and that you do not intend to retract the words spoken."

The answer of Mr. Ben was more accordant to his present feelings than to the strictness of truth, when he asserted positively that he had never said a word about Captain Brighty, good, bad, or indifferent. This assertion, so little in conformity with the boast he had but lately made of having successfully prevented the Captain's match, startled his two University friends, well as they were acquainted with their comrade's character, and they both loudly called upon him to stand to his words, offering to back him in any way he pleased. Mr. Jack, meanwhile, took an opportunity in the confusion to slip out unobserved, with the humane and fraternal intention of preventing bloodshed by instantly informing his father of the affair, and getting a warrant issued to arrest the combatants, if hostilities should be insisted on.

A scene of much altercation ensued between the three friends, which was, at length, put an end to by the departure of the two officers, who

informed Mr. Ben Goldspin that their part being now performed the remainder was in the hands of Captain Brighty himself, who, they begged to assure him, would not be slow in inflicting proper and sufficient chastisement on the person most concerned "when time and place should serve."

It was market-day at C——, and the streets, usually deserted, were thronged with buyers and sellers. As the day advanced there arrived several carriages, which stopped at the principal inn, and set down fashionable-looking visitors to luncheon, who afterwards might be seen scattered about in the various shops making purchases. There was one principal shop where all that was most elegant in mercery was to be purchased, and here the *élité* of the county chiefly congregated both for the sake of buying and meeting their neighbours. Several officers of the regiment had ridden over from their quarters in order to beguile their *ennui* by a few *rencontres*, and with the view of renewing old flirtations or beginning new.

All the family of Brixton were in the shop, and Mrs. Goldspin was seated on a chair in state, attended by the shopmen, who assiduously recommended various articles for her approval.

Mr. Ben Goldspin had just emerged from a public-house, where he had been arranging some

agricultural affairs with several farmers, and he was lounging up the street, smoking his cigar, when, as he paused opposite the great shop, he saw two horsemen advancing from the other extremity; that they were military men, he could not doubt, by the gracefulness of their seat and the glitter of their adornments, as well as from the fluttered appearance of several giggling damsels, who were passing at the same time; nor could he be uncertain of their identity, having recognized in one the officer who had paid him a very recent visit, and in the other, Captain Brighty himself.

His first impression was to turn his eyes towards a window and appear not to notice them, but he had scarcely time to do so before he was roused from his apparent abstraction by several sharp cuts on his arms and back, and, on turning round to ascertain the cause of the salutation, he was greeted with a similar one across his face and hands. He had only time, between the rapidly administered castigation he was receiving, to remark that the inflictor was no other than the gallant Captain himself, who had, in a space of time incalculably quick, leaped from his horse, throwing the rein to his mounted friend, who stood guard in the road, immovable and unmoved, looking on, while summary justice was administered in so prompt a manner.

Mr. Ben roared and struggled, and endeavoured in vain to ward off the whizzing slashes, which buzzed round his ears and before his eyes like the spokes of a wheel in full motion, dazzling and astounding him. Meanwhile, at every window, at every house, and at every door, heads were thrust and eager eyes were looking on; the ladies at the shop flew with one accord from the counters, followed by the youngest of the shopmen, who left Mrs. Goldspin, in all her dignity, on the dais at the upper end, served by the master himself.

The transaction was like lightning—being as rapid in its mischief and its effect—and they had scarcely time to see what had occurred, when the Captain, whip in hand, vaulted into his saddle, took the rein from his friend, and both gravely and leisurely, without looking to the right or left, paced down the high street, and, continuing, what appeared to be their morning ride, were soon lost in the distance.

The consternation in the town of C—— was extreme: so public a horsewhipping had not taken place in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, and all mouths were open, and all ears were attentive, to learn the cause.

Mr. Ben, smarting from the cuts and furious with mortification, speedily returned to a favourite retreat near the scene of his discomfiture, where,

joined by his brother and a few of his faithful friends, he consulted as to the means of being revenged on the daring Captain.

The latter had calculated on the probable consequences of his exploit, and was quite prepared to meet them. He, accordingly, gave himself no further concern about the matter, and when, a few hours later, he joined the Brixton carriage on the road to their home, his gaiety seemed increased rather than diminished; and the loud laughter of the young ladies and their mamma proved that but little sympathy was felt for the ill-used hero of the day.

A large fine was imposed on the Captain by the justice of the law, which he not only paid cheerfully, but professed his willingness to contribute as much more whenever called upon on a like occasion, having similar provocation.

Mr. Jack and Mr. Ben Goldspin, for a time, finding change of scene pleasanter than the stupid neighbourhood of a gossiping county town, took a tour, it was supposed, in Wales, where they were joined by their parents shortly afterwards; thus making a gap in the society not easily filled up.

CHAPTER II.

> Why should this desert silent be
> For it is unpeopled? No.
>
> *As you like it.*

This affair, which occupied much attention for a considerable time, smothered the scandal which was just rising, owing to the zealous propriety of Mrs. Goldspin, respecting Mr. Loftus and Clara; for every one justly considered that it had been proved rather dangerous to indulge in little anecdotes which compromised others and might bring their chastisement with them.

The continuance of Miss Fane in the family of Coombe Place startled the neighbours, however ready to believe any ill-natured report, and the unpopularity of the source from whence it had emanated, rendered every one cautious in repeating it, and Mrs. Trumble found, with extreme vexation, that she had lost her valuable teacher and gained small reputation by the transaction.

Clara was herself, however, far from satisfied. She could not forget that she still lay under an imputation, which, though forborne to be expressed openly, was still alive in the minds of all, and could not be refuted by any explanation she had in her power to make. Happy and content in her present abode, she felt that this gleam of comfort was not destined to last, and that an exertion on her part was necessary to secure her future independence. Again she turned her thoughts to the family mentioned to her by her friend Eugenie Petit, and she wrote to the address given her, proposing to accept the situation of governess to the two daughters of Mr. Luttrel, who she had lately found were just arrived from Paris.

On naming her project to Lady Derrington, she discovered that her ladyship was acquainted with the family to a certain extent, and she was, at all events, secure of entering on new ground, with persons about whom there was, at least, no mystery.

"I have never seen Mr. Luttrel," said Lady Derrington; "it is not this generation which is familiar to me: his mother and my family were well acquainted, coming from the same part of Northumberland. His father is not long dead, but Charles Luttrel was married early; his wife was an accomplished woman of fortune and

fashion, very extravagant and profuse like himself; she lingered long in her illness, and, as during his father's life-time they were ill enough off, they lived chiefly abroad, in Italy, I believe, where both his daughters were born — the eldest cannot be fifteen yet: their mother has been dead five or six years, and, I should consider Mr. Luttrel a bad guardian for them. His aunt, Lady Seymour, I heard, is sometimes with them or they with her; but, if she is like her former self, she is not altogether the proper head to control these fiery spirits, for such I should imagine them to be to judge by their youth and character of the family—the Luttrels have always been rather unmanageable. You must make yourself look as old as you can, and with your quiet reserved manners you will probably impress the young ladies with the respect necessary for their too young governess."

"I do not dread them at all," said Clara, "I confess to being rather tired of the extreme monotony and dullness of my late situation, where I had not a single pupil who possessed a grain of genius and but few who had the slightest talent. It seems to me, that people constantly living in the country acquire the heaviness of the earth they cultivate, without gaining the grace or beauty of the flowers that spring from it; they require,

like these flowers and trees, transplanting and training to bring out their perfections, and without it they remain rooted in stubborn and knotted stupidity, till neither time nor culture is of any avail. I acknowledge to a fondness for a wandering life, and the sight of new faces and things; in a narrow circle one becomes, in an incredible space of time, narrow minded, and believes one's little world a great world."

"This is, however, not even confined to country life—it may exist in crowded cities, if we shut ourselves up in exclusiveness and refuse to know what happens at our thresholds," said Lady Derrington, "since all the world is our neighbour we should encourage ourselves to feel interest in our neighbour's good, and by becoming acquainted with him put ourselves in a way of serving him."

"I suppose your love of change and of liberty inspired you, Clara," said Miss Clinton, "when you composed these verses. I find you out continually by certain bits of paper scattered in your portfolio, which is by no means sacred from my curiosity; for I have suspected you of poetry from the time I first caught you."

Clara laughed and blushed while obliged to acknowledge the lines which Miss Clinton read; "I wrote them for a pretty air, the melody of which pleased me," said she, "you know how

tyrannical music is and how slavishly one is obliged to follow its lead—the poor poet has but little chance of immortality when he makes lines for music, rather should the composer be inspired by the poet, it would be certainly fairer."

SONG.

The violet had wept all night
And saw the dawn in tears,
Her butterfly, with plumage bright,
Close at her side appears:
"Why mourns my flower?" he softly sigh'd,
"Is not thy lover near?"
"Alas! but thou hast wings," she cried,
"While I am rooted here!
I'd rather be of insect race,
Than thus in beauty shine,
So I might fly from place to place,
And share my lot with thine—
Oh! that in pity from the earth,
Some hand would set me free;
The winds should bear me in their mirth,
Away, dear love, with thee!"

"I will set these lines to music myself," said Isabella, "for though I have not your voice to boast of, I flatter myself, I know something of composition. I confess that has, however, nothing to do with melody. It is strange, that there are so few pretty melodies now, compared to those which existed in the days when words were never written—in the Scotch ballads what pathos and

grace—and what wildness in the Irish, without following one rule of composition, they contrive to please even fastidious ears, accustomed to the scientific perfections of Italy and Germany."

"Aye," said Clara, "and two or three lines of the rugged but expressive verse to which they are married, are worth whole volumes of the affected no-meaning which distinguishes modern English songs: it cannot be, that our language is too harsh for music as foreigners sometimes insist, otherwise our songs would never have charmed; ah, yes! our rough English, as well as the deep sounding German, contains a hidden grace and feeling which, drawn forth by genius, can equal the melodious tongue of Italy itself—some of the old German ballads are exquisite, and some of Göethe's songs, unaccompanied, defy any tongue, however sweet, to compete with their music.

"Is it not in poets who are wanting?—some genius equal to the old masters in the art, who have illustrated every nation, would renew the old spell, revive the old sweet wailings that touch the heart, as well as please the ear."

"It is true, we wait long, for this Avatar," cried Lady Derrington; "but it is surely coming on, amidst the rush of events, with which the time is full. A galaxy of genius generally shines

forth brightly all at once; for instance, at a time when great statesmen exist there are usually great minds produced in every department of art and literature. Even at this moment, when commerce seems to rule the world, and the love of gain to extinguish every nobler aim, the pure spirit is not extinct which should illumine the dull sky, leaden too long and too long obscured, and perhaps the hour is arrived for the angel's wing to touch the waters."

"We live," said Miss Clinton, "in an age of general talent, and expect so much and know so much, that we are content to remain in a state of clever mediocrity. There has been a lull of true genius for a great length of time, but it will re-appear as brightly as ever when its time comes. The torch may be turned towards earth, but the flame aspires to Heaven. It may be, that some great political change will effect an alteration in the minds of men, and those things which have absorbed them for a long period will pass away and give place to others superior to them. We may be convinced of one thing, that what mutations soever appear in the affairs of the world, the great principle of Divine Poesy is never really affected—it may be obscured for a time, but its light re-appears when meaner objects become extinct. Poetry is the soul of the world,

as its every day actions are the mere body; and as the body is heavier than the spirit it dominates more, but as it sinks the other rises. Some day, perhaps, we shall hail, even in this world, the reign of mind, as the gross earthly particles that form a mist around our being become dispersed. To arrive at this, however, we must banish those wishes which injure its developement and we must begin by doing away with that craving, grasping desire of gain, which seems now to have taken possession of all, from the sovereign to the peasant.

"No one is content under his vine and his fig tree, monarchs are merchants and dealers, and poets reckon their verses only as so many guineas coined.

"Fame is no longer the

'Last infirmity of noble minds;'

and till we turn away from 'greed,' we shall remain unvisited by great thoughts."

"Come, Isabella," said Lady Derrington, "I must not allow you time for any more philosophy at present, if you intend to carry out your proposition of avoiding our guest to-day at dinner, for the time of that important event draws on and Mr. Loftus will shortly arrive. I advise you, therefore, to continue your harangue as you

thread the mazes of Coombe Wood, on your way to the farm, while I attend to the less intellectual process of seeing that our friends have wherewithal to refresh their mortal nature."

"A care," said Miss Clinton, "for which you are more likely to gain thanks, dear mamma, than I who preach about the ethereal portion of our being. Let us go, Miss Fane, and conceal ourselves in the shades, leaving creature comforts to our masters. I will take you a charming walk and show you some new paths in our solitude; after which, we will take a row on our favourite lake, and fancy ourselves transformed into the fairies, who are said still to linger beneath its waters."

When Mr. Loftus, who had that day invited himself to dine at Lord Derrington's, arrived, he found for the first time since Clara had been there, that the dinner party was unusually augmented. It was, in general, composed only of the family party, graced by the agreeable presence and conversation of Miss Clinton, and had always been a pleasant recreation for him, to which he looked with a sort of calm enjoyment such as the society of congenial minds affords, where no affectation exists, where nothing is forced, but the natural inclinations of each party lead to

themes removed from everyday life and everyday occupations. In such re-unions it might seem that the common cares of the world were laid aside, and something beyond mere existence was gained for a brief space.

As he rode along on his way, he had amused his fancy with the thought of meeting Clara for the first time, without a crowd, of observing her in a position different from any in which he had before seen her. He pictured to himself her appearances, he imagined her words, her looks, and her voice, which he could not conceal from himself, that he wished once more to hear.

Yet, while he thought of these things, he almost reproached himself for allowing his mind to dwell on them, and regretted that he had not continued to resist the inclination he had felt to find himself near Clara once again.

"Why should I torment myself about her?" thought he; "it is really a weakness. I must not indulge in this notion of seeking my ideal in every strange face and in pursuing it wherever mystery clings. Fairfax is wrong—I will not be encouraged in it. This Clara is only an ordinary personage after all, a good actress, perhaps—if she has a design, yet what right has my vanity to suppose she has? I wish I had never seen her."

With this very usual wish, of the most

ordinary of uncomfortable lovers, the philosopher rode up the avenue to Coombe Place, and having entered the drawing-room his first impression was one of disappointment, to see Lady Derrington alone, and to observe several of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood walking in front of the windows, waiting till the summons to dinner was given.

Lady Derrington reproached him for so seldom visiting them, and particularly on coming the day her daughter was gone out. She did not name Clara at all, and Mr. Loftus felt uncertain whether she was even still there.

The dinner passed off in an unusually dull manner, there was not a being there suitable in any way to Mr. Loftus, and he regretted a thousand times having come at all. He thought, too, that the manner of Lady Derrington was somewhat forced, although she tried to be as cordial as ever he had found her; and to several of his enquiries as to where Miss Clinton had disappeared to, he received answers so evasive as to convince him that she had absented herself purposely, perhaps in order that he should not meet Miss Fane.

"They have no foolish pride of station," thought he, "therefore they could not do it from that motive, there must be some reason which I

do not understand. They are in general all openness and cordiality—what can this portend?"

He saw that Lady Derrington had no intention of naming her daughter's whereabouts to him, and he therefore, after she had left the table, resolved to discover it from the father, who he rightly judged was probably not in their secrets. He found little difficulty in gathering from him, that he fancied he had heard Isabella talk of a visit to her nurse, the wife of a farmer on the estate; armed with this hint, Mr. Loftus took leave early and betook himself to a stroll in the woods for the rest of the summer evening.

There was a high hill to ascend to reach the farmer's dwelling; it was covered with large thickly grown trees, and offered beautiful spots here and there for repose: wherever this occurred, seats had been placed so that the whole walk, of several miles, was an agreeable lounge. When the wood was ended a series of meadows began, and then a copse and a grove led to an open space filled with a small sparkling lake, shut in on one side by higher hills and having an amphitheatre of wood sloping down from it towards lower ground, leaving a fine view of the plain beneath, its winding river and extensive fields.

There was, by the side of the path near the lake, a rustic building where several large birds

were kept. A huge white owl, with enormous yellow eyes, sat in the darkest corner of his large apartment and scowled on the passer by—and several fine proud hawks sat frowning on their perches, as if ready to swoop on any prey which might come within their reach. But the attention of Mr. Loftus, as he paused to look at these prisoners, was arrested by a magnificent eagle which was looking piteously through the bars that restrained its flight, and with depressed feathers and shrouded eye seemed pining for liberty.

Edmond Loftus stood contemplating the splendid bird for a time and could not help regretting that the greediness and curiosity of man should lead him to inflict pain on those creatures whom Nature formed for freedom and the enjoyment of life without its cares.

"This is changing the poor animal's condition for its misfortune, indeed," thought he, "he has learnt to reflect and to regret, and only approaches nearer to man in order to desire fruitlessly. This poor creature, when soaring wild and free amongst the rocks and clouds, was gazed at as a wonder, with awe and respect; he fell into the power of some clown and all his dignity disappears at once—he who was a monarch is now a slave—that which was looked upon with reverence

and fear, is now an object of pity. He knows it too, his fiery haughty eye is quenched and the glory of his existence is at an end; he asks the stranger for a compassionating glance and he is indebted to sordid hands for the daily food which he once took whenever he required it.

"If souls really transmigrated, a not unnatural belief this might have been in days of yore, a king who had the world at his command and, for his penance, in the first of the lives after that granted to human nature, is penned into this form, conscious of his degradation and full of sensation for his own sufferings; perhaps of remorse for his former acts. His life may be prolonged many years, even in this captivity, and then when the spirit which animates his feathered body flies off, some other creature may receive it, unless the penance is accomplished and he is forgiven.

"This doctrine is neither new nor unreasonable, tyrants and wretches often die as they lived prosperous and content, having crushed and tortured every one beneath their sway, and never having felt the miseries they have inflicted owing to a perverse nature: that they should be thus punished, conscious but unable to make their identity known and obtain release, is a punishment beyond all that has been named of torture.

We have no reason to know the kind of torments prepared for the wicked, and we may well suppose mental agony to be one of the most severe.

"I am, probably, wronging this innocent bird," he added, smiling at his own visions, "but the strange intelligence we see in animals, leads us into wild conclusions. I can easily believe in the Eastern prince's transformation into a baker's dog, when I observe the marvellous sagacity of those creatures—and, to reward my faith, behold Miss Clinton's favourite has become aware of my vicinity long before he has been able to see me, and is barking to protect those he guards against a traitor who approaches. Perhaps he is right, and I bring danger in my path to some one over whom he watches. If so, I will be content to do penance in any shape for my misdemeanour."

He followed the direction of the dog's voice, and left the eagle's cage—but had not advanced many paces when a long drawn, piercing, mournful cry met his ears, as if to implore his return. He looked back and saw the poor eagle beating itself against the bars and trying to force its head through, while its now bright, eager, flashing eyes were directed towards him, as if in reproach for his abandonment of a sorrowful prisoner.

He could not resist returning, when the strange bird was immediately comforted and happy, leap-

ing about in a somewhat awkward manner on the ground, with all the appearance of joy. Again, when he quitted the spot, the same melancholy cry sounded on his ear and he hastened on to avoid it, quite annoyed with himself for being involuntarily affected with the incident. He had not gone far when at a turn in the lake, he perceived a boat in which two ladies were paddling themselves amongst the reeds and overhanging shrubs which dipped into the water. The little dog was running impatiently along the bank, and every now and then stopping as if with an intention of daring the dangerous element in order to reach his mistress.

Loftus hailed the boat and requested to be allowed to pay his devoirs to the nymphs of the stream, who, finding that they were discovered in their retreat, had only to row towards him with the best grace they could.

"Pray," said Clara, timidly, to her friend, as they neared the shore, "pray do not allude to anything, and let me entreat you not to change your manner towards him—I should be so very much confused and distressed if he could imagine that I was affected by the gossip which has so coupled my name with his."

"Do not fear," said Miss Clinton, "you will

see what command I have over myself, and how well I can

'Fit my face to all occasions.'

If you had seen more of society, you would know that the subject nearest the thoughts is always farthest from the tongue. In the world we live in a continued state of disguise."

"Well," said Clara, laughing, "there is some excuse then for Mr. Loftus, he is so used to it."

"The moon is rising, fair ladies," cried Loftus, as he assisted the boat to shore, "and I feel afraid of you; for you appeared as suddenly to me in these wilds as fairies do to belated travellers, taking lovely forms and leading him into dangers he can never afterwards escape from."

"You are safe from us," said Miss Clinton; "we are exactly what we appear—no ladies of the lake nor wood fairies, but honest women without disguise of any kind—but how can we be sure that you are not some

'Brown dwarf that o'er the moorland strays.'

If however you are a true man, you will conduct us safely through the wood towards home, for we have lingered on the water a little later than we intended."

"In hopes of giving time to unwelcome visitors to be departed?" said Mr. Loftus.

"Why should you think so?" asked Miss Clinton, while Clara turned away to hide a blush.

"Because I had invited myself," returned he; "and you knew that you were to be interrupted by my presence. This is very unfair. I had pictured to myself so agreeable an evening, and the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with Miss Fane and I found only country squires and a good dinner."

"Excellent things both," said Isabella; "and I have no doubt you were as well satisfied with both as you would have been with their substitutes. What could two women like us possibly say to interest you in comparison with the learned agricultural and statistic information you have acquired to day."

"I have acquired nothing but *ennui*," replied he; "and, having artfully discovered where you had vanished to I escaped to the enchanted region to search for the deserters."

"You are fond of these voyages of discovery, are you not?" asked Miss Clinton; "they must be exciting, whatever the object, no doubt, since they lead people so far from the beaten path. But having found the treasure sought the excitement and interest no doubt disappear together."

"Not with me," said Loftus, looking at Clara; "the nearer I approach the object of my search the more precious it appears to me."

"To which of us is this gallant speech addressed," said Miss Clinton; "if I did not know you to be a really fashionable man well versed in the world's language and quite incapable of saying a word that you mean, it would go hard but that I should be flattered—but," she added, turning to Clara, "I must explain to you, Miss Fane, that the world to which Mr. Loftus belongs, possesses a language peculiar to itself, it is mellifluous and melodious to the ear, but is to sound what shadows are to sight, quite unsubstantial; and all the amiable and charming things you may henceforth hear from him, you are only to consider a voice like that of echo in a cave."

"Why do you put these sayings upon me?" said Mr. Loftus, a little confused; "Miss Fane will avoid and dread me if she listen to this doctrine."

"Oh, no," said Clara, rather gravely; "I never either avoid or dread any one. I rely on myself and judge for myself."

"Thank you," replied Loftus, with a slight accent of hauteur; "you at least reassure me. I am not given to fear myself, and not much to avoiding either," he added in a low voice, intended for her ear only, "it had been perhaps better if

I were. But why," he continued; "are you so severe to me, Miss Clinton, or rather to the class to which I am supposed to belong—but to enter whose charmed circle I have no pretensions. Can you call that man a fashionable half of whose life has been spent in workshops and studios, who has made himself one of the people; who has fled from pomps and gaieties, who gives himself up to rural enjoyments or solitary musings, and who shuns the crowd of cities?"

"When the season is over," laughed Isabella. "I will go on for you—one who is forced to create a world of his own in the country before he can make it suitable to his tastes: Who brings Belgravia into Derbyshire and talks of retirement, and sighs for the shades with Almack's music in his ear—who must get up graces and charades and be an actor in them to wile away the time."

Clara pressed her friend's arm, who continued, "for if you have not done that this year, you you know you must plead guilty to such acts in our solitudes in former days."

"I begin to repent me," said Loftus, "and to believe that all I have hitherto done has been mere acting, and therefore I am resolved to be in earnest henceforth and become the merest Corin when in the country, although I despair of meeting with Phillida, and when in London—but I

am not going there. I am on my way to Venice. Will you trace for me a line of conduct, Miss Clara—I appeal to you because as your ideas are less sophisticate than my sarcastic friend, fair Isabella, I shall be more likely to adopt new notions at your suggestion."

"Always walk along the broadest path," said Clara, "and leave the cross lanes and alleys unexplored—this is good advice, which you can understand the better as it is what has led us safely through the mazes of this wood and brings us straight to the point we were seeking. If we had been tempted by those hundred pretty detours which invited us on our way we should have lost ourselves long ago."

Mr. Loftus was a little mortified that his companions took leave of him at the end of the avenue, and he found that he was not expected to return with them to the house. He could only therefore seek the stable and having mounted his horse ride back to Loftus Hall by moonlight in a very loverlike mood.

"What an idiot I have been," said he; "to trust to this travesty; it is clear that I mistook her character and that she despises me. Isabella is too clever for me; she knows all I am sure and is guarding her friend against my duplicity. I

must shake off this weakness and endeavour to think of her no more—for what is she to me—

> 'Less than a shade by moonlight cast,
> Less than a note of music past.'

Good Heaven! that I should suffer my mind to dwell so long on such trifles. The world—the world of action is mine—once more upon its waters to struggle against and to conquer oppressive thoughts."

CHAPTER III.

The fraud of man was ever so
Since summer trees were leafy.
Much Ado about Nothing.

The answer that Clara received from Lady Seymour, the aunt of the Miss Luttrels, determined her at once to depart from her kind friends, to whom she promised to communicate her success in her new undertaking. She accordingly left Coombe Place, having previously written to Maria and learnt that her old lodgings were ready for her.

Mr. Loftus had not again appeared and she was ignorant as to whether he remained behind in the country or had really set out on his way to Italy. She resolved to allow him as small a place as possible in her imagination, the more so as she could not conceal from herself that he already occupied her thoughts too much.

"Idleness," thought she, "is always said to be the parent of fancy. I shall now have no time for vain musings on what I had better forget, my destiny is prosaic enough and but little of the poetry of life will be mine. I must strive at all events that its vexations may intrude as little, and to what else could lead dreams of which Mr. Loftus is the subject."

Maria and Mrs. Spicer each gave her a warm greeting, according to their different characters, and she felt by no means so lonely in her solitary lodgings as she had dreaded. She had much to tell to Maria of Mrs. Wybrow, to whom she had written on her departure not thinking it advisable to go to Loftus Hall. The news from William continued to be favourable and frequent; he talked of great discoveries, of extraordinary enjoyments and excitement in his voyage and spoke very little of annoyances of any kind. Maria had treasured his letters, all of which she showed to Clara.

"I am," said she, "doing all I can to be clever by the time he returns, and now you are come I shall be sure to learn something. You will show me on the map where he is and how far he has got, though how maps know, except by magic, I cannot think. He tells me of such extraordinary things that sometimes I fancy he

only does it to laugh at me; but then I am sure he would not, as he knows I am ignorant enough already.

"I often wonder, particularly since I began to learn something, how it happened that he could ever love me, who am so unlike him in being able to understand things. You would, in that respect, have suited him exactly; but then, you see, he knew me first and after all William is not *grand* enough for you."

Clara smiled rather mournfully, as she thought how little there was in her destiny of grand or exalted, and she answered Maria by telling her that she had heard Love was no respecter of persons.

"He has seen some very great people," said Maria, "and I am afraid will think our little parlour very mean when he comes back, after having been in a king's palace—read what he says."

Clara followed the passages on which Maria particularly dwelt and read,

"At Cairo I saw Mahomed-Ali, that extraordinary man who has changed the destinies of Egypt. It is a curious thing, for one accustomed to London to go through the streets of Cairo; instead of trains of waggons and coaches, one has to wait till a train of camels has gone past. The Pacha lives in a grand palace or citadel on a height

that overlooks the city and is building a mosque of alabaster, which will be a splendid thing when finished."

"That puts me in mind of the Persian tales," said Maria, "think of a whole house made of alabaster! doesn't it seem wonderful!—and for William to have seen it!"

Clara read on.

"I visited the ancient obelisk of Heliopolis, the oldest in the world, which now stands almost alone; its numerous companions having disappeared: we went over a very wide plain, when I saw a camel and a buffalo yoked together dragging a plough, which at once put all ideas of England out of my head and convinced me that I was really in the Desert. The tree that produces balm grows here—I will bring you home some of the bark of it—the tradition says that it sprung from a pool of water in which the Virgin had bathed her child, and it is also said, that Cleopatra brought it from Judea and planted the charming tree in this soil.

"The obelisk stands in a garden, and the figures and hieroglyphics on it are extremely beautiful."

"Now," said Maria, interrupting, "that is what I cannot understand, because I have been to the Museum to see all I could of Egyptian

things since William went, and I do not think any of them pretty at all—indeed, I must say, they look frightful, some have got monkey's heads, some oxen's, and it frightened me to death to think he should be amongst such ugly creatures. Isn't it odd he should admire them ?"

Clara explained his admiring them as works of art of so early and mysterious a period, and Maria, silenced if not satisfied, allowed her to go on.

"Early travellers used to tell marvellous tales about the Phœnix, which was accustomed to visit the temple of the sun at Heliopolis and burn itself on the altar; this is not to be believed as a fact, the Phœnix is a mere emblem or symbol of the power of the sun. I cannot, therefore, promise to bring you one of its feathers as the merchants of old pretended to do at the great fair of St. Mark's, at Venice.

"Everything I behold in this wonderful country shows me, that the more it becomes understood the more it may convince the world of the accuracy of the Scriptures, and when we meet with something in those sacred pages which appears incomprehensible, the reason is merely that we have no interpreter at hand to translate and explain the difficulties. The more ignorant a traveller is, the less he is inclined to believe;

but, as he advances in knowledge, that which appeared impossible before rises into clearness before his eyes; for instance, all the mere names mentioned in Genesis as belonging to Egypt, explain much that is there half explained or only hinted at."

"How good he is," said Maria, looking up with tears in her eyes, "I am afraid I shall never be half good enough for him, they say sometimes that clever people are not religious, but I am sure he is both."

"Simplicity of heart, dear Maria," said Clara, "and rectitude of purpose stand in the place of talent—you know, 'little children' who could not be clever from their extreme youth, are promised all the privileges of learned men who are commanded to resemble them."

Maria's eyes brightened, and she read on—

"I am continually meeting groups of figures just like those we used to look at in the National Gallery, that you admired with me. A young woman, dressed in blue and red, seated on an ass, holding a child in her arms and followed by an elderly man, a perfect Joseph; the desert and the palm trees and the fountain by which they rest, all quite perfect."

"You see," said Maria, "he writes all sorts of things to me, because he knows even if I do

not quite understand I shall be very much pleased to try and make them out, just as I pick out a song in music by ear without really knowing exactly why, as I never studied. It seems just as natural to me to understand him if he is ever so learned."

"How does he send you his letters?" said Clara.

"Mr. Loftus, replied she, always sends them to me because William is allowed to enclose mine and his mother's to him, to save postage. What should I do without that!—but Mr. Loftus is so generous. Did you see him in the country? how he would admire you! I should be glad to know what he is like."

"What, did you never see him?" asked Clara, surprised.

"No," replied Maria, "I am to see him when we are married; for he says we are to go down to Derbyshire and spend the honeymoon, if ever that takes place," added she, sighing, "one comfort is, I shan't be teazed any more about the Pennyman's nephew, for since the break up there, ma has given up talking of him, for he is like to be no richer than William."

"What has happened then?" said Clara, "you forget that I know nothing, and in your letters you never mentioned any one but William."

"That was, you know," said Maria, blushing, "because I had no one but you to speak of him to. Oh dear! I forgot you didn't know the Pennyman's have been found out cheating and spending the money allowed for the paupers, while they kept them on short allowance. That was the reason they were able to have such a fine house and pinery and all that at Highgate, and live like lords and that made them so proud.

"Simpson was just as bad, for he was his uncle's head man and knew it all. It was very wicked of them and every one is quite ashamed that knew them; they got prouder and prouder after you went away, and had a box at the opera and gave parties where lords and ladies, they said, came. I can't think what sort they could be; but, it is said, there are lords and ladies in London who, if they didn't go to visit such people as the Pennyman's, would be obliged to stay at home alone, because no other great people will notice them. Poor Celia was always with them, and left off coming here at all and now we shall never see her again."

"Why?" asked Clara, surprised at the tone of melancholy in which Maria spoke; "has anything happened to her?"

"Oh dear yes," answered Maria; "I'm very sorry for it, though ma' says it serves her right

for being so proud and vain of her beauty. She met some gentleman who fell in love with her at the Pennyman's parties or at Willis's Rooms or somewhere, and she has run away with him."

"And married him?" said Clara.

"No, that's the worst of it," replied Maria, gravely; "they say not. He used to come to her father's, pretending to be a painter, and called himself Clark; but that was not his name—he is some great man—but what's the matter, Miss Fane? How pale you look!"

Clara in effect stood gazing on the speaker as pale as marble, till roused by the question she sunk into a seat rigid and motionless.

"You have been standing all this time," cried Maria, "poring over these letters and maps till you are quite faint—let me get you some water?"

"I am better now," said Clara, recovering herself; "how came it to be discovered about Celia? tell me more."

"Oh," resumed Maria, "this Clark was continually there, and though she had known him, from first to last, not more than six weeks, he persuaded her to run off from her father, which she did, and no one knows where they went to. It was just after the Pennyman's failed, so they could not be asked who he really was, for they

got away as quick as they could, and are gone, I believe, abroad. They had some friends, magistrates, who got them out of the worst of the scrape or they would have been transported. Poor old Mr. Sawyer is quite broken-hearted about Celia, and goes on like one out of his mind; he'll never recover it, for he was so proud of her. Isn't it shocking she should have behaved so?"

"Shocking, indeed!" exclaimed Clara.

And much she reflected on this strange story afterwards—with a bitter feeling of distress such as she had never before experienced. Humiliation was added to her astonishment, and indignation to have found herself placed in a position which raised her no higher than the level of a foolish, flirting girl like Celia Sawyer, for she could not doubt for a moment that the false Clark was no other than Mr. Loftus—the man whom she had forgiven, of whose feelings she had been so tender—whom she had allowed herself to regard with indulgence—whom she had felt satisfaction in seeing, and whom she had lately—regretted.

"Alas!" she sighed, "how fortunate am I in having quitted his dangerous presence—for ever. He does not come here, therefore he will not know where I am. Miss Clinton does not intend to inform him of my destination, and I shall in future never be likely to be thrown into his

sphere—as he is going abroad, and I shall remain in England. Farewell then at once to the idle dreams I was forming of the existence of good in man. I shall henceforth think Miss Clinton right in her estimate of their characters. How distressing to think so fair an outside should conceal such falsehood.—

'Oh serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!'

Alas! my experience has been hitherto limited, but already I have discovered much evil. It seems only in the straightforward monotony of life that it is to be avoided—all approach to enjoyment brings it at once to light."

CHAPTER IV.

Two lovely berries moulded on one stem,
Like to a double cherry seeming parted,
But yet a union in partition.
Midsummer Night's Dream.

Clara soon received an answer to her letter from Lady Seymour, the great aunt of the Miss Luttrels', appointing a day for an interview, which she did not fail to keep. She found Lady Seymour at her house in Eaton Square, where her young nieces were staying with her for the present, until the house their father had taken for them at Fulham was ready.

She was a lady of a certain age, still handsome, and dressed in a very youthful manner; she sat in a study, the walls of which were hung round with copies of good masters, all tolerably well executed: there were half-finished models in plaster and in wax, scattered about on tables—

engraving and etching tools, vials of acqua-fortis, and a long array of colours in bottles and cups, with all the paraphernalia of a painter. A guitar lay on a sofa near her, and a few foreign books were scattered in conspicuous confusion.

She received Clara very courteously, but without rising from her seat before an easel which supported an oil picture of large size, with which she was busied.

"I am sure I need not apologise to you, young lady," said she, "for not quitting my darling occupation. I doubt not but you understand the spell which keeps me clinging to a desk, a book, an easel. I have scarcely a moment to spare, for I have still much to do to complete my great work — the largest I have hitherto attempted. But I am aware that I have duties which reprove me for too lavish indulgence in my favourite pursuits: let us talk of my beloved charges, whom I wish to confide to you. Pray sit down, and give me your attention while I let you into the secrets of our respective positions."

Clara having conformed to her wish, Lady Seymour continued, talking with volubility.

"I am devoted," said she, "to the arts—they occupy all my attention. What, indeed, is life

worth if one neglects its finest, its most delicate occupations—so exalting, so elevating? I have been called 'blue,' perhaps I am a little so—and if intense admiration of all that is refined, sensitiveness to all that is superior, all that is above the common run of things, makes me deserve to be distinguished, I might be called *couleur de rose*. Alas! but for my long habits of application, I might have been able to impart my acquired knowledge where it would be practically useful. I might have attempted to form the minds of these two darlings left to my charge; but I am a poor, weak being, all nerve, and unable to bear exertion, and I am forced to delegate to another the office which would have been so delightful to me. I am fond of rule and order, Miss Fane; my beloved nieces you will find unlike me in some, I fear, essential respects, and it will be your province to see that they approach my standard of female excellence as near as possible."

Clara answered modestly that she would do all in her power to meet her wishes, and she expressed herself certain that after the pains Lady Seymour had taken with the education of her nieces, there would be little trouble in her task.

"You are mistaken, my dear Miss Fane," said the lady; "my sweet creatures are lively and

animated, and impressionable to such a degree that they are apt to forget my careful instructions. They love better to flutter their glittering wings over a flower than to settle upon it. You see, my dear young friend, the bent of my mind; perhaps you will think my language poetical—alas! I am, nevertheless, the very soul of sincerity and truth."

"I do not consider," said Clara, smiling, "that poetry and truth are necessarily separated."

"You are a sweet creature," returned the lady; "but you must leave me now. I have an idea you will see my plan carried out some day. I must put that down at once — charming thought!— a butterfly hovering over a flower—will it not make a charming vignette? You draw, of course? Well, I may employ you sometimes to put down my ideas. Imagine how I occupy myself! I adore charity, and I have a school of my own for which I hold a bazaar every year—it is a great privilege to contribute to it. You shall sketch me some trifles on my dictation. I employ several poor artists, who are too glad of my patronage, and I cannot refuse to let them contribute their mite to my charity, because it makes them known in my circle. One should always extend the hand of patronage to the worthy—and some of these poor things are starving!—it goes

to my heart to witness the distress of this beautiful world, and I do all I can to alleviate it. But let us talk of these lovely creatures," said she, in a confidential manner; "they are placed in a somewhat difficult position: the real business of my life, after all, is to attend to their welfare, and the happiness of my existence would be to devote my whole time to them; but, as I have explained, I have duties which interfere—duties to society—a large circle, who expect my services —this house, besides, is too gay for such young inexperienced and attractive beings—for they are more lovely than words can picture—you will be charmed with them. Their father is perfection, as a man; he adores them—he lives for them; but he has duties, too,—active ones—and, besides, a man! what would you have? He will be so happy to confide them entirely to your care; you are, yes, you look, old enough to be a mother to them, since Fate deprives me of the delight of calling myself so. You will have entire controul, can order what you please for them, any masters you consider necessary, and any little indulgences you know. You will not be too severe—I see it in your face, otherwise I should say a great deal. You will strictly attend to their morals, and as for their religion—dear me, I forgot to inquire; I hope you are a Protestant? Aye, that's well!

because we are very particular in that point—there is nothing like being religious, it is so proper! We have a charming preacher near us, and a perfectly unobjectionable congregation: very few men—those dangerous and destructive creatures! I shall see you very often, and forgive me for occasionally interfering—it is, I am sure you will think, natural in one so nearly connected with their dear mother—pardon me this emotion—they are, as it were, left to my peculiar charge—they were much with me in Rome and at Naples, and, but for my nerves and the necessity of their being with some person who has controul, I would have implored their dear father to spare them to me now. In about ten days I must, however, part with the dear angels—their establishment will be arranged, and you will kindly accept the transfer of my treasures."

Clara listened to all this harangue with much patience, and began to fear by all that their devoted aunt said, that the Miss Luttrels would prove rather a more difficult charge than she had imagined. She was about to take her leave when the folding doors of the room suddenly opened and two figures bounded in.

She had never beheld two beings who so entirely deserved the epithets which had been bestowed on them of lovely: their ages might be

fourteen and fifteen, or a little more; they were, however, nearly of a height, and might be almost taken for twins—there was a great difference nevertheless in their complexions. The eldest who was greeted as Claudia, was much darker than her sister, with a flowing profusion of black, silky hair, which hung nearly to her waist, large, sparkling brown eyes, and a brilliant colour on her delicate rounded cheeks—all her features were exquisitely formed, and her figure had a lightness and grace in every movement.

Sybilla, the younger, had dark, auburn hair, as full and luxuriant as her sister's: her eyes were hazel-blue, so shaded by fine, long lashes, that they might be mistaken for black—like those of Mary Stuart, which are never alike in any two portraits, their changeable colour was not to be defined. She was dazzlingly fair, and the roses came and went on her face with every emotion. Her figure was smaller than her sister's, and both were distinguished for hands and feet singularly minute. Both these apparitions glided forward towards Lady Seymour, who uttered a little scream as they caught her in their arms, and whispered in her ear, glancing slyly and rather timidly towards Clara.

"Oh! it *is*, then!" was the exclamation of the

eldest; "we thought so!—oh, you treacherous darling!—so you have been plotting with papa against us—and we are to go away and be shut up, and have no more rides, and no more sittings up, and music parties, and all that is delightful."

"Let me present you, my sweet nieces," said Lady Seymour, making a sign for them to be silent, "to Miss Fane, the lady who is so kind as to take charge of you. Alas! I ought to reproach her instead of recommending her to your attention, for she is stealing you from my arms—she is usurping my place. Let her not gain one superior to mine in your heart!" she added, *avec effusion.* "You will love me always, won't you, beloved objects of my affection?"

"Oh yes, and smother you with kisses, if you like," cried they both, suiting the action to the words, and devouring her with embraces; "but you know it is all your fault—you know if you really chose you could keep us—but we are too wild for you, and, what is worse, we never mean to be any better."

So saying, laughing, kissing, and carressing, they almost overwhelmed their affectionate relative with their demonstrations.

Presently, however, they seemed to become conscious that they were wanting in politeness to Clara, who stood spectatress of this scene.

"Sybilla, my dear child," said Claudia, assuming an air of gravity; "how can you allow Miss Fane to stand all this time. I am afraid Ma'am," she added, addressing her, "that you will be shocked at us and amazed at our levity—under our present circumstances too! Is it all settled? when are we to have the pleasure of receiving you at our own house, since Lady Seymour sends us away?"

"My angels," interposed Lady Seymour, "I have been telling Miss Fane all about it and have begged her to come to you in ten days."

"Oh!" exclaimed Sybilla; "ten days more grace, that's charming—and then we'll begin to be dull and good. How we will amuse ourselves meantime! Papa says we may."

"Miss Fane," said Claudia, with a graver air; "we are much obliged to you for coming. Papa will send the carriage for you on the day we fix, so do not give yourself any trouble. I will arrange everything for you. You shall have a nice room and we will have plenty of music—they say you play so well—that sweet little Eugenie Petit told me you were an angel. I made papa send for her, when we went to her husband's on purpose to ask all about you. I know we shall be good friends."

Clara's first interview with the Miss Luttrels

although so strange, left her enchanted at their appearance, but rather anxious at the prospect of the probable difficulties she should have to encounter in the management of two evidently very forward spoilt children.

There was, however, nothing rude or ill-bred in their manner, although bold and wild, and there was an expression in their countenances which told of fine dispositions, requiring only judicious guidance and watchful care. She felt, at once, that she was not of a proper age for such a charge in spite of the assertion of Lady Seymour, who was evidently anxious to shift from her own hands the responsibility of the two treasures her niece had left.

This reflection did not seem to have occurred to Lady Seymour, to judge by the account she gave to Mr. Luttrel when she informed him that this important accession to his domestic establishment had been secured.

Mr. Luttrel, the father of Clara's intended pupils, was a man, still young, but somewhat worn in appearance and having an air of *ennui* and absence, natural or assumed, which told of indolent habits, as his somewhat haggard though handsome face spoke of dissipation. There was a wandering expression in his fine dark eye which indicated a restless mind, and nothing in his countenance

bespoke either intellectual superiority or high feeling. Although the features were regular and seemed harmonious at a first glance, the second look destroyed that notion, the too uncertain character of the month, the want of breadth in the forehead, the smallness of the head, all failed to show either goodness or genius, in both of which qualities the handsome and admired Charles Luttrel was evidently deficient.

He was, in fact, a man of fashion, occupied with his pleasures and avoiding his duties, and dissipating the treasure of life, as others of his class do, as if it was of no worth and given only for the purpose of amusement.

He was immensely popular and although without the reputation of wit, was sought in all society and courted everywhere: he knew his advantages and cultivated them, because they placed the world of fashion at his command, a world he cared for only from habit and in which he lived because he had not the taste or energy to seek a better, heartily *ennuyé* as he was of it. When he changed its scenes it was not for any recommended by greater refinement or intellect, yet though he was suspected of preferring company at times beneath his station, he was not the less either admired or courted, and his word was decisive on all matters of taste or ton in the best society.

"Auntie dear," said Mr. Luttrel, as he threw himself on a couch in his aunt's study and languidly looked up to answer her interrogatories of why he had not come to dinner.

"Auntie, I am so horridly occupied with these detestable lawyers that my whole time is taken up. I believe I had some dinner at the club, but my mind is so bewildered that I positively can't remember. It's a relief to me to hear that something is done towards the establishment of those darlings. I wish Claudia did'nt grow so enormously, I blush to see her enter the room. I must absolutely have the girls called my sisters, it's absurd that I am to be their father; if they would but keep children—but they won't, they will grow—and be so old! could'nt one give them something as they do puppies to keep them under. They are lovely too, which is another bore—they will be looked at, admired and every one will ask who's they are—what a question for me to answer!"

He turned his dark ringlets over his finger as he spoke and gazed in a glass close beside him.

"Do I look like the father of anybody—now do tell me—charming Auntie?"

"Certainly, you look like theirs, your are so handsome, dear Charles," was the answer; "you know, let them grow ever so fast, they are only

thirteen and fourteen after all and can't be brought out for two or three years at earliest. But this nice steady person they have now will keep them in check."

"Is she old?" said Mr. Luttrel, yawning.

"Not positively old," replied Lady Seymour; "but she looks so, and is very quiet and grave."

"Oh!" said the papa; "ugly, I suppose."

"Not positively ugly either," was the answer; "but by the side of those creatures a Hebe would look a dowdy. She is rather—rather—I don't know what—but you would not look at her twice."

"I don't wish to look at her at all you know, auntie," said he; "and that's the reason you so kindly have settled the matter for me about cooks and housekeepers and governesses and all, the *canaille* besides—how can I ever repay your disinterestedness!"

"Never, my dear nephew, never," sighed the lady, "for you have deprived me of my joy and solace—the society of those angelic emanations! —oh! what will my house be without them! I live but in their sight."

"Don't talk any more about them," said the father, "I adore them, of course, but it's very hard upon me to be set up with two animals like

them, so beautiful and so wild—I have not an idea what to do with them, so you must keep them out of scrapes and see that their keeper feeds them at proper hours, and beats them when necessary."

"You wicked, cruel, and abominable papa," cried a voice close at his ear, and Miss Sybilla threw her white arms round his neck, "we won't be beat, and fed and knocked about just as you like and we'll beat you if you order it. Oh! we've had such a ride in the park!—our horses went like lightning and we raced all along the lake so fast—so fast, everybody thought we were run away with. It was such fun!—to see the fright William was in and the faces of all the people. Lady Seymour dear," said she, suddenly, "can our new governess ride?"

"You wild thing, I never asked her; but, of course not," said Lady Seymour.

"Of course she shall be taught then, and go out with us, as this naughty papa won't. It is not half so pleasant as racing across the Campagna, but it does well enough for England—it is not like riding along by the blue bay at darling Naples, but the water is pretty too and the people stare quite as much. Oh, Claudia, Claudia!" she cried out, as her sister entered, "come and

help me to tickle this naughty boy, he has hidden my shoe—he's at his tricks again—there's no peace with him!"

So saying, both young ladies engaged in a conflict with their reclined papa, who entered into their sport as if he had been their brother and of their own age.

"Silence, children," cried Lady Seymour, "what a *charivari* you keep—I'll send you all to the nursery directly. Charles, do give Condrillon, her slipper—she's got it!—she's beating him with it! bravo, you angels!—oh, what spirit, what *navïté*; but my nerves can't bear it. I shall ring to take you all away."

"Papa," said Claudia, throwing herself down on an ottoman, out of breath, "now do be sensible and answer me a few rational questions. We've got a house, and we've got a governess—now, do you expect us to study? because if you do you're mistaken; after going to all the balls at Rome last year, do you think we're to be made little children of again?"

"You only went to children's parties, you know, sweet audacious!" said her papa.

"But I danced with grown up men, handsome impertinent!" replied his daughter, "and I'll never dance with, or speak to a little boy again; and as we've a house we mean to give parties our-

selves and we'll invite you and auntie Seymour and we'll be so gay and brilliant."

"You'll be regulated by this Miss Something, of course," said her father, "I've nothing to do with you."

"She's something, indeed, you silly old man!" cried Claudia, "but you shall make nothing of us, we promise you."

"She's prim, I hope, and good and proper and strict too," said the parent.

"If she is she shan't stay," said Claudia, "you know we've had enough of governesses, and don't want one at all—we're quite clever enough—ain't we, auntie dear; now, dear papa, do let us have parties, it will be so nice! But we're heiresses, you know, and can do as we please—and so we won't ask you."

"I don't want to be plagued with you and I am not your guardian," said the papa, "if those respectable persons, whom your good mamma named as your protectors, like you to drive four-in-hand, you may for me."

"Oh, let us! let us!" cried Sybilla, jumping up, "I can drive to admiration!—what a good idea."

"Papa has always such charming ideas," said Claudia, "but he don't mean a word he says, he is so *perfide*."

"My dear girls," said the father, "I assure you, I never will interfere in your affairs any more than I am obliged—it is quite bad enough to have to go through all this bore of lawyers on your account; but, as for giving parties, I suppose auntie here would say it was wrong, and she regulates everything."

"You must wait, my delight," said Lady Seymour, "till you are once out, and then papa will let you do as you like, of course—you must be sixteen, Claudia dear, there is no precedent for an earlier age."

"I can make one then," answered Claudia, impatiently, and with a slight frown, "why am I obliged to do as other people do? besides, there have been Queens no older than me and people are obliged to obey them, and they have the world at their command—which I should like very much."

"Adieu, my children!" cried the papa, suddenly rising, "I am obliged to leave you; settle the affairs of education and all that sort of thing as you can amongst you; but don't forget to take lessons of Centelli whatever you do: I shall never be able to endure either of you if you learn of another; he began to form you at Rome, he is now in London, his style of vocalisation is the

only thing endurable in the known world: I leave you my injunctions and my blessing."

"*Dolce e carissimo padre mio* that you are!" cried Claudia, as they both, dancing round him, enclosed him in the circle of their arms towards the door, both singing a Neapolitan serenade in the sweetest of all silver voices. The father paused approvingly, and, having joined in the pretty refrain with a voice as soft and clear as their own, broke from them and disappeared.

CHAPTER V.

What is the end of study? let me know.
Love's Labour Lost.

At the appointed time Clara was duly sent for to Fulham, Lady Seymour having herself accompanied her thither. As they drove along, she observed to Clara that the father of the young ladies was a perfect pattern of domestic devotion.

"Such a creature, my dear Miss Fane," said she, "so fond of his children, so attached to the memory of my beloved niece who was so early called from him. Sybilla is the image of her; the eldest is more like his family. You will find that the dear creatures, though possessed of perfect tempers and dispositions, have moments of excitement and vivacity, which render them doubly interesting to those attached to them. I am myself so gentle, naturally, that the least thing causes me to be too much agitated, otherwise the brilliant outbursts of their imaginative

and glowing feelings would occasion me the most extreme delight; as it is, I avoid all excitement, and must fly from that which I delight in, for I have duties to society which I cannot but fulfil."

Clara listened to these and to other fine speeches, and was at some loss to comprehend what this confidence could mean, except it was intend to convey the fact to her mind that the young ladies were very passionate; nor could she understand what the great duties of Lady Seymour were, which so entirely precluded the possibility of her superintending the welfare of her nieces.

They were received by the young ladies with great pleasure, who were full of exclamations of delight at their new house and its arrangements; each sister having her own room, with a toilet-table set out with the utmost care and elegance as if for grown women.

"Giulia has the taste of an angel," cried Claudia, "and has fitted my room up exactly like that I had at Naples, which overlooked the bay. I like our house of all things, and we shall be so happy in it—shan't we, Sybilla?"

"Oh, impossible not!" replied the sister, "we can almost live in the garden, where there's a swing hammock; we will have such fun!"

"I shall see you every day, my beloveds," said

Lady Seymour, "and in idea clasp you to my bosom every hour. Oh, Miss Fane!" she added, drying a supposed tear, "watch over these treasures and guard them for me."

"Oh, dear auntie," cried Claudia, "*we* mean to take care of Miss Fane, so you need not fear for us."

"Farewell then, my sweet flowers," exclaimed the lady, embracing them both as she disappeared to her carriage.

They flew to the balcony and looked after her as she drove away.

"There goes sincerity!" said Claudia; "oh, auntie, don't we see through you! how glad you are to get rid of us—as if we didn't know all about it to be sure!"

Clara started at these words, which betrayed the observation of her pupils, if not their affection for their relative, and she followed their looks as they watched the disappearance of the carriage towards the gate, their uncovered heads leaning over the balcony and their white arms waving adieux to the retreating traveller.

At length, their curiosity satisfied, they drew in their pretty forms and re-entered the room; they whispered a few moments together and then advanced to Miss Fane, and, each taking a hand, led her in a sort of mock heroic style to the sofa

where they seated her. They then stood a minute before her in silence, and looked so fixedly in her face that she could not suppress a smile.

"We shall soon," said she, "know one another, we appear to have all the will."

The eldest, on this, placed one of her pretty feet on a low chair, and, leaning her crossed arms on her knee, continued her scrutiny, nothing abashed: her sister, meanwhile, stooping over her with her white hands resting on her shoulder, and equally bent on studying her countenance. They both looked so pretty in this attitude, impertinent as their occupation was, that Clara contemplated them with pleased attention without feeling annoyed.

"I dare say," at length remarked Miss Claudia, shaking back her thick, dark curls, "I dare say you think us a couple of young bears for behaving as we do, but now I must tell you exactly how the case stands. You are to be our governess: now we hate governesses; we hate learning; we hate being bored; and it is as well to begin as we mean to go on. Our first governess, after poor dear old Nicky, our nurse, left us, was a horrid old cross French creature who used to worry our lives out; we knew a great deal more than she did long before she went away, and that made her so mad that she did nothing but scold and

beat us and tell falsehoods about us. Well, she's off—married, thank goodness! and in Switzerland, we hope; for six months we've had our liberty: now, can you suppose, at our age, we're going to submit to a new tyrant? if papa does he's mistaken, and as for him he spoils us, and we can turn him round our fingers, so there's no fear of his interfering. You look good-natured and funny, and we like fun; you are very pretty too, and that we like—Mademoiselle Tournemine was hideous! So, just listen: we are ready enough to learn anything we like, and so that it's not *blue* we'll consent to be taught things, and as long as you don't bore us and be cross we'll be as gentle as lambs and doves; but the moment you begin the airs of a governess it's all over, and we're your enemies for life."

"Suppose I answered that I will not enter into this compact," returned Clara, smiling.

"Why then we'll tease your life out, as Tournemine once did ours," replied the pupil; "but you'll agree to it, for we're not at all bad girls, only we've got a great deal of character, and we do think, that after submitting so many years to the tyranny of one governess, it is hard to begin again when we hoped it was all over. Now then sit quite still and comfortable, and put up your feet and feel quite at home, while we go and play you

a duet. We will do nothing but amuse you, and nurse you, and kiss you, and love you, all day long, but we won't obey—so there now!"

Saying this, Miss Claudia and Miss Sybilla, entwining each other with graceful embraces, whirled round the room, singing like two larks, and dancing like nymphs, the dark hair of one mingling with the fairer tresses of the other, their rosy cheeks flushed with gaiety, and saucy daring in their wild eyes. Presently they stopped, took their places at the pianoforte, and, with fingers as light as zephyr-blown leaves, executed a difficult piece of music with all the ease of professional players. So animated did they become as their music proceeded that they continued to beat the time with their feet and their nodding heads, till they looked as a pair of joyous young Bacchantes might have done, inspired by the god, and playing to a troop of wild Fauns in some mystic dell of Arcadia.

Clara was quite taken by surprise by the originality, grace, beauty, talent, and sauciness they displayed by turns, and was so amused that she had neither the inclination nor the power to check them, or to assume any part of the command which had been delegated to her, but listened with pleased attention till they had finished their performance.

"Now then," said Claudia, rising, "you must play to us, and let us hear if all's true that little Eugenie told of your genius—oh! she said you were quite a wonder—and as she was right about your beauty perhaps she is as to the other."

Clara, of course made no difficulty in obeying, and played so much to the satisfaction of both that, on her finishing, they embraced her rapturously.

"You darling!" exclaimed Sybilla, "now we are sure to like you! only you must sing—Italian—German—all you can; do you know Centelli, our old Neapolitan master? there's nobody like him; he's to come to-morrow to renew our lessons—isn't it lucky, Claudia, that he should be arrived? Miss Fane will fall in love with him, he's so handsome."

"Oh no," said Clara, looking a little grave, "I never fall in love: it is not right to talk about falling in love."

"Not right!" cried Claudia, "then what *will* you say to us?—why both of us are always in love!—it is so amusing!—but we haven't had time yet to begin again; we mean to however as soon as we're settled, so you may make up your mind to that. Now sing, there's a dear, sweet, interesting thing. Oh, here's '*Luce di quest'anima!*'—sing that—

I'm learning it, and must practise it for dear Centelli."

Clara did as they desired, and they were in raptures at her voice and expression.

"What a soul you have!" cried Claudia; "you will sing like an angel after a few lessons from Centelli. I had no voice at all when I began with him, and he says I shall do great things: you are almost perfect, but he will do you such good—now a German Lied—Oh, Sybilla, she's going to sing our *Wiedersehn!*—isn't she quite charming?"

Some hours passed away in this enthusiasm, to the amusement both of Clara and the young ladies. At length, she rose from the piano and asked some necessary question about their arrangements for the rest of the day.

"Oh," said Claudia, "don't fidget yourself about anything; Giulia is our housekeeper, knows our ways, and will do everything you want; you have only to say what you require and she attends to it. Now we will shew you your room; you shall see how we have arranged all as we thought you would like it; we shall find now if your taste and ours agree. But, I tell you what, my dear Miss Fane," said Claudia, stopping suddenly, "you must attend to what I say about every-

thing; first, you shall not contribute a single article to my aunt's bazaar, because if you do so once your whole time may be taken up with her whims. She lays every one who is clever under contribution, and gets the whole of her bazaar furnished with presents to sell for the poor, which is all nonsense; she ought to buy them of the poor first, and then sell them to the rich: she gets the credit of being charitable *á trop bon marché*—I have not patience with it!"

"But she does so much herself?" hazarded Clara.

"What a charming, innocent love you are!" cried Claudia, laughing heartily, "how easily you are taken in! One can see you have heard some of auntie's fine speeches. I suppose you believe that she has half educated us too?"

"Certainly," replied Clara.

"Well," laughed Claudia, "you might be forgiven for that, considering how little we know. But make yourself quite happy on that subject, she never had anything more to do with teaching us than she had in painting the great picture in her study, which she calls her 'Grand Inspiration.' It was all done by one of her victims—we know all about it."

Nothing could be more admirable than Clara found everything in the house, and when she was

left to herself and looked round on the splendour and elegance about her, she could hardly believe her real position.

"This is almost unnatural," mused she; "it seems like a vision, and will perhaps fade away like that of Rose Cottage; while it lasts it is extremely seducing and agreeable, but I have learned to distrust what I take at first for pleasure. What a singular position these young girls are in; older in their minds than in their years, they are confided to me, a mere stranger, and though I am supposed to have authority over them I see that I cannot do anything but by indulgence. They are spoilt children, no doubt self-willed and impetuous, but they are very fascinating and clever, and seem inclined to like me. I wonder what kind of man their father can be; Lady Seymour is evidently a selfish, false, woman of fashion, who merely does what she calls one of her duties in as pleasant a way as she can."

Clara soon found that her last surmise was altogether correct: Lady Seymour used Mr. Luttrel's horses and carriages as if they had been her's, for her visits and her drives. She drove often down to Fulham to see the young girls and stayed some hours, occasionally taking them out; but Clara seldom went with them, except walking, which they did every morning, and they had a pony

carriage at their command: they were not fond of going with their aunt, and greatly preferred their walks with her. Sometimes the two young ladies rode out with an old groom, who had lived long in the family, and who seemed to have some control over them. The butler was also an old man, and seemed very fond of both; they teazed and coaxed him by turns, but he was firm in assertions that he had their papa's orders for all he did.

Giulia was an Italian, who had been their mother's maid, and pleased her less than the rest of the establishment, for her manners were pert and her air only just removed from impertinent. They had another maid, a young Frenchwoman, for themselves, called, by them, Fifine; and the rest of the servants had been hired by Lady Seymour since their arrival.

Mr. Luttrel had never made his appearance at the house, though Clara had been there some weeks; but, she understood that the young ladies saw their father frequently when they drove to town with Lady Seymour, where they went without her. Still, it seemed to her strange that he never came, and she thought his absence sometimes cast a gloom over Claudia, who talked a good deal of him and of their former days at Naples.

Her pupils were, on the whole, more tractable than she had anticipated, but she was obliged to adopt their tastes in the all she made them do, she found that they became *ennuyé* at the least grave reading; they were fond of poetry in any language and devoured romance. History distressed them dreadfully, and they would close the book and beg Clara to tell them the story but not make them wade through anything so dry.

"But, don't you know," said she, "that to arrive at a knowledge of things worth knowing, one must submit to the dullness of a beginning?"

"Yes," they would reply, "but when one knows all that nonsense about Greeks and Romans and kings and generals, what is one the better for it? Imagine, how stupid to begin talking blue that way in society!—every one would go to sleep—now, music and drawing and dancing and speaking languages, all that is charming, and one does not mind a little trouble for it; but, do you really, now, believe that any human being cares whether there was ever a Cæsar or an Alexander—and as for all their weary Kings of France and England, I hate their very names and don't want to know anything about them — no more than Sybilla, and I'm sure she doesn't."

"Oh!" said that young lady, "when you two read that sort of thing, I never listen, but think

of something else, as I used to do with Madame Tournemine. It is the only thing that ever reminds me of that dreadful woman."

Their chief object was music which they delighted in, and their singing master was their especial favourite; but it was a continued labour to induce them to attend to more important studies. Nevertheless, they were full of affection, amiability and grace, and it was impossible not to be attached to them. They anticipated Clara's wishes, they waited on her, played to her, talked to her and seemed quite happy in her society.

"How very odd," said Claudia, one day, "that we should like you so much. I thought all governesses were horrid creatures like Tournemine, who was such a monster! We are very unfortunate, dear Miss Fane," she added, a cloud coming over her bright countenance, "in having lost dear mamma, she was always ill and lying on the sofa, so we did not see her much because she could not bear the trouble of us, so that we were always with Madame, and she was so harsh and vulgar! Papa was hardly ever with us either—he used to be away somewhere—are husbands always away like that? I should not like my husband to go away. I should love him so much, only I don't want him to be quite like papa. Isn't papa naughty never to come to see us?—he won't be-

lieve that you are charming either ; Lady Seymour has told him you are ugly and very cross, and he says he hates domestic affairs. I wish I could make him come, I am sure he would often be here if he knew you."

But still the papa kept away, and Clara felt rather happy than otherwise that their summer lives were undisturbed. Lady Seymour's visits became much less frequent, and sometimes she would be a week or ten days without paying a visit. One day she arrived, apparently in high spirits, and announced to them that their papa intended to come soon to see them, and to let them give a party. Nothing could equal their ecstacies on this occasion, and they began instantly planning all sorts of entertainments.

"You shall have a tent on the lawn," said Lady Seymour, "and a band and there will be dancing and delights of all descriptions. And who do you think you will see?"

"Oh, tell us—tell us, dear auntie," cried both at once.

"A dear old friend of Italy," replied Lady Seymour.

"Who!—who!" cried Claudia.

"It's Prince Cecco, who used to sing for us?"

"It's Carlo Cignani, who brought us the great grapes?"

"It's Mr. Clark, who painted us ?"

"No—no—no," replied Lady Seymour ; " but how odd you should think of Clark—he is in England."

" Spectacles and all, and with his Hessians ?" laughed the girls.

" Just as odd as ever," said the aunt ; " he is painting with me at this very time—I am finishing my picture of the Flight."

" Oh, let us come and see it," cried Sybilla, " and see dear old Clark again. Do you remember how we used to pelt him with sugar plums at the Carnival ? Does he play on the flute as well as ever ?"

Clara stood amazed : were they really talking of Mr. Clark, the painter, whom she knew ? who was he—who could he be ? how was he connected with the story of Celia Sawyer.

"But it is not he I meant," said Lady Seymour, interrupting her reflections, " think of some one you liked very much indeed, who used to be so fond of you, ungrateful children."

"No—it can't be !—oh, Sybilla, it is—it must be !" exclaimed Claudia, clapping her hands, " Sir Anselm Fairfax ?"

"No other," said Lady Seymour, who was instantly overwhelmed with kisses and questions.

"Where is he—when did he come? where does he start from?"

"He has been in Scotland—he is just arrived from thence, he is going to Vienna, he is coming to see you here before he goes."

These communications were received with rapture, which was increased by their being invited to go the next day to town to meet their old, and apparently favoured, friend.

Clara, accepting the invitation given her to accompany them, thought this would be a good opportunity to see Maria Spicer, whom she had promised to visit at her first leisure. It was therefore agreed, that the young ladies should be set down at Lady Seymour's and the carriage take Clara on to Poland Street, where she could be left for an hour or two, and she then proposed returning to her pupils in Eaton Square hen it suited her to do so.

CHAPTER VI.

With all my heart I'll gossip at this feast.
Comedy of Errors.

"Ah," said Maria, as they proceeded on their way together on her return across the park towards Eaton Square, after Clara's visit to her old friend was over, "I am so happy to walk out with you; I so seldom do now since Celia ran away. She was very fond of walking in the park on a Sunday, when she was very smart and used to get so looked at always. William told me once he did not think it right for me, without we had a gentleman with us, so I left off going as he couldn't often come and he never liked Celia at all. I have heard she lives in great style now and drives a fine carriage. I wonder if she is married or not."

Just at this moment, turning sharply round from Stanhope gate, a beautiful little equipage came in sight; it was a low open carriage with

two small white ponies, and followed by a tiny groom on a third. Within sat a lady very showily dressed, enveloped in a scarlet satin cloak lined with white fur, although the day was warm. She wore a bonnet with feathers, very much off her face, showing a profusion of dark hair; the colour on her cheek was evidently heightened by rouge, and her whole bearing was bold and daring. She was driving her ponies and had a rose-coloured parasol fixed in her whip.

As she dashed past, her bold eyes fixed on Maria and Clara and, so far from withdrawing them, when she saw by the start of the former, that she was recognised, she stooped forward on her seat, kissed her hand and nodded several times.

"Oh dear—oh dear, it's Celia herself," exclaimed Maria, turning pale.

But Clara scarcely heard her, so much was she engrossed by a figure which, standing close to the rails opposite, was regarding the whole group. It was no other than Mr. Loftus, on whose counte nance contempt seemed mingled with surprise; the exclamations of Maria caused Clara to turn her eyes from him for a moment, and when she looked again he was gone.

"Well, that is extraordinary," said Maria, looking after her late friend whose flaunting fea-

thers were still seen fluttering in the air, "she looked very bold I think, Miss Fane—how can she be living?"

"She did not look respectable at all," said Clara. "I hope you did not bow to her."

"I was so taken by surprise," said Maria, "that I think I nodded too; but I am sure I never will again, she looks so improper."

"Did you ever see Mr. Clark, who took her away?" asked Clara.

"Oh yes," replied Maria, "we often saw him pass the windows; he was a very odd looking man in spectacles, his hair was cut short on his forehead—I think a wig—and he wore Hessian boots with tassels; a very strange dress for a lover."

"Very strange, indeed," sighed Clara, "and you are sure it was he she went off with?"

"So every one said, but yet he must be some great lord, or she couldn't be living so fine as she does," answered Maria.

The friends parted at Hyde Park Corner. Maria, who was accustomed to walk alone, returning by Piccadilly, and Clara hurried as quickly as she could towards Eaton Square. She had never before been alone in the streets and though it was so short a distance, she felt timid and uncomfortable as she went on: she would not

allow Maria to go all the way with her as she feared to fatigue her, but she had assumed a boldness which she found she did not possess when they parted.

"I must accustom myself to this sort of independence at least," thought she, "since in future, I can expect no guard but myself."

She had already crossed from Apsley House to the Arch and was now attempting the always crowded crossing at the top of Grosvenor Place, which a throng of carts and carriages, horsemen and foot people made particular difficult; and she was obliged to wait some time before she saw the way clear. Just as she had watched her distance and thought to reach the opposite side without trouble, some grooms from Tattersall's mounted on spirited horses came up, and in her haste to escape their splashing, she almost ran against a gentleman, who had planted himself exactly in her path as if to obstruct her way: she was springing forward when his arms arrested her and he almost lifted her to the pavement.

"Good God! what a lovely creature!" was his exclamation, as he released her.

Clara was extremely confused and a good deal frightened, and to his question of was she hurt? returned no answer, for she was aware that he had stood in her way on purpose and also that his manner was by no means respectful.

"Let me give you my arm, my angel," said the stranger, "don't blush and look angry. You shouldn't be walking alone—it isn't safe, with such little feet as that, I wonder you can stand on them."

Clara recovered herself immediately, and with a haughty manner begged he would allow her to pass on as she required no assistance.

"I cannot part with you, *belle cruelle*," persisted the gentleman, "I owe you an apology for having nearly caused you to fall; but my arms were ready to receive you—you can't deny that."

As he spoke, he continued to walk by her side to her great annoyance, but restored to herself by rising indignation and ashamed of her former fears, she went rapidly on with a firm step.

"Upon my soul," continued he, "I am horrified—I see I have offended you. It was an involuntary crime—yourself the cause. Speak one word and tell me I am forgiven."

"Sir," at length said Clara, stopping and glancing at him with all the severity she could throw into her countenance, "leave me instantly, you disgrace yourself to no purpose."

The gentleman looked at her a moment, took off his hat with a graceful action, made her a profound bow and turning on his heel left her to pursue her way unmolested.

Clara had recovered her self-possession by the time she had reached Eaton Square, but she inwardly resolved not to venture another time to take a solitary walk, even for so short a distance. She found her pupils in ecstacies at the prospect of the approaching *fête* at Fulham.

"Papa," said Claudia, "gives a breakfast and borrows our house—is'nt that grand? we lend it him—that makes us quite women. And we are to be guests and Lady Seymour receives every one, and dear Sir Anselm is sure to come, oh, how he will like you! and then Papa will see you, because though he said at first you need not be interrupted and could stay in your own rooms if you thought it would put you out—we are determined you shall be there all the time. It will be such fun; Papa is so obstinate and will have it that you are a fright; he says auntie told him so. But dear Miss Fane, do go with us into Lady Seymour's painting room—she has just turned us out because she said we only interrupted Mr. Clark, who is there helping her; but we want you to see him."

"Did he say he knew me?" asked Clara, starting and in a hesitating voice.

"No, to be sure not, how should he," was the laughing reply; "he is such a quiz, you must not laugh at him though if you can help it, for he is a good creature."

"I would rather not go in," said Clara; and beg you will not insist on it. Lady Seymour will prefer not being interrupted."

"Well then, we will just run in," said Claudia: "and say good bye to her and return to you to drive home."

In a few moments Clara heard their merry voices in an opposite room and presently a door opened and one too familiar to her, exclaimed,

"Good bye, ladies—good bye—I beg to be excused the liberty."

The phrase and the voice were certainly belonging to Mr. Clark and she could entertain no further doubt of his identity. It was singular, she had beheld Mr. Loftus for an instant only not an hour previously and now he was again in his disguise—the same disguise he had assumed to entice away the unfortunate Celia. She wearied herself with conjectures all the way home to Fulham while her lively pupils were chattering to each other on the subject of the proposed party which was to take place in a few days.

The day of the *fête* at length came and with it a crowd of carriages from London and its environs, filled with all the fashionables that could be collected at the end of a season. The young ladies were so wild with delight that they ran from one place to another showing Lady Seymour

all that had been prepared so that Clara was able to conceal herself in her own room for a time until they should discover her absence.

Mr. Luttrel had not yet made his appearance and his daughters were enjoying the admiration and enthusiasm their youthful beauty created amongst the guests, when their musical screams told their governess their vicinity, as she watched for them through her rose covered window, pleased to observe their gaiety though depressed herself.

Presently a bouquet thrown up to her drew her attention to a group below; she looked out and saw both girls holding the arm of a gentleman whose face was at that moment turned from her, but whose figure she imagined she had before seen.

"Come down—come down, you naughty girl!" cried Claudia; "we are telling Sir Anselm Fairfax all about you—and he says he knows you very well. What a shame not to tell us you were old acquaintances."

The gentleman in question turned round and Clara beheld the host of Rose Cottage.

She descended immediately by a little private staircase which led from her room to the garden and the recognition took place.

"My fair friend, found and lost!" exclaimed

Sir Anselm, taking her hand kindly; "how happy I am to meet you, we were sure to behold each other again; the sympathy was too strong to be resisted which led me to a spot which you inhabit. Promise me that, thus renewed, our friendship shall not so soon vanish as its first spark did before."

"Recollect Sir Anselm," said Clara, smiling, "that I did not desert you. My young friends here have named you very often, but as your mortal name never reached me in your mysterious fairy bower, I had no idea their enthusiasm pointed towards you."

"I was at that time Grand Master of Passive Joy, according to Loftus," said Sir Anselm, laughing; "our meeting was a strange one and oddly ended. My sister in law was always preparing surprises for me, and that in which you performed a part was the most pleasing I ever experienced."

"Yet you abandoned an acquaintance you profess to have liked even at its commencement," said Clara; "it was your own act, neither Mrs. Fowler nor I were averse to continue it.

"Aye, my fair arguer," returned Sir Anselm; "that is one of my secrets. Whenever anything pleases you intensely fly from it while it is yet blooming, if you wait too long it withers in your

hand and you see its leaves scatter. I abandoned your society at the instant it had charmed me in order to preserve one pleasurable recollection."

"I shall now destroy it then!" said Clara.

"You now renew it," returned he. "I see you alone—unencumbered by anything different from yourself—I shall hear you speak and sing and act without referring to another: you are a new being in a new world for me."

"Yet I regret the old one," said Clara, sighing. "I am indeed alone."

"Do you regret already?" asked Sir Anselm; "is there then no age free from regret and is there no possibility of judging for another?"

"I believe there is no period without regret," said Clara; "even my dear little pupils sigh because their father is not oftener with them."

Sir Anselm looked benevolently at her and after a pause said—

"You do not regret his absence too?"

Clara smiled as she replied that she had never seen him yet.

"He will be here directly," returned Sir Anselm. "I passed him on the road. Do you know that I am going to take his children abroad with me, and you too."

Clara expressed extreme astonishment at this

arrangement of which she believed neither of her pupils had the least idea.

"Yes," said he; "Luttrel is obliged to stay a little longer here on business and he wishes them to return to Como, where he has a villa and to establish his children there. Lady Seymour is glad to be of the party. I take charge of you and the young ladies and they are to go my route, and be joined by Luttrel when his inclination serves. Does this scheme please you?"

"Extremely," cried Clara; but it as much surprises me, for I should have thought you would have fled from the trouble."

"No," replied Sir Anselm; "it is a new species of enjoyment. Look at those beautiful wild creatures! I have known them almost from their infancy and they interest me extremely. I shall like to watch the seeds developing themselves till they burst forth into flowers."

CHAPTER VII.

How shall we beguile
The lazy time if not with some delight.
Midsummer Night's Dream.

The young ladies who had bounded away and left Sir Anselm and Clara talking now re-appeared.

"Oh, Sir Anselm," they exclaimed, "Papa is come! do take Miss Fane with you and speak to him. We want him to see her first without us for he fancies our governess is some dreadfu fright—so don't tell her name at first till he gets acquainted with her. Now—go."

So saying they darted off again, like butterflies to a fresh flower and Sir Anselm, giving Clara his arm led her towards the other side of the lawn where a group was being welcomed or was rather welcoming the host. But Sir Anselm turned suddenly away down an opposite avenue.

"Let us," said he, leading Clara to a seat beneath a large acacia, "sit here till those noisy welcomers are past: when he comes near it will be time enough to interrupt him. All noise and glare and perturbation, all disturbativeness are enemies to enjoyment and should be avoided. They are about to dance—the band has struck up—we are happily far enough off to gain the melody only, without the clash and noise of instruments—we can see the dances too—and from hence they are more graceful than closer. There are few things which do not suffer by too close contact: angelic nature alone draws us near and charms us by its vicinity."

"There is something very soothing and pleasing," said Clara, entering into his vein of thought as she felt herself impelled to do, now, as at their first interview, "in watching waving leaves and boughs and it is the same with human figures when they have grace and follow the directions of harmony."

"A great philosopher said," observed Sir Anselm, "that what music was to the mind, dancing, properly so called, was to the body, because that exercise renders the body flexible and graceful, as melody forms and improves the spirit and draws forth its beauty and its power. Dancing has a poetry which to some

forms is natural, cadenced movement throws grace and beauty over the figure and developes its proportions; it may be considered the link between the mind and body uniting them harmoniously."

"No awkward or ugly person then should dance?" said Clara, smiling, as she pointed out certain bad dancers.

"Certainly not," exclaimed Sir Anselm; "let us turn away from those clumsy men who are dragging awkward females in rude, angular directions—it is like an execution! rest your eyes on those lovely forms — Claudia and Sybilla are moving round at this moment, and a train of the youngest and fairest are following them—that is real dancing, number and harmony, poetry and philosophy combined—one married to another!"

"Like the spirits in Faust's vision," said Clara.

"Yes," replied Sir Anslem with animation, repeating the lines to which she alluded—

> "Wie alles sich zum Ganzen webt—
> Eins in dem andern wirkt und lebt!
> Wie Himmelskräfte auf und nieder steigen,
> Und sich die goldnen Eimer reichen!
> Mit segenduftenden Schwingen
> Vom Himmel durch die Erde dringen,
> Harmonisch all' das All durchklingen!

There is a true picture of harmony and graceful union, such as seldom have the words of a poet

set before the eyes and breathed into the ears of man!

"There is in music," continued he, resuming his evidently favourite theme, "two distinct qualities: one enervates, one exalts; one tickles the senses, one belongs to the soul. The same arts, according to the use made of them, render both the mind and the body subject to virtue or to vice: dancing, as well as music and painting, possesses that power. The virgins of Lacedemonium, as well as the syrens of Lesbos were taught dances, but with an object far different the one from the other. And poetry, too, has long been felt to act in the same way. Happy the bard whose lyre has never been tuned but to the measure sacred to the virtuous muses! Philosophy, itself, has two branches: one pure and holy, one false and dangerous."

"The awkward dancers seem the most persevering," cried Clara; "see, they continue when the sylphs have ceased."

"A lawgiver of yore," said Sir Anselm, "decreed that ill-formed children should be thrown into a gulf, and my master himself," he added, gaily, "in his ideal republic, sentenced the deformed to destruction. One can't help being almost wicked enough to wish sometimes that it were so."

"Yet how much genius, as well as goodness, sometimes resides in a rugged or ill-shaped

frame," said Clara; "poets, painters, composers, have been deformed, yet they have shown how free and independent were their minds of outward show."

"They are exceptions," said Sir Anselm, "it is a *tour de force* of Nature, to show that she can triumph over difficulties apparently insuperable."

At this moment a voice near them exclaimed:

> "How charming is divine philosophy;
> Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose!"

"Ah, Luttrel!" said Sir Anselm, turning round, "you are come at last to the spot of my retreat with my pupil. From hence we have been watching the gambols—

> 'Apart, on a hill retired.'"

"Who would philosophize in such a company but you, Sir Anselm?" said the speaker, looking at Clara, who, raising her eyes, at the instant recognised the gentleman who had so much annoyed her in Grosvenor Place. She blushed deeply, and could scarcely repress a frown. Mr. Luttrel looked confused, but recovering himself instantly, said with much ease—

"How fortunate that I saved you from being run over the other day. Anselm, imagine! but for me your fair philosopher, who walks about alone studying men and worlds, would not have

been this day sitting in these shades "listening to your sweet piping."

Clara blushed again, but bowed slightly as she acknowledged his apology.

"You must dance with me to prove that you received no injury," said Mr. Luttrel, taking her hand, with a beseeching air. "Sir Anselm, command your pupil not to refuse me; she looks as if she intended it."

Clara drew back and begged to be excused, when at that moment Claudia and Sybilla burst forth from a thicket, and, seizing her hands and those of their father, whirled them along to the lawn. Clara found it now impossible to resist longer as the music had already begun for quadrilles, and Mr. Luttrel's party was formed.

"Can you ever forgive my impertinence," whispered Mr. Luttrel, as they met in the dance, "strangers as we were then and are still, will you condemn me without remorse? Who are you, beautiful vision?"

A change in the figure prevented the necessity of Clara's reply, and when the quadrille was over the two girls came flying up to their papa, laughing and clinging to him.

"Now, now," cried Claudia, "do you think Miss Fane a fright and a blue, and are you terrified at her?"

"Very much, indeed," exclaimed Mr. Luttrel, as he bowed to Clara.

"It isn't true, you foolish boy!" cried Claudia, "now papa's going to pretend to be timid; don't believe him, Miss Fane; he thinks you charming; he is quite in love with you, I know, as we are."

The admiring looks of Mr. Luttrel did not seem to contradict the words of his daughters, and Clara saw, with little satisfaction, that the impression she had made on him was favourable.

"I rendered an involuntary service then the other day," said he, "to one to whom I am under an obligation for taking care of these unruly children. How do you manage them, Miss Fane? I have never been able to do so."

"Because you don't try," said Claudia; "you never come near us."

"I will come in future, depend upon it," said Mr. Luttrel with meaning, as he left the spot, carried off by the lively pair, and Clara involuntarily retraced her steps to the tree where she had left Sir Anselm; without being able to account for it, she felt as if his presence was a sort of protection to her, and the sight of him so unexpectedly that day had inspired her with a confidence which the meeting with Mr. Luttrel was not likely to increase.

She remained silent when she took her seat

near him, and he went on speaking as if their conversation had only just been interrupted.

"I have followed you in the dance," said he, "which you seemed to have engaged in on purpose to prove that you thoroughly understood my remarks on the subject. You dance more gracefully than any one here—where did you learn your accomplishments?"

"It would be difficult to explain how I acquired the little I know," said Clara; "my education has been a singular one and I often fear that, knowing few rules, I am unfitted to teach, for I have been taught almost by chance, but I had I suppose a natural facility which took advantage of rapid opportunities."

"Like the architecture of the Parthenon," said Sir Anselm, half musing, "which pedants have sometimes objected to because the Doric order prevails in its beautiful whole, and that order they have allowed themselves to fancy accords not with received proportions. Harmony does not consist in exact sub-divisions, and as the temple of Minerva will be ever a model of the beautiful in art in spite of its deviation from the usages of architects, so a mind forming itself into order by its natural and inherent qualities, will sometimes produce as wonderful results as the marvellous work of Phidias.

"You are an orphan?" added Sir Anselm, kindly, in a low voice.

Clara looked down, as she answered in the affirmative.

"Obliged," said Sir Anselm, half aloud and musing, "to exert the powers within because unhelped: she will do the same to guard herself—she is independant of assistance.

"Does it give you pleasure to go abroad—I mean to travel?" said he, after a pause.

"It is a sort of passion with me," answered Clara, "but I have only dreamt of it, not having yet been able to gratify the longing I have."

"You shall go through Germany to Italy," said he, "it will interest me as much as it can you to observe the effect these scenes will produce on you and your younger companions. How old are you?"

"Eighteen," answered Clara.

Sir Anselm sighed very deeply and repeated—"Eighteen years! it is a long time!" and relapsed into silence.

"Shall I sing to you as I did before?" said Clara, distressed to observe a gloom stealing over him, and wishing to dissipate it.

"I can fetch a guitar if you like and sing here, or if you will walk to the house with me we shall find no intruders in the music room and

the tones of the band will not disturb you there."

"Yes," said Sir Anselm, rising, "take me to some spot where I can hear her voice—where I can fancy I still listen to her."

Clara did not make any reply to what he said, but was struck to observe that he seemed engrossed by some powerful recollection which appeared to abstract him from the present and carry him back to the past.

"Sing," he said, when she had seated herself at the piano, "something that you have composed yourself; have you nothing with your own words aud music too?"

Clara hesitatingly replied, that she feared her own compositions would sound poorly; but he insisted, and as she found he really wished it she placed herself at the pianoforte and, collecting her thoughts, after striking a few chords, sung what she thought would suit the pensive tone of his mind at the moment.

> Oh, nightingale! sing not again—
> Thy voice is chang'd, untrue thy tone,
> The spell that linger'd in thy strain,
> With all its gentle calm is gone.
> 1 would not from the mem'ry part
> Of notes that soothed my soul of yore,
> I would not teach this failing heart,
> That, even thou, canst charm no more!

Thy voice was sweet when ev'ry bough,
Was trembling in the chilling spring,—
The time of roses greets thee now,
And thou hast all forgot to sing!
Ah, cease! nor strive to wake a lay,
Whose sounds can only speak of pain,
That tells how all things dear decay—
Oh, nightingale!—sing not again!

Clara had subdued her voice, which was a soft contralto, the most pathetic of all tones, as much as possible, wishing that it should be heard only by Sir Anselm. He had remained listening to the thrilling sweetness of her song with his head leaning on his hand in absorbed attention, and appeared to be soothed by the strain she had chosen. When she had finished he said—

"You are a being all gentleness and refinement, but you scarcely belong to the modern world; you should have been born some years before the present time, when taste and sentiment were not treated with the scorn which is their portion now.

"In literature, broad coarse caricature alone delights the reader, and if a few traits of refined feeling, which genius can seldom entirely part from, are introduced by a popular author for his own relief perhaps, those are looked upon as the blemishes of his work—in poetry, mediocrity is preferred above high merit, tinsel is chosen instead

of gold—riotous noise in music, startling the mind rather than touching it with melody. This is an inharmonious age and you have no business in it—it is not your sphere."

"I fear," said Clara, gaily, "I have no remedy but to remain in the sphere, however uncongenial, in which my lot is cast. The present must content me since the past is unfelt. Do you not think, however, that this reign of coarseness and materialism is but transient. Mind surely must triumph over matter after a very short struggle."

"It has frequently been so," replied Sir Anselm, "but it requires a few great spirits to change the course of these overwhelming streams of matter-of-fact and exaggeration, which are contending against all that refines and exalts our nature. Heaven knows, we require exalting rather than debasing, but the aim of all now seems to be to degrade the world as much as possible and keep the chained eaglet on the ground rather than let it take its course towards the sun. The grandest themes now chosen for composition, in poetry and romance, are furnished by the criminal courts and the reports of police offices—Cupid is, indeed, turned a link boy and Apollo a street sweeper; and the excuse given for these revolting subjects is, that they are *true*: as if all vice and crime did not spring from our unhappy natures!

"The noble aim of literature should be to create examples worthy to be followed, not to content itself with a detail of errors and crime too well known and too often copied, by perpetuating the memory of which, in clothing them with the glowing drapery of fiction, they take a dangerous hold on the imagination and the heart, and destroy the horror which should belong to them.

"Manners, morals, conduct and conversation, partake of this dangerous, downward tendency, which threatens to overturn all that is pure and holy and good and true, and to substitute anarchy and misrule in social life. There is no crime now, however hideous, confined to the ignorant classes; the highest and the lowest meet on equal ground and are equally calculated to afford subjects for a popular epic or romance."

"How grave you are talking, dear Sir Anselm," exclaimed a voice, which at once dispersed the gloom into which the speaker was falling, "you are to bring Miss Fane into the tent to take some refreshments—papa commands and so do I."

So saying, Claudia clasped a hand of Sir Anselm and Clara's, and led them away in triumph.

Clara found some difficulty in winning her pupils back to anything like application for some days after the *fête* which they had so much enjoyed. They were delighted with the prospect of going abroad soon, and were loud in their praises of Sir Anselm, whom they seemed to regard much more like a father than they did their own. It was a relief to Clara that the latter had not kept his word with his children and still continued to absent himself; this relief was not, however, destined to last long, for Mr. Luttrel, before the end of the week, rode down to Fulham to the infinite joy of his daughters.

They were walking with Clara in the garden when he arrived and came there to meet them. There was something in his air and manner particularly distasteful to their governess, however welcome he might be to the two affectionate girls whom he treated merely as play things. His bold and fixed gaze, which would not shrink from the coldness she assumed, distressed and annoyed Clara, the more so, as she felt herself, to a certain degree, compelled to endure and not appear to observe its meaning.

He walked and played a little while with the children and then made an excuse to send them away. Clara was following when she saw that

they were leaving her, but Mr. Luttrel detained her.

"Miss Fane," he began, "I hope you have no objection to my plan of letting the children travel. Lady Seymour goes with you and Sir Anselm Fairfax consents to be teased by their childish vagaries. I am sorry now that I am forced to stay behind but I shall join you all at Como as soon as possible. How grateful I am to their judicious aunt for having selected so careful and prudent a protectress for them as you appear to be! She did not describe you quite correctly to me, or on my honour I should have been apt to fear such grace and beauty too attractive."

"I hope to attract the attention of your daughters, Sir," replied Clara gravely, "and to fulfil my duty to so interesting a charge. Lady Seymour informed me that she was the only person to whom I was to apply for directions respecting my pupils, but if you, their father, desire to give me any, I am ready to hear them."

"Your care of them, your indulgence and kindness," said he, "give me a charming notion of your character. I hope the papa will not incur all your severity, for I assure you except you think admiration of all that is exquisite and beau-

tiful a crime, he does not deserve that you should look so very gravely upon him."

Clara remained silent without changing the expression of her countenance.

"My good auntie," said he, still walking by her side as she advanced towards the house, "is aware how susceptible I am to beauty and grace and showed herself a wise woman in deceiving me so completely as she has done. I can forgive her cheerfully. Pray let us be good friends Miss Fane, I protest I am getting tired of this crossness. Only tell me that you will not look upon me as a savage, as you seem to do at this moment, and I will be a pattern of papas and *preux chevaliers*."

"Mr. Luttrel," said Clara, "you will, of course, reflect on the propriety of acting towards your daughter's governess with respect and you cannot but be aware that compliments and professed admiration are quite out of the question and very unsuitable to our relative positions. I am quite ready and, indeed, pleased at the idea of accompanying my pupils abroad, I am very grateful for the considerate kindness which has made my situation here more like that of a distinguished guest than a dependant and I trust you will permit me to continue to feel as content and as satisfied as I have hitherto done. The young ladies are already too little accustomed to

restraint, and interruption is to be avoided as much as possible. May I therefore beg, for their sakes, that you will not visit them here, but will see them always in town under the roof of their aunt. I beg your pardon for this dictation but I am obliged to tell you that I must urge it, unless you please to recollect that I require you to permit me to remain unnoticed in your house."

She curtsied as she spoke and left Mr. Luttrel standing in some surprise at a firmness and gravity he had by no means anticipated.

"She is a strange animal," mused he, "of course this is all assumed, it will go off when she sees her time; it is amusing enough after all and rather more piquant than the ordinary run of things. I begin to be heartily sick of my last adventure and, as this promises me more difficulty, I shall pursue it with more spirit. Meantime, I see a softer strain is required—she is sentimental and *tant soit peu* heroic. I must fall a little into 'Ercles' vein' to please her and will assume humility. It is somewhat comic—if London is not propitious to me, Como and its skies will befriend me more. *Allons*, courage; *sans doute c'est une femme quelconque—comme les autres.*"

With this comfortable reflection, Mr. Luttrel drew his fingers through his beautiful dark ringlets—whistled a lively tune and betook himself to

the stable, mounted his horse and departed *sans* adieu.

"What an extraordinary thing it is," said Claudia to her governess one day, after returning from London, where they had been taken by Lady Seymour; "papa says he does not remember the colour of your eyes and asked Sybilla if you were not short and fat! I told him he must be blind, and auntie Seymour said he was a hypocrite. I wonder why she said so. I don't like to hear papa called names and I don't like auntie for it. Papa only laughed and said he was not, which I am sure is true. Do you think he is? dear little governess! I am sure you love him now, don't you? isn't he handsome and nice? just like you."

"You are a good, affectionate, little darling," said Clara, evading the question, "and very fond of dear papa."

"Dear papa! oh, oh! you call him dear papa, too! I knew you would like him," exclaimed Claudia, claping her hands. "I'll tell him you called him 'dear papa,' and then he will like you better than he does now. I can't think what he says you are *sauvage* for—I am sure you are quite the reverse."

"My dear Claudia," said Clara, "listen to

me. You are old enough to understand many things, and I can talk to you as if you were a woman grown. Recollect that I am only the governess, and you must not talk about me to papa at all, it is not right. I am no more to papa than your maid Fifine is, and you do not talk to him of her; he will not like it and as he does not like me, it will annoy him if you speak to him on the subject of what we do here—gentlemen have other things to think of than young ladies' occupations. So, please, do not name me, when you see him, at all."

"Very well, I won't then if I can help it," said Claudia, "but shall I tell you what I think? Papa likes you better than he pretends; he asked me a good deal about you, where you came from, who you were and whether you ever asked about him. Now, if he did not care would he have taken the trouble to try and find out all these things?—perhaps that was the reason why auntie called him a hypocrite. I won't forgive her for it though."

"Let us talk of something else now," said Clara, "we had better think of the history and traditions of the places we shall see abroad—will you read something with me that will teach us to appreciate them more? You have been abroad and know more than I do of foreign names, there-

fore I shall look to you for a great deal of information. You are growing very old now, and must be steady to set a good example to Sybilla."

"Oh!" exclaimed Claudia, "I suppose we shall be obliged to begin that weary German again that we may be able to talk as we go on. I hate anything but Italian, there is no music in that horrid, cracking, spluttering and drawling—it is odd how well it goes to music though—just listen—I declare, delicious Italian is hardly better than it is sometimes!"

According to her wont, whenever any graver study threatened her, she flew to the piano and began singing and playing till she quite forgot all but the harmony she was drawing forth.

Clara looked at her with admiration.

"How beautiful and innocent these creatures are," mused she, "what a contrast to their worldly and apparently indifferent father. What will be their fate! with so much sensibility and feeling, which can meet with no support from him, they will not be understood, will be neglected perhaps, and as years advance see their desolate position too clearly and learn to regret and grieve. This is their spring: long be it ere their winter arrives!"

CHAPTER VIII.

If sight and shape be true,
Why then, my love, adieu!

As you like it.

Mrs. Spicer was sitting at her little table, busied with sundry small bits of paper which she occasionally took from her drawers; some of these documents were bills connected with the expenses of her lodgers, but some were of a more exalted description; for her literary effusions were usually placed side by side with these memoranda. Sometimes she took up one and sometimes the other, and her soliloquy was inspired by either, as they attracted her attention: so that, her musings were somewhat variegated in style.

"Three and sixpence, beer and butter—Frewen; he's in a fine humour to-day as usual, and there'll be no end to ringing of the bell.

'Little Cupid one day'—

I never finished that—the Muses hasn't visited

me lately—I began it when Celia ran away—let me see.

> 'Little Cupid one day, tired of roaming,
> His wings and his bow were a pluming.'

I shall make something pretty of that.

"Oh, sixpence parcel delivery, against Grimford—I'll take care he don't forget that; something sent him from them nieces of his, hypocrites! all to get him to name them in his will to the harm of his natural god-daughter.

"Bless my heart, a double knock! let's see who that is—perhaps for the lodgings up stairs; very bad luck of late—oh, a man in spectacles, looking about—he'll very likely do, don't seem one come for curiosity. I'll open the door and speak to him myself."

Mrs. Spicer said the last words, after having reconnoitered the new arrival over the blinds, and satisfied herself as to his appearance, which was a little remarkable.

He was a slight made man with red whiskers, rather tall, wearing Hessian boots with tassels, full grey trowsers, a coat that hung loosely about him, and wearing a pair of large green spectacles.

Maria, who had seen him cross the street, at that moment ran into the room, crying out—

"La, ma'! there's that Mr. Clark knocking here, what can he want? perhaps we shall hear something about Celia."

"Oh, oh," said her mother, "is it him? well, I'll let him in and see what I can get out of him."

"Can't you hear the door?" growled a voice from the inner chamber, "they've knocked twice."

"Well, if they have, I suppose they can wait," replied Mrs. Spicer, sharply, as the visitor's second knock ended and she leisurely proceeded to the door.

The person, already described then entered, having been assured, in answer to his enquiry, that Mrs. Spicer had lodgings that would exactly suit him.

"Oh," exclaimed he, looking round, "artist here already—fine elevations!—architectural gems hey? mine are not in that line, though I deal in the like ware—I beg to be excused for saying so. I want a good room with a good light. Oh, second floor, well, the higher the better—open part of the street—*jour à gauche*—do very well—when can I come in? want to begin a picture—no time to lose—strike a bargain—short and sweet, hey?—name Clark; studied at Rome. Well known in town."

"And in Poland Street too, I think," said

Mrs. Spicer, looking very knowing; "you have been painting in this neighbourhood, I think—haven't I seen you sometimes going to Mr. Sawyer's?"

"Patron's tailor—portrait of a lady—fine woman—good contour—rich colours," was the reply.

"And where is Miss Sawyer now?" said Mrs. Spicer, in an insinuating tone.

"Portrait finished—nothing more to do with it," returned the painter; "commission ended—patron satisfied—lady pleased."

"Did you paint her for her father?" asked Mrs. Spicer, still persisting.

"Small portrait—pocket size—oil—nothing to me who for—delivered to patron. Mind my own business—recommend all to do the same—beg to be excused for saying so. No time for idling—come again to-morrow—send in goods and chattels—begin work—full of it. Good morning."

So saying Mr. Clark, with the same promptness as he had conversed, made for the door, bowed, shut it himself, and disappeared.

"There's not much to be got out of him!" exclaimed Mrs. Spicer; "it's an odd thing: old Sawyer must have known of the picture, as the artist went there. It's just like him; he always encouraged that girl in her folly, for he used to

boast that she'd marry a lord, and this is what comes of it; he's rightly served."

"Oh! ma," said Maria, with tears in her eyes, "he seems so unhappy now, poor man, that one can't bear to reproach him. I dare say he's sorry enough that he let her go out so much and do just as she liked. I always thought the gentleman came disguised, but it *was* a real painter after all. How strange he should come here."

"Oh, no," said her mother, "he saw the bill of course, and the situation struck him as the best in London, and so it is, and yet my rooms is'nt let half the year; I'm sure I don't know how I'm to get on at this rate."

She resumed her seat and her inspection of her papers however with a more satisfied air, and inspired by this sudden piece of, what she considered, good luck, began again to add a stanza to her poem of "Little Cupid," but failed in satisfying herself.

"I don't know it happens," said she, "but I cannot get on with 'Little Cupid.' I'll finish that song I wrote the first verse of, and Celia was to set to music. My songs are all moral, and it's a pity she did not take to some of them instead of the high-flown airs she has been taught since. Let me see, it began—

'I rebuffed his caresses, I——.'"

An impatient ringing of the drawing-room bell, however, disturbed her, and she was forced to attend to the summons of Mr. Frewen, who angrily inquired what that horrid knocking had been about. When he understood that it was the harbinger of a new lodger he broke forth into invectives against houses where so many people were harboured.

"Not a moment's peace of one's life for your door," exclaimed he; "here I pay a high price for my apartments and can't keep quiet, and now you're letting your second floor to some horrible man who will keep a noise over my head enough to split it."

"He'll do no such thing," answered Mrs. Spicer sharply; "I can't keep my rooms empty, except you like to pay for them; they've been unlet long enough to half ruin a poor widow like me. I'm sure I do all I can, and it's hard enough living without being scolded for bettering oneself."

"Poor widow, indeed!" said Mr. Frewen scowling, "you're, most likely, very well of—richer than I am, I dare say."

"How can you insinuate it, Mr. Frewen," exclaimed Mrs. Spicer, "when you know you roll in riches, and, I'm sure, I may roll in straw if roll I must, for want of anything better."

"How dare you say I roll in riches," cried Mr. Frewen; "everybody is in the same story. I tell you what you may take my word for—that whenever I die, and you are trying to kill me with noise and clamour, you'll be none the better for it."

Mrs. Spicer, by no means pleased at this last observation, withdrew, shutting the door with a bang to show her displeasure, and for some time she heard Mr. Frewen pacing up and down his room in a state of nervous irritation: to punish him, therefore, which she occasionally ventured to do, in order to keep him in check, as she professed, the next time he rung she sent up the maid to receive his orders, a proceeding which hurt his dignity so much that he generally remained in a state of sullen quietude for the remainder of the day afterwards.

Mr. Frewen was never known to receive but one visitor in his retreat in Poland Street, and that one very rarely made his appearance. It appeared that he was now expected, and that was the reason that Mrs. Spicer's lodger was so alive to the knocks at the door. She was indignantly seated at her table, grumbling to Maria at the hard fate which obliged her to submit to the tyranny of the cross old Indian, and was trying to soothe her perturbation by resuming her often

interrupted verse. She had proceeded, however, in her declamation of the song to which she had previously directed her attention—no farther than a second line—

> 'I rebuffed his caresses, I bade him begone;
> I let down my tresses and——'

when again the knocker interrupted her musings, and this time the intruder proved to be a gentleman for Mr. Frewen, for so the new comer announced himself.

"What name, if you please, sir?" said Mrs. Spicer, inquisitively, eyeing him through her spectacles.

"It is no use taking my name—he expects me, ma'am," said the stranger, firmly, and the defeated widow was obliged to give in and usher the nameless gentleman up.

"If he won't tell his name I'll manage to know his business," mused she, as she opened Mr. Frewen's door, and said, "Mr. What-his-name, sir, to call upon you."

"Shew him in," was the exclamation, without further comment, and the visitor was received with a heartiness very unusual with the person to whom his presence seemed welcome.

Mrs. Spicer not only shut the door hard, but made a feint of going down stairs, walking heavily; but she had not reached the bottom

before she recollected that some little domestic arrangement in Mr. Frewen's back sleeping apartment had been neglected, and she entered there softly, careful of disturbing the speakers in the next chamber, who were only divided from her by folding doors. While detained by her care for her lodger's comfort she could not avoid hearing what was said. Their conversation was thus conceived:—

"Well, Spry, any more news?" said Mr. Frewen.

"Why, yes," replied the stranger, rubbing his hands, "yes: I have discovered that she is in England, and, moreover, in London at this very moment."

"Then I must leave it," replied the shaking voice of the questioner.

"That does'nt follow," answered the friend, "London is large enough to hold you two; you have, no doubt, often been close to each other without knowing it."

"I should be aware of her vicinity within a mile," exclaimed Mr. Frewen; "a jade! I couldn't help knowing she was near from the antipathy I have for her. What is she about—how does she live?"

"The same support as before; he's just as besotted as ever, and humours her extravagant

whims, though he gets sometimes tired of them for a time. She is moving heaven and earth to find you since she discovered that you had returned from India. She means to go as far as law will let her to get a provision, and she will stick at nothing."

"Comforting particulars!" exclaimed Mr. Frewen, between his teeth; "but it serves me right for being such a dolt—an idiot; I, who had gone through the world for so many years treating women with the contempt they merit, to get taken in by a designing, artful, intriguing widow—at my age too! And as for a divorce it can't be had—I can never bring it home to her; and now then I am plagued and tortured to death, afraid to show my nose outside the door for fear of her pouncing upon me and dragging me to a court of law to get money out of me—Money! why I've got none! she's ruined me by her extravagance: didn't she set up an establishment in Calcutta fit for a native prince, and keep open house for all the rattling dandies and simpering misses in the Presidency. I wouldn't stand it, and I didn't stand it, and then she insulted me to my face and in the midst of all the set of hornets she had brought about me; and, at last, didn't she leave me and go off with some harum-scarum officer!"

"All that is very true, my dear friend," said

the adviser, "but the world would take her part, and, what's worse, the law will, and if she gets scent of where you are she'll sue you to a dead certainty, and your fortune being so great you—"

"I tell you," said Frewen, angrily, "that I'm a ruined man; that I can hardly keep myself; that I stay in this den half the year for cheapness, and if I should be forced to make that hussey an allowance I shall starve."

The friend smiled. "Well," said he, "you know your own affairs best, and whether you think it best to settle something on her or go on with this hide-and-seek to avoid coming to an arrangement. We have already paid a good sum to ascertain her movements, and you'll be obliged to throw more after it in order to keep out of her way. You are safe enough here, for no one will think of looking for you in this quarter; they'd expect to find you living according to your means instead of in this poking hole."

Mrs. Spicer bridled with indignation at this disparaging manner of naming her domicile.

"If I spend the last penny I have—and that's not much," said Mr. Frewen, "I'll keep that woman out of a settlement. She thought to wheedle all out of me, but she played her cards badly and I'll be even with her."

"Sometimes she's at a boarding-house in

some town abroad," said the visitor; "sometimes she manages to get up a fine establishment and places herself at the head of it. She is famously in debt eveywhere, and her being a married woman protects her. She reckons upon a good deal in the old quarter, but he begins to be tired of getting her out of scrapes, and is, I hear, growing angry at your leaving his appeals unnoticed, so that we have something to dread from him."

"I wish they were in the bottom of the Red Sea!" exclaimed Frewen, stamping with rage, "and all the women that ever were born with them!"

"That's all very natural," said the philosopic friend, "but it won't help the affair. Shall I go on as usual, or do you think better of it?"

"No, no!" replied Mr. Frewen, "I'd starve first, as I hope I may see her do!"

A movement of the visitor, who seemed rising to depart, warned Mrs. Spicer that her position was no longer safe, and she therefore noiselessly quitted her retreat and softly descended to her own apartment, not sufficiently informed on the subject of Mr. Frewen's affairs to be quite satisfied, but delighted to have gained some information.

"An old fox!" exclaimed she, "married then!

and he passed off with me for a bachelor! while I was foolish enough to fancy—such things *have* happened that people have taken fancies—some like young girls, some women more near their own age—but, however, there's an end of *that!* This accounts for his temper—well, I pity the woman who has him, that's all: he's worse than Grimford, and that's saying a good deal!"

With this soliloquy she resumed her sedentary occupation, and recommenced polishing her bills and her stanzas, till other incidents interrupted the course of her studies and called her attention another way.

A few weeks had passed away since Clara had heard from Maria, and she had been too much occupied with her pupils and their restless preparations for going abroad to go and see her, when she received a letter, the following paragraph in which caused her extraordinary uneasiness—

"I told you ma had let your rooms, and who do you think to?—that Mr. Clark that I told you Celia Sawyer ran away with: it is very odd, for he doesn't seem, after all, to know about her, or else he pretends. He is a very odd man, but ma thinks he is rich, and I am sorry to say he seems

to have taken a fancy to me. He gets me to sit to him for heads; he puts wings on and paints clouds behind, and I get very tired of it, only he promised to do one for me myself and then I shall have it to give to dear William. But the worst of it is, ma says she is sure he would be a good match for me, though he is such a fright, and twice as old, at least, as I am. I don't know whether he cares about me himself; I don't think he looks like a man to fall in love, but ma says he is always praising me and saying I am an angel—I only want one person to think so, I'm sure! and he has been a long time now without writing: I am getting quite uneasy and cry when I think of poor dear William perhaps being ill and no one to nurse him. I wish people would be content without being rich or grand; how happy we might be if William had set up as a doctor at home, I would have been so saving, and I'm sure we should have got on; but he thought to grow great and rich and do me more justice, he said. Ma is always thinking about money and wants me to marry a rich man; I hope this Mr. Clark will turn out to be as poor as Simpson did—not that I wish him to be found out to be a bad man either, that is wrong; but ma will keep on teazing me not to think of William, and I think of

scarcely anything else, and the more she says so the more he keeps in my mind,"

This communication startled Clara.

"What can this mean?" mused she, "there must be some design in it, I tremble to think what injury may be plotting against that poor girl. Perhaps she is to be entrapped like the foolish vain Celia; and though no such weakness is to be feared in Maria, still some artful means may be taken to wean her from her present attachment, alas!

> 'If knowledge of the world makes men perfidious,
> May Juba ever live in ignorance!'

but, of late, I have had such strange experience that I begin to dread and doubt all outward seeming. I had better warn Maria against this false Mr. Clark while there is time."

To this end she wrote in answer to her young friend—

"Dear Maria,—I feel very uneasy and uncomfortable about the person you name. I have reason to know, the man who calls himself Clark is not what he pretends to be—not a real artist and not, even as to person, what he looks; he is disguised and has some bad purpose, I fear, in

view. Tell your mamma, she had better be on her guard respecting him, as *I am sure* he is a false character."

When Maria received this intimation, she was very much astonished, and immediately communicated to her mother the suspicions of Miss Fane.

The fears of Mrs. Spicer were immediately aroused and visions of purloined tea-spoons and other valuables, flitted at once through her brain. She gave a rapid glance towards her cherished watch, the dimensions of which might seem a guarantee for its not being readily carried off without the theft being perceived, and felt a little re-assured to hear it still tick in its accustomed place.

"What's to be done?" said she, "Lord bless me! who ever would have thought of my being so taken in! now I think of it, I really do believe he wears a wig, and perhaps false whiskers; they are very red and he seems proud of them; but he would dye them if they were real no doubt. He must be one of the swell mob, I do believe. Dear me, what is a poor lone widow to do! I think I had better ask your god-father what he thinks best. If he doesn't snap my nose off, I'll just try."

With this resolution, Mrs. Spicer betook herself to the den of Mr. Grimford and knocking at the door of his apartment, was answered by a growl.

"I want," said she, entering and seating herself on a chair close to the table on which the architect was engaged in drawing plans. "I want to consult you about a little matter of business, Grimford; as an old friend of my late husband and my child's god-pa', I think I may expect—"

"What do you want?" said the kind friend, whose advice she sought, "what makes you come interrupting me when I'm busy? you know I don't want women in my room."

"Oh no," tittered Mrs. Spicer, "nor I shouldn't a come, only that a lone widow really must lean upon some kind friend as has her interests at heart, as I know you have."

"Well," said he, in a tone rather less surly, "don't lean on the table and jog me, say what you want and have done with it."

Mrs. Spicer then proceeded to impart to Grimford, who listened with considerable patience, having a certain species of curiosity in his composition as well as herself, to her account of the supposed swindler and cheat, in the second floor.

"It's just like your wisdom," said he, "taking in people you know nothing of. I saw all along

he was no artist, he can't draw a straight line; he can't feel my buildings—he doesn't know a church from a hospital. Of course, he'll rob the house and perhaps murder some of us into the bargain. Give him warning, to be sure."

"Good gracious! how you terrify me, Grimford," exclaimed Mrs. Spicer; "we must keep a sharp look out on him and I'll go at once and give him warning this very minute. I wish you'd just keep your door open as, if he was to attack me, I could scream for protection you know."

"Oh, scream away!" said Grimford, "he's too cunning for that—it'll be in the night he'll be off, take my word for it."

"Well, it's quite awful!" said Mrs. Spicer as she departed, rather gratified, nevertheless, at having secured the sympathy as she thought of her domestic tyrant, on whom her repeated attacks had never made any greater impression than they did at the present moment. Yet, as she sometimes sentimentally observed,

"Love will hope when reason will despair,"

and she repeated to herself her favourite phrase of comfort of, "there's no knowing what fancies people *do* take."

The next time that Mr. Clark requested Maria to sit for an angel, Mrs. Spicer stepped forward and

remarked that she would herself take her daughter's place if necessary, but that Maria was engaged.

"Hope to be excused for having asked," replied Mr. Clark, "thought Miss Maria willing; nearly finished head—substitute not suitable—much obliged all the same—postpone—sitters slack—new ones next week—won't press the subject—intended surprise to god-father—distinguished artist, worthy man."

"I'm greatly obliged," said Mrs. Spicer, a little shaken in spite of herself at the apparent candour of her lodger; "but just now, I will decline; and I was, to say the truth, going to name that my second floor will shortly be wanted for an old lodger, who has written for it, so that I must beg you to suit yourself."

"Suited now," was the reply, "bless my heart—omitted rent—forgot that I was stranger—beg to be excused—month due—quite correct. Unpardonable oblivion—occupied with art!"

So saying, Mr. Clark produced from his purse wherewith to settle the offered bills without hesitation, and Mrs. Spicer softened towards him as she saw that there was no appearance of poverty, and that he paid in gold and silver and not in notes, which she should have instantly suspected of having issued from the Bank of Fancy.

"Upon my word," said she, as she left him, "I don't see why I'm to turn him away if I keep a sharp look out on his movements; if he is a gentleman in disguise—he pays like one—and, who knows?—it may be the making of us—I'll keep Maria out of his way, however, and face the danger myself."

She repeated to Mr. Grimford the compliment which had been paid him by the suspected lodger, and she observed that it had its effect in spite of the growling reception it received.

"If he pays his way he's not a swindler—if he understands art he may be an artist," said he, "don't bother me about him, go your own way, it's no affair of mine."

Mr. Clark therefore was permitted to stay on in his lodgings, and indeed, so much did he appear absorbed in art that the warning given seemed to have escaped his recollection altogether. He occasionally went out to attend sitters, according to his own report, and his room was filled with half-finished portraits, so that his being an artist by profession appeared an undoubted fact.

"The only thing I suspect is his whiskers," said Mrs. Spicer to Maria, "they have an artful look, I shall keep my eye on them."

CHAPTER IX.

> Dost thou mark yon lady?
> Oh! she doth teach the torches to burn bright.
> *Romeo and Juliet.*

Clara had written to Miss Clinton to inform her of the proposed journey of the Miss Luttrels, and expressed her own pleasure in the prospect. She did not however make the enquiry which was nearest her thoughts, however anxious she might be to know where Mr. Loftus was, and whether she was likely during this excursion to encounter him.

"The route arranged by Sir Anselm Fairfax," said she, "is one which will make us acquainted with a wide extent of country from the Rhine to the Danube and along great part of the course of the latter fine river. All will be new and interesting to me and I cannot help anticipating much delight. My pupils become every

day more dear to me, and I am spared the sight of their father: he has the propriety to refrain from coming to Fulham, and as we shall leave England so soon, I hope to see very little of him again, and I trust to his neglect of his children for his leaving them and me tranquil at Como, where our wanderings are to end.

"Lady Seymour does not improve on nearer acquaintance: she is intensely selfish and always alive to her own interests. I believe she is much in debt and is not sorry for an excuse to absent herself from her old society which she finds expensive; she goes as Mr. Luttrel's guest which answers her purposes of economy but she carefully avoids all trouble or responsibility, that devolves of course upon me, but I find the interesting girls very reasonable and ready to be convinced by mild persuasions and I shall look to Sir Anselm for great support as well as for information and protection. We shall form a large party, and I heard Lady Seymour make a characteristic remark the other day that it will be necessary for us occasionally to separate and meet again in order not to take the hotels by storm on our way.

"'I should grieve,' said she, 'to see these dear angels ill accommodated and I am so fragile myself that I must always secure the best rooms

if possible, so that we will make such arrangements as that all may be made comfortable.'

"By this I see plainly that she intends taking care of herself first; we must countermine as much as we can, but she is very courteous, and her presence is necessary for my pupils, for I feel I have not sufficient age and power to manage for these young people, alone.

"As a farewell to London gaieties we have a box at the Opera to-night, where, as I have been formally invited by Lady Seymour, I am, not unwillingly I confess, obliged to go.

"I should really be quite happy in my present position were it not that I doubt and fear the character of Mr. Luttrel."

On the night Clara had named, accordingly, the visit to the Opera took place much to the delight of Claudia and Sybilla who were taken there for the first time. To Clara's great relief their father did not appear; her wish however to avoid him she soon found would be frustrated, for she saw him in one of the stalls, and presently his glass was directed to where they were sitting.

The beauty of their party had, in fact, attracted many eyes and caused him to follow the direction of a friend's enraptured glances and thus recognise his own family.

"Good heaven!" exclaimed the friend, who

occupied a stall next his own in the centre of the pit, within two rows of the orchestra, "for the love of the beautiful look at that box, there are four women there who realize all that has been fancied of the glory of female loveliness. Look at that young girl, almost a child, with the dark hair and flashing eyes, laughing to a younger still, with the face of a descended angel, all light and grace, and between them, behind—who can that tall, elegant creature be?—she has not appeared this season; surely, it is Lady Seymour with them. Good God! Charles, you must know them, take me with you, I am in love with the whole party."

"Yes, I know them, don't be violent," answered Mr. Luttrel languidly, looking nevertheless at the box, "they look well to-night, we'll patronise them if you will; but don't bore me about them—my business is with the tall girl in the middle—engage the other two in talk for pity's sake, and when we go out give your arm to my aunt. So shall you do me service and enchant your own eyes."

"They smile—they gaze—they wave their fans and shake their pretty ringlets—'tis at you, Luttrel! happy animal, though colder than an iceberg—the middle girl draws back and looks away!—they point towards you—sweet creatures,

they are very young. Your aunt perceives us!—gracious is her bow. We come, blest beings!"

And in a few moments after this conversation, Mr. Luttrel and his friend, the young Marquis of Claremont, had joined the party in the box. Lady Seymour welcomed them tenderly; the children's exclamations soon informed the Marquis who they were, and Mr. Luttrel took his seat next to Clara, to whom he had bowed almost imperceptibly on entering, and she had returned the salutation without raising her eyes.

The young Marquis had engaged the attention of both sisters, and was talking with great animation and bringing forth their original remarks, when the curtain again drew up and Claudia seized his arm and pointed to the stage.

"Silence," said she, "if you breathe I will not speak to you again, and never answer that question you have asked me."

"I am dumb till that moment arrives," said the Marquis, who was as much an enthusiast in music as in beauty.

In the crash of the chorusses, Mr. Luttrel took his opportunity of whispering to Clara.

"I know now the meaning of your cruelty, your friend is in town, I am generous and will give you news of him."

Clara started but did not answer, while Mr. Luttrel went on—

"Poor Loftus! he never told me you were his ideal, though I knew of his being bit at Mrs. Trillet's—charming woman, isn't she? do you correspond with her? it must be a delightful intercourse no doubt, with congenial minds."

"Mr. Luttrel," said Clara, shocked at the tone he assumed, "you speak of persons scarcely known to me, with whom I have no communication whatever."

"Really!" returned he, raising his glass as he spoke as if looking in another direction, "I thought you had been staying with Loftus in the country; what odd notions one takes in one's head! but don't blush and look uneasy—I'm not jealous. I am sure you are tired of his sentimental philosophy already. We shall be good friends by degrees; you look so lovely when you are angry—it's quite a treat! there now, that is just the look that charmed me the first day we met."

Clara turned away and leant over the chair of Claudia, who was beating time with hands and feet, and, in her delight, every now and then grasping the arm of the Marquis, who was watching her in a state of rapturous admiration.

The speeches of Mr. Luttrel had quite destroyed all Clara's pleasure at the Opera.

"Is it possible ?" thought she, "that Mr. Loftus is really so base as to make a jest of me and to misrepresent our acquaintance. Alas! if he is an intimate friend of this man, I have no hope of him, for I fear he is altogether worthless. How unfortunate that these amiable children should have such a father. What a contrast is the conduct of Mr. Loftus, whom I had forgiven and begun to esteem, to his words! Alas!" she continued to muse—

> 'Who may we ever trust,
> When such a knight so false can be!'

The unfortunate and degraded Celia taken from her father's protection, and now the strange disguise assumed as if to deceive the innocent Maria."

While she was absorbed in these thoughts two gentlemen entered an opposite box, conversing eagerly, as if almost unconscious of the splendid scene of which they formed part. Clara's recognition was as rapid as that of her pupils, who immediately called out—

"Oh! papa; there is our dear Sir Anselm: can't we go to him. Detestable man! he will not look our way; oh! I wish we could fly across to his box."

"Do you love him so very much, then?" said the Marquis, reproachfully.

"Yes," replied Claudia, archly; "better than anybody in the world, except papa."

"But, why?" said the Marquis; "he is too old for you; you must love somebody younger, who will adore you."

"But he adores me already," cried Claudia, "so I don't want any one else."

"Happy antique!" exclaimed the Marquis; "put him in your cabinet, but wear me every day."

"Do you think yourself a flower, then?" asked Claudia, pertly. "Miss Fane; do you know who that is with Sir Anselm?" she said, turning suddenly round; "he is looking so at you! I am sure it must be Mr. Loftus himself—our playfellow of Naples!"

"Do you know Mr. Loftus, then?" said Clara, trying to speak in an indifferent tone.

"To be sure we do; we knew everybody at Naples; and we were not then kept in a country house seeing nobody, as we are now. Do you know," continued Claudia, speaking to the Marquis, "that papa says we are only children, and this is the first time we have ever been at the Opera. Is'nt it a shame! don't you think Sybilla and I look like quite women?"

"Lovely ones!" replied her new acquaintance, "I do not mean to forgive Luttrel for hiding you,

and keeping your beautiful friend in retirement too," and he bowed to Clara.

"Why didn't you come to our *déjeuner* at Fulham?" said Claudia.

"I was out of town, unfortunately, and my good stars only brought me up to day, and introduced me to your charming acquaintance, by mere chance, no thanks to the civility of Luttrel," returned the Marquis.

"Mr. Loftus is going away; will he come to see us, do you think, Miss Fane?" exclaimed Claudia.

"What, then, he is a favourite too?" inquired the Marquis.

"Oh! yes, we delighted in him when we were very little," said Claudia, "he is such a mimic; he can take off any one—we used to laugh so when he did Mr. Nobody for us, and ——"

She was interrupted by a knock at the box door, which was followed by the entrance of Sir Anselm Fairfax, unaccompanied, however, to Clara's great relief, by Mr. Loftus.

As the ballet had not yet began, there was an opportunity of conversation, and much was said respecting their intended tour.

"But why is Mr. Loftus gone?" said Sybilla, pouting; "we saw him with you, and he could not help seeing us, and yet he is run away."

"He charged me," said Sir Anselm, "to be the bearer of his devoted regards, but he had not a moment to lose—he leaves town to-night, by the train, on his way to the continent. We shall be sure to meet him abroad, and then all your quarrels will, I hope, be made up."

As Sir Anselm spoke he glanced towards Clara, whose hand he took as if merely in recognition as he did so, so that she could scarcely be certain whether or not any part of the remark was addressed to her, and yet she could not help thinking he spoke with a meaning more than his words expressed.

"My dear Marquis," said Lady Seymour, "why don't you go with us abroad? What a charming society we should be. I think travelling is only endurable in a crowd—there's nothing I detest so much, but I have duties which oblige me to sacrifice my inclinations. These darlings must be attended to—do help me to protect them."

"Oh, do!" said both girls, with whom the Marquis had made great way; "tell us you will come; it will be so nice!"

"Why, truly," said the Marquis, looking at Claudia, "I seem to have a reason now for doing something, which I never discovered before in the course of my life."

"Oh!" cried Sybilla; "Miss Fane should lecture you as she does us when we talk nonsense: come, and be scolded by her as we are," she added laughing, and kissing Clara.

"Nothing more delightful," said the young man. "Suppose I follow you, would you admit me to your coterie?"

"Assuredly," cried Lady Seymour; "we shall welcome pilgrims whenever they appear."

"I will then take a vow, dictated by Miss Claudia," said he, "to accomplish this pilgrimage, and she shall be the Lady at whose shrine I will lay down my cockle hat and staff."

"Oh!" that is perfection!" exclaimed Claudia; "how grand I am already! Well, vow, by—by—"

"By the question you promised to answer," said he, "I swear to follow you as a faithful pilgrim, if I should make the journey barefoot."

"Oh, do, do!" cried Sybilla, laughing heartily; "that would be funny."

"But rather inconvenient, cruel beauty," said he, "so I fancy I shall take the usual method, unless, indeed, my Lady commands, for henceforth I have no other mistress than fair Claudia."

"Well, we will expect you," said Lady Seymour; "at all events don't disappoint us."

When the ballet was finished Mr. Luttrel

contrived that Sir Anselm should give his arm to Lady Seymour, and the Marquis required no further hint to devote himself to the young sisters; Clara, therefore, could not avoid the proffered arm of Mr. Luttrel, who lingered behind the rest, as if by accident, so as to get separated by the crowd.

"How came you and Loftus to quarrel," said he, leaning down towards her; "I know he is a sad fellow, but I cannot forgive him for this. Confide in me—I am used to these sort of things—though I don't want to reconcile you both, I assure you, upon my soul! I should be miserable if I had not hope to support me in spite of your frowns, which are really out of place with me, who know the secret."

"Mr. Luttrel," said Clara, "you annoy me beyond all words by this bantering kind of conversation, which I do not understand, nor can I attempt to do so. It would be useless to explain anything, since you are bent on distressing, and, it would seem, I can call it little else,—insulting me. Pray, let us hurry on; the young ladies must have got to their carriage."

"It's so pleasant to me to have you here to myself," said he, still lingering, "and to tell you the truth, your being frightened is charming—I

have no objection to it—but, though I have every inclination, I really am not going to run away with you in the true style; that would suit Loftus better—he's quite a hero of romance, in his way."

He spoke with a sneer, which was not lost on Clara, who saw plainly that he had some pique against Mr. Loftus, and the spirit of opposition impelled her immediately to think that she was doing her former friend injustice in condemning him at the word of such a man as Mr. Luttrel.

"We shall meet again to-morrow," continued her companion, "for the last time while you stay in England. If I had got rid of my law affairs, I would have gone with you—but don't fret, I will make up for it another time. Here's Fairfax, by all that's boring! hadn't he enough to do with my aunt but he must come back to find me out."

With evident vexation Mr. Luttrel gave Clara over to Sir Anselm, bidding him good-night, as he said he should not wait to take leave of the ladies below; "I go another way," he said, "so you can take care of Miss Fane, who has a dreadful terror of the male sex, so be sure not to make love to her."

Clara almost clung to the arm of Sir Anselm, who conducted her to the carriage where Lady

Seymour and the young ladies were waiting, fully amused, however, by the lively talk of the Marquis, who was standing at the door, leaning in, busily engaged in entertaining them.

She was not sorry when they drove off, and, having set Lady Seymour down, returned to Fulham by the light of a bright moon.

CHAPTER X.

Be quiet, people! wherefore throng you hither?"
Comedy of Errors.

Lady Seymour was one of those amateur painters who pass a good deal of their time sitting opposite a piece of canvass spread out on an easel, surrounded with colours in cakes and in bottles, with as many brushes, and as much oil, and varnish, and turpentine, as would serve half a dozen artists: who gain a great reputation for genius, and even carry their love of art so far as to patronize public exhibitions where their performances occupy conspicuous places on walls supposed to be appropriated to the encouragement and reward of rising and risen talent.

Whatever might be the merit of Lady Seymour's works she had full credit for them, and the artist who stood by to be enlightened while she painted no doubt profited by her hints, as she professed to obtain nothing new from his; yet so desirous was she to impart her knowledge that

she never even mixed her colours except in his presence, and was so anxious to afford him opportunities of excelling himself that she generously suspended her labours after he had left her studio to resume them only at his next visit.

The artist whom she, with so much philanthropic consideration thus assisted, had been known to her abroad, where, according to the version of the transaction given by her to her admiring friends, she spent the greatest part of her time studying in the galleries. True it was that her rooms in London were filled with copies, more or less correct, of the *chef d'œuvres* of first masters: and staring Sybils, squinting Cencis, woebegone Giocondas, and crooked Venuses looked from the walls in self-contented complacency, amidst confused rocky masses of Salvator, pink and blue misty Claudes, or black and green Poussins, generally pronounced, by those judges she consulted, *better* than the originals.

"My dear Clark," said she, the morning after the Opera, to her companion of the hour, "you must make up your mind to travel with us, for I intend to take an enormous quantity of sketches from nature during this tour, and you may just as well improve yourself too, and then we can have each other's opinions. I have spoken to Luttrel, who is quite content that the girls should have

you as a master; they would not learn, I am certain, of any one else, and they are very fond of you. You have so little to do here, where the market is overstocked with artists, that it would be wiser to go with us."

Mr. Clark, the artist, who was, by chance, just passing a brush over Lady Seymour's foreground, her arm, as she said, being cramped, and she "could trust him," replied briefly—

"Handsome offer, my lady—quite just, few sitters profitable at this season—always glad to visit foreign parts—proud of the honour—pack up traps—willingly agree—when shall we be off?"

"There's a good soul, now!" said Lady Seymour; "we shall go in about ten days or a fortnight. You shall travel on my carriage with my maid; the Miss Luttrels and their governess have their own, and Sir Anselm Fairfax has his. As you know the country you can be useful to us, for I believe we are not to have a courier till we arrive at Frankfort; Sir Anselm has a crotchet about it, and has engaged some wonder who is to direct all our movements through Germany. You and I can sketch and look after the picturesque, and I shall bring back a whole portfolio full of drawings; if my nerves fail me I can depend on your skill, your style is so like mine, and I can always correct any defects I may discover."

"Certainly, certainly, my lady," replied the artist, apparently working unceremoniously on Lady Seymour's picture, while her mind was abstracted, "shall get on capitally—ladyship's taste surprising—greatest amateur in Europe—stick at nothing. Germany, fine country in parts—original—stupid people—know 'em well—too fond of daubing—keep to the old world—figures cut out of parchment—count every vein and hair—wonderful geniuses—great philosphers—glad to see 'em again."

"Well then, Clark," said her ladyship, "it's all settled, and you go with us—now then, don't spoil any more of my picture—how well I've dashed in that stone at the donkey's foot, and I think I've improved his right leg, and Joseph's nose—I wonder you didn't remark it."

"Not to be passed over, my lady," said Clark, resigning his pencil. "Take my leave—sure to be ready—give landlady warning—she gave me warning last week—even with her—beg to be excused for saying so."

Mr. Clark accordingly left his pupil or instructress, whose patronage was supposed to be so extremely serviceable to him that she never considered it necessary to offer him payment.

"Poor fellow!" she would sometimes say to the admirers of her own genius, "he has very

little means and I do all I can for him, I am such an enthusiast in art and doat so on talent, not that his is first-rate, but he has some and will improve by study ; I give him every opportunity and patronise him extremely, as Luttrel does, also, through my recommendation. Those pictures he has exhibited were all done under my direction, and I sold several for him; his gratitude is extreme, and I could not mortify him by refusing to accept that landscape, which I may almost call my own, as I dictated every touch : he has great facility when guided by judicious hints."

Lady Seymour, in fact, contrived to occupy more of Mr. Clark's time than might have been prudent on his part to allow, but that he had other patrons whom he had known in Italy who did not so much fear to offend his delicacy by offering remuneration for his services. It appeared that his roving disposition had always prevented his settling anywhere long, and the climate of England accorded so little with him, that he was too glad of any excuse to quit the sombre skies of home for the brighter atmosphere of the continent.

By the young ladies the announcement of his being about to accompany them was received with pleasure :—

"Oh, he is such a quiz !—such a strange crea-

ture! we used to laugh at him at Rome all day long," exclaimed both sisters; "he's the most good-tempered animal that ever breathed, and is never offended; he's very clever, too, papa says, and paints all auntie's fine pictures—everybody knows it, yet she fancies no one sees through her: isn't she just like an ostrich, Miss Fane, hiding her head and fancying no one sees her body?"

"But," said Clara, extremely annoyed at the prospect before her, "it will be very tiresome to have Mr. Clark always with us; if he is such an odd man he will be strangely out of place. I am very sorry he is going."

"Well my sweet governess," said Claudia, "you have the most unaccountable antipathy to poor dear Clark that ever was; whenever we speak of him you turn pale and red and blue, now I know you will like him when you come to know him, he cannot be understood at first."

Clara sighed.

"He is sure to fall in love with you too, for he is the strangest of all beings about that, Papa used to say he was a true votary of Cupid, always in love with one person or another and running after them to sit for his Madonnas and angels."

Clara blushed and bit her lip and endeavoured to turn the conversation.

"Did you like the Opera last night," asked she.

"Oh dear yes to be sure!" cried Claudia, "now, my beloved darling governess how can you be so commonplace! as to ask one if one liked anything so entrancingly angelic, of course one adored it—but you had no soul at all last night, you were never moved, you sat like a statue, and seemed bored—I am sure you were while Papa was whispering to you—Sybilla and I think he likes you much better than he did. And then you trembled so when Sir Anselm came in and your hands were quite cold: I was afraid you were ill but the Marquis would not let me lean over to ask you, he was so tiresome! oh how he did go on—I have such a dreadful quarrel with him for that and many other things. You don't know how he talked about being in love, and when I told him you said it was not proper, he laughed so and said your eyes contradicted your words. Papa was so amused and when I said you called him 'dear Papa' he laughed more; I want him to like you so I was determined to tell him though you told me not."

"Claudia," said Clara, looking grave, "you have not kept your word with me; I begged you not to repeat that foolish phrase, which only applied to your feelings not my own."

"How odd," said Claudia pouting, "you don't like anybody, you hate papa, and you hate poor

Clark; I dare say you'd hate Mr. Loftus if you knew him and you only pretend to like Sir Anselm I dare say, and I shall tell him so for fear he should trust you," she added maliciously.

"You are unjust, dear child," said Clara, "I do not dislike, but I wait to know people before I pronounce. Sir Anselm is an exception for I liked him before I knew him well; I feel sure that he is as amiable as he seems."

"And do you think papa is not!" said Claudia with an inquisitive and arch look.

"No, I think Mr. Luttrel just what he appears," answered Clara vaguely, "and always a good papa to you."

"And a 'dear papa' too," replied her pupil, then added musing, "I wonder what Giulia means by his being too gay, and his having 'another establishment.'"

Clara felt that it would be better to leave the discussion of such subjects, the mysteries of which she did not desire to have solved either for her own or her pupil's sake, but she saw with pain that her care had not availed to prevent the intrusive gossip of the servants from awakening suspicions in those innocent but inquisitive minds relative to their father's conduct, and she rejoiced that they would shortly be removed and that other objects should engage their attention.

Her mind was, however, extremely disturbed by the thought of Mr. Clark being the companion of their journey.

"Can it be really Mr. Loftus?" she reflected; "would he condescend to expose himself to detection in this manner—and what object can he have in view? He must be aware that to resume that disguise could only distress and annoy me, and would certainly not raise him in my esteem. I hope there is some mistake in the affair, and that the similarity of name and occupation has deceived me into this fear: yet the voice I heard and the words were identical with the character Mr. Loftus assumed in Derbyshire."

Meanwhile Mrs. Spicer had been thrown into a state of much excitement by the announcement that her second-floor lodger was about to leave her apartments.

"It's very odd of Miss Fane, I must say, Maria," said she to her daughter, "writing to you that he wasn't respectable, and knowing that he was going to travel with them ladies. If he is a great man in disguise, she must have some design on him herself, and wanted to get him away from you. I know the world better than you do, 'Ria, and I often, when I was a girl and I married your poor dear 'pa when I was a mere child, have seen

what envy was if one happens to be handsome—not that you are half as good-looking as I was at your age—but then men have different tastes, and if Miss Fane thought this gentleman admired you, she might be jealous, and try to spoil the match."

"La! ma!" said Maria, indignantly, "how can you think so! Miss Fane is above it, I'm sure, Besides, I'm certain Mr. Clark is no gentleman in disguise—he's not a bit like one—there must be some mistake about him, and I'm very glad he's going."

"It's easy enough for you to talk, 'Ria," said her mother; "but it's much out of my pocket losing him, gentleman or commoner, and no thanks to Miss Fane for it, either; but I shall just go up and tell him a little bit of my mind, I can assure you."

So saying, Mrs. Spicer sought her lodger, whom she found busy packing, in his shirt sleeves.

"Well, sir," she began, "since you are going to quit, I hope you'll consider that its not quite handsome in you to try to deceive a poor lone widow in the way you have—for in spite of your disguise I'm not to be taken in, and, as the mother of a family—though I've only got 'Ria left now—I will say that your conduct to poor Celia doesn't do you much credit."

"Conduct, marm!" exclaimed the painter, looking up from knocking nails in a picture case; "please to explain. Warning given previous—views changed—no fault either side—mutual convenience considered. 'Ria and Celia, both pretty names—no connection with the parties."

"Don't say so, my lord!" exclaimed Mrs. Spicer, a sudden thought occurring to her mind that she would, by giving him his real title, surprise him into confession. Mr. Clark dropped his hammer and stood aghast.

"Who do you please to take me for?" said he, at length: "insinuations incomprehensible—quite abroad—all fair with John Clark, artist, R.A., that should be, but for enemies—what have you against him, marm?"

"That you have insinuated yourself into my roof," said Mrs. Spicer, in an heroic tone, "with the view of carrying on your caccinations against either me or my daughter, as you did at Mr. Sawyer's, and made a victim of Celia as you won't of us, I can promise you, for you are found out."

"Bless my heart," cried Mr. Clark, in a vexed tone, "mystery increases—what's all this?"

"You're now going abroad after some of them young ladies at Mr. Luttrel's," continued Mrs. Spicer; "but Miss Fane knows you, so you needn't think to escape so easy."

"Miss Fane!" said Mr. Clark; "who is she? Oh, I remember, governess! Governesses always spiteful—draws herself, perhaps—envious—jealous. All one—can't help it—pursue my course. False accusations, ma'arm—fine woman, no doubt, though rather squat—pretty girls also; but can't put up with impertinence—hope to be excused for saying so. Request privacy—want to pack. Life short, art long—no time to lose."

"Well," said Mrs. Spicer, as she retired, "if he's a lord in disguise, he's an odd one; his linen is neither of the whitest or the finest, and his hand is as red as beef. In novels and plays, now, a nobleman is always discovered by his white hands and fine cambric: he brazens it out well, at any rate. I've done my duty, however, and have let him know he can't take *me* in, whoever else he may: pity old Sawyer hadn't my penetration."

CHAPTER XI.

> Why what an intricate impeach is this!
> I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.
>
> *Comedy of Errors.*

The period of their departure was at length arranged, and the whole party set forth *en route* for Paris. There were many tender adieux and some tears on the part of Mr. Luttrel's two daughters, and Clara, although she had few friends of whom to take leave, felt the truth of the remark that—"We never do anything for the last time without regret." She regretted their beautiful retreat at Fulham, its gardens, and its flowing river, and she sighed to think that, perhaps, she was leaving tranquillity behind.

"I should be less uneasy," she thought, "if I had not the fear of Mr. Loftus's capricious imprudence in thus accompanying us, disguised so ridiculously, a circumstance which cannot fail to

place me in the most awkward positions, and how to avoid appearing to recognise him I am at a loss to conceive. I rejoice to leave Mr. Luttrel behind, although I believe the language he thinks proper to hold is merely a jargon which his class permit themselves to use, as unbecoming as it may be unmeaning. Every step I go divides me from my early protectress, Mrs. Fowler; long will it be ere I see dear nurse, Susey, again, and I shall probably be separated for many a day from my recent kind friends; there is much, however, before me, and the beautiful world of Nature is inviting me to enjoy her scenes. My long-cherished wish of travelling is about to be accomplished, yet I feel a depression which threatens to destroy the pleasure I anticipated. This sensitiveness is, I feel, wrong, and may degenerate into selfishness: I must not live for myself—alas! why have I not some near and dear relation, some close tie of blood which would bind me more to existence and give me a stronger motive for action? After all I am but a mere unit in society, belonging to no one, and destined to carry on a load which I bear for myself alone. How willingly would I endure it for one who looked to me for support and affection; alas! all around me have their joys and their sorrows; I am only permitted to love, not expected to do so. But," she mused on,

drying the tears which started to her eyes, "even Lady Seymour talks of duties; we all have duties to fulfil, and I must rouse my mind to those I have undertaken— mine are light and happy ones, after all, and I am ungrateful to repine."

In Paris Clara's spirits revived, for she had an opportunity of seeing her old friends the Petits, and Eugenie, now Madam Lecoq, to whom her presence made a little holiday. With the quick feelings and animated affection of the French, they welcomed her and devoted themselves to her amusement. The French, of whatever class or calling, and however occupied, have always leisure for entertainment, and can always spare a few hours that is to be devoted to some improvised pleasure; they, therefore, contrived to enjoy every minute of her stay.

Their lamentations were equal to their joy at the departure of their friend; but they parted with her full of smiles and encouragements, and fragrant and elegant were the bouquets showered into the carriage and graciously received by the young ladies and their governess as they drove off towards the railroad, which was to take them to Brussels, and onward to the Rhine.

The "exulting and abounding river," was new to all but Sir Anselm Fairfax and Mr. Clark. The latter had scarcely appeared to Clara's party

during their route, as he was particularly attached to Lady Seymour, who had preceded them to Paris, and whom they had joined at Brussels, where he was, apparently, so much engaged in giving his services in the railroad trajet, that he had not intruded himself on them. The sisters were quite enough occupied in observing and admiring, and Clara almost forgot his vicinity till they all met on board the Rhine boat. She was standing with her pupils, watching the rapidly developed views which flash on the sight like magic pictures, and, when seen for the first time, take away the breath with wonder and admiration, when turning suddenly round to make some remark to Claudia, she suddenly perceived Mr. Clark standing close beside her.

She could not suppress a slight exclamation, which made him look off his sketch-book, the leaves of which he was endeavouring to smooth, ruffled as they were by a fresh wind, which made the fine river appear still more animated and sparkling.

"Splendid objects, Miss," was his remark as he nodded rather familiarly to her; "good colours, nice effects—charming outline—sweeping, circling —sharp against blue sky. Fine bit of ruin— nice loophole—pretty slope of vines — striking projection."

Clara did not reply, she feared to trust herself; but her colour rose, and she remained unable to move from the spot. Mr. Clark resumed,

"Sorry, Miss, to find I'm no favourite—quite unintentional if any offence given. Didn't deserve to have character attacked—innocent as a lamb. Hope by future conduct to do away with former impressions. Devoted servant—beg to be excused for saying so."

"If you desire," said Clara, gravely, "to do away with former impressions, why appear in your present character. I cannot believe you sincere as long as you continue the art which you now think proper to practice."

"Truly sorry, Miss," said Mr. Clark, opening his eyes wider through his spectacles; "do my best—enemies sure to accompany talent—would not willingly annoy; but did not know I was interfering with another's profession."

"Sir," said Clara, "discussions of this kind are useless. I have allowed myself to be deceived in you, and can only now regret having already been weak enough to excuse your first offence. Henceforth if you have any regard for my peace of mind, let us appear to be strangers to each other."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Clark, in a tone of such extreme surprise, and as Clara conceived,

affected simplicity, that she turned away, being scarcely able to suppress a smile, which she would not for the world have permitted him to detect.

"What marvellous acting!" said she to herself; "he out-does all his former attempts, and really looks so exquisitely absurd that it would be perfectly impossible, I really believe, for any eyes but mine to detect him. How extraordinarily he has coloured his hands; they are so white in reality that before, even in this character, Miss Giles used to remark them, and now their very shape seems changed. Who would imagine that beneath this extravagant garb and bearing so graceful a person as Mr. Loftus could be concealed!"

Mr. Clark, meantime, had hurried away so quickly from her side that he appeared to others as if struck with some sudden panic. The two young ladies had run off to their aunt, while Sir Anselm had joined Clara, and was enjoying with her the beauties which continued to increase at every bend of the fullest and most glorious of rivers.

The ringing laughter of the Miss Luttrels in the meantime was heard at the other side of the boat, as they stood talking to Mr. Clark.

"What can have put such a notion into your dear, stupid, clever, extraordinary head?" cried

Claudia. "Miss Fane got a 'bee in her bonnet,' as you call it, certainly not, it is you who must be crazy to think so."

"May be mistaken, ladies," replied he; "but have studied for insane effects. Bright eyes, rather wild—flushed cheek—words incoherent—unaccountable antipathy."

"Take care she doesn't bite you then, since you will have it so," laughed Claudia; "you have evidently an antipathy to each other—we must keep you asunder."

"Shan't force myself on any one," replied Mr. Clark, looking scared; "very much alarmed always at mad people. By no means safe to take charge of youth. Unfortunate malady. Quite awful!"

And, as he spoke, he removed as far as possible from Clara's part of the vessel, attaching himself throughout that days' voyage to Lady Seymour, who was making a great parade of sketching, and who soon entirely absorbed his attention, while Clara, delighted with the conversation of Sir Anselm, almost forgot her late agitation, and resolved, as much as possible, to detach her thoughts from the reflection of being in the company of one for whom she now began really to feel indignation overpowering the indulgence

which she had permitted to increase, at one period, to something approaching regard.

But, however much she might labour to forget his vicinity, he seemed destined, even contrary to his own wish, to intrude himself on her notice; his habits were so caricatured that he did not escape the ridicule of several of the passengers, even though the Germans are much less apt than the English to indulge in risibility.

He was continually putting himself forward to assist every one, offering to interpret in all languages, a smattering of which he seemed to possess, and the tittering of waiters and travellers followed almost everything he said and did.

Clara blushed at every new *exposé,* lamenting the buffoonery which she conceived so degraded him, and trying in vain to avoid observing his ridiculous behaviour.

On their second days' voyage, from Coblentz, several additions to their party were made, and amongst them Clara perceived a couple whose identity she could not mistake. This was no other than Captain Brighty and the fair Stanny as his bride.

The latter seemed by no means to wish to conceal the new character in which she figured, and the affectionate demonstrations they exhibited

to each other were so conspicuous that the observation they coveted followed them every where.

Mrs. Brighty was attired entirely in white silk, with white shawls and satin cloak and boa, all of the same pure tint, and she was every moment calling to her lover-husband to supply some deficiency in her dress or her comforts. She sat enveloped in clouds of snowy drapery, ministered to by her devoted swain, who looked proud and conscious of the prize he had won.

"Law," said Mrs. Brighty, "what a good idea it was of us to come here for our honeymoon—the Rhine's quite a trump card, I declare. I'd heard so much about it that I thought it would turn out all moonshine: only look at the funny old rat's castles perched up such a height—how in the world could they ever climb up to their comical old dungeons in the clouds?—well, thank goodness we've something better to live in now-a-days."

"The whole thing I should vote a bore," said the husband, "I give you my word, were not my adored by my side, and—

'Nothing wants these banks of Rhine,
Since I have got thy hand in mine!'"

"Oh you creature!" said the bride, looking round, hoping that they were observed; "did you

make that now?—you are so romantic. But I say, Captain, come here—whisper."

As she spoke, she leant close to the captain's ear and said a few words that directed his attention to where Clara was standing with Sir Anselm.

"Yes," replied he to her suggestion, "I lay my life it's the same girl that they said Mr. Loftus was in love with and went about in disguise after—but look, Stanny, I give you my word I verily believe here's your fine squire himself, carrying on the farce still. Isn't that the same quizzical figure we both saw the day of the Well-flowering, carrying off Miss Fane to a carriage, and you recognised Mr. Loftus as the hero."

"To be sure it is!" exclaimed Mrs. Brighty, "well, that is a joke!—I'm determined I'll let him see I smoke the affair. How capital!—but what a fool he must be to run the country over after such a chit as that. I'm sure I see no beauty in her now—do you?"

The tone of the last question decided Captain Brighty's reply, which was entirely agreeing to the last proposition of his bride.

Presently after Mrs. Brighty rose, and walking leisurely along the deck on the supporting arm of her spouse, she stopped suddenly behind Mr. Clark who was busy sketching, and began a

series of remarks which she expected would occasion some perturbation in the mind of the feigned artist. But he seemed either strangely insensible or to possess singular *sang froid;* for he went on drawing without paying any attention or once turning round to observe the speakers.

"Derbyshire hills are not unlike these," said Mrs. Brighty, "though I cannot say much for the rivers there—there's old Castleton with its ruin is a little bit like—I wonder if all our beaux are at home now, or whether any of them are roaming about like us. Some folks in a certain quarter, seem at their old game, hey?—hem! hem!"

But Mr. Clark was still absorbed in art.

"Well, it's too bad to cut old acquaintances," continued Mrs. Brighty, more pointedly still; "poor Kate will expect to be asked after, at any rate."

Still no movement on the part of the artist, except to adjust his spectacles.

At last the bride got quite out of patience, and motioning her husband to bring her a camp stool, she took her seat by the side of the disguised hero and caused her drapery to fall so close to his drawing that he was obliged to look up.

"Beg pardon, Miss," said he, "ashamed to be

so absent. Absorbed in contemplation—art and nature combined—quite irresistible."

"Oh, how do you do?" said Mrs. Brighty, putting out her hand and looking archly, "don't expect to escape me, I have lynx eyes, I assure you. How did you leave all at home?"

Mr. Clark stared and looked extremely bewildered.

"Much flattered I'm sure," stammered he, "last exhibition, I suppose, made my poor attempts known—a little thought and some good handling—next year do better. Sorry I've not any thing with me, Miss—left all at home in safe keeping."

"Oh, you sly creature," persisted Mrs. Brighty, "not all—I see Miss Fane is not forgotten, oh, fie!"

Mr. Clark's looks expressed unmitigated wonder as he removed his seat further off, and murmured to himself—

"Bless my heart!—another mad woman—why, there must be a ship full!—how dangerous! and all attacking me."

"You see I'm married," said Mrs. Brighty, "shall I introduce my husband? or, do you want to keep up the fun? if you do, I declare I won't say a word. I'll do as I'd be done by."

Mr. Clark started up, letting his portfolio fall

and had to stoop and pick up all its treasures, which the wind was making free with, much to the amusement of the passengers; the bustle caused Clara to turn round and she then observed the group and at once recognised the bride and her captain. As, however, she had very little acquaintance with either she did not think it necessary to bow to them, being very far from desiring to renew the slight knowledge she had of them. Mrs. Brighty was, however, in a condescending mood and anxious besides to exhibit herself as a bride: she therefore at once went up to her, exclaiming—

"Well, Miss Fane, who'd have thought of our meeting here!—here I am you see, married in spite of spite—fine triumph over the Goldspins, who are ready to die with vexation—the two cubs have never been back since the affair of the horsewhipping. Capital fun, wasn't it? you didn't see how the captain laid it into Master Ben, did you? you'd have split your sides—I'm sure I did!"

Clara received these demonstrations as coldly as possible, and merely asked after her family very briefly.

"Oh, mamma and Kitty make it out very well," was the answer. "Kate's got a new lover, so Mr. Loftus need not think she wears the willow,

you can tell him so if you like," she added, looking knowing. "Who's that tall fine man you were talking to?" she continued, pointing to Sir Anselm, "is he a new acquaintance? and what brings you here?"

Clara answered, by naming Sir Anselm and Lady Seymour, contenting herself with telling her she was travelling with them, not thinking it necessary to enter into further explanations.

"He's a monstrous fine man," resumed the bride, "but what a pity *some folks* make such quizzes of themselves!—I see through it, I assure you."

Clara pretended not to comprehend her hints, and took the first opportunity to escape and join her own party; but she saw plainly, that both she and Mr. Clark were the objects of entertainment, both to the captain and his lady, whose laughter was not repressed and whose glances told how much they were amused.

Clara felt so annoyed that she resolved at length, that she would make up her mind to confide in Sir Anselm and entreat him to represent to Mr. Loftus the absurdity of carrying on this travesty, which annoyed her so extremely. They were now, however, arrived at Mayence, and as she saw little more of Clark and there was considerable bustle at their disembarkation and

settlement in an hotel, she of course put off her intention for the present, determining to take the first opportunity that presented itself to tell her strange story and endeavour to enlist Sir Anselm in her favour.

CHAPTER XII.

First let me talk with the philosopher.
King Lear.

At the Anlagen, that charmingly situated garden just beyond Mayence, where the bright waters of the Rhine and Main unite, and Nature puts on her most joyous aspect to celebrate the union, Clara accompanied her party to hear the famous Austrian band, which gives the first promise to the traveller of the world of music he is entering, when he sets his foot on the soil of the Fatherland.

Nothing can be more exquisite than the performance, and the enthusiast is lost in admiration of the skill of the players; but it must be confessed that it requires that enthusiasm to enable a new comer, fresh from England and unacquainted with the habits of the country, to endure the style and habits of German fashionables.

The atmosphere, even at some distance, is impregnated with an odour, delicious to the initiated but hateful to noses polite: a dense crowd of music adorers are seated in the sun on ricketty chairs in small or large parties, at wooden tables, where huge jugs of beer supply the encircling glasses of the guests who drink the inspiriting beverage with the same delight as their ears drink in the heavenly sounds which rise from the crowding instruments, whose "melodious clang" enchants them.

Whichever way the newly arrived traveller turns he sees foaming tankards and brimming cups, no tribute of the vine, but the child of the hop; in every mouth he beholds a meerschaum, and every breath is redolent of the intoxicating weed.

If he is neither a drinker nor a smoker, while one of his senses is delighted the others are cruelly tortured, and he hurries away, coughing and oppressed, from the scene of hilarity and takes refuge in some of the dusty allies behind the sedentary enjoyers of beer and music.

Thus retreating from odours which custom had not yet taught them to disregard, Clara and her pupils had taken refuge in a green alley just without the bounds of the enclosed space, and had seated themselves on a grassy bank shaded

with trees, where they could listen to the sweet strains without being exposed either to an unclouded sun or the breath of tobacco-scented breezes.

As if one instrument alone were sending forth its impassioned soul to the skies, the full tones of this harmony-breathing band rose in glorious unison, tuning to its delicious sounds the groves and gardens and hills and rivers which lay in calm sunshine listening around, speaking in a language best understood by minds refined, and suggesting thoughts exalted far above earth and earthly cares.

Yet in the pauses of this heavenly melody might be heard, amongst the beer drinking votaries of the Beautiful, discussions so strange and startling that the hearer might imagine he were listening to the ravings of maniacs, or that the potations pottle deep so freely indulged in by the philosophers of "the garden," had affected their brains with fever.

A party of young students seated fraternally enjoying the beverage which they quaffed from glass beakers with leaden covers, might be heard thus expressing their sentiments—

"What," asked one in a tone of contempt, "does any rational man propose that another should understand by the word Fatherland?—it

is a term which it is time that we should erase from our language if we would not be looked upon throughout Europe as fools and dupes. Love of country! empty word—there is no such thing as country; it is a ridiculous delusion, an hypocrisy, an impossible idea. Who feels it? Where is it? Who knows it? Who finds it? Does it exist amongst the aristocracy of a nation?—certainly not—all aristocrats, in every nation, make common cause with each other. Is it to be found in science—no; there is no bound to thought; it flies beyond the frontiers of a country. Is it amongst the peasantry?—no; a boor loves his village, his field, he knows nothing of his country and cares nothing for it—he is a half-formed being, scarcely detached from the soil which he cultivates, a link between man and brute, he has a certain superstitious veneration for what is called his country perhaps, but it is as a pagan worshipped the stones or the trees which he found in the woods and on the mountains. This animal may have some vague notions of the Fatherland as he has of religion, for religion implies a state of inferior humanity: religion and patriotism are both mere abstractions, things that have no existence. All that is contrary to liberty is impious, and both religion and patriotism fetter the mind which should be free."

"You argue justly," replied another, expelling from his oracular mouth a cloud of smoke, "there is one animal which is at the same time both the priest and the victim of this superstition—it is the soldier. Destroy the absurd belief and the victim is saved—the priest becomes a man."

"What say you," exclaimed a third, setting down his flagon, "to that bugbear morality? Can any thing be worse than the chains with which it loads a free-born creature?"

"They must be broken by a violent effort," said a fourth, "the world cannot endure such tyranny any longer. There is but one sentiment, but one affection to be cherished, that sentiment I will call *Humanitism*."

"Success to *Humanitism!*" solemnly ejaculated the whole party, emptying their beer glasses.

"Success to the brethren of the New Hegelian Philosophy," said they, as they replenished them with grave solemnity.

At another table another group might be heard engaged in equally edifying converse.

"I hold all these superstitious legends," said a voice issuing from a cloud, "as popular myths which expressed certain ideas or preoccupations, or desires of the human soul at a certain period, containing a hidden meaning very different from that which is apparent. According to the cha-

racter of a people and their mystic hopes, these legends will be formed. No one mind imagined the legends which have erected creeds—they have been the emanation of the general spirit of humanity, which thus adores its own work."

"I differ with you," replied a student of Bonn, through the medium of another veiled voice, "I reject the intervention of the human mind, of the universal thought; because that implies a mystical power, a sacred foundation, something vague and uncertain removed from truth: this I cannot admit. These legends, I maintain, were invented by one person only and were for the purpose of deceiving, of creating a doctrine destined to produce power to the priesthood—and for six thousand years this sort of trickery has succeeded."

"Religion," observed a disciple of the great modern philosopher, Feuerbach, borrowing his own words, "is nothing but the re-union of all our most exalted instincts collected into a body and become a system. It is not that some mystic power has created man—man has created a mystic power. Man has detached from himself the noblest part of his soul, has attributed to it a distinct existence and has given it a name under which he has afterwards worshipped it. Man has thus deluded and despoiled himself to create an imaginary being. He has the faculty of thus dispossessing himself in order

to adore that which he has created—this places him on an exalted pinnacle whence he is able to worship himself!"

"Undoubted truth!" murmured a second student, "but it is necessary that man should know that it is himself to whom he pays these honours; for in thus despoiling himself to produce this chimeric creation if he is not aware of what he has done he becomes a mutilated creature, a truncated object, a monster in nature, an *Unwesen*."

"Hence it follows," said the first speaker, "that it behoves the new philosophy to teach man his danger, to restore to him that which he has consented to part with—to make him a perfect creature once again by restoring to him the portion of himself, out of which he had formed a fantastic being."

"A glorious, magnanimous, generous creature is man!" exclaimed a youth with a long dirty beard and swollen features, whose red eyes shone like lighted coals, "who skims off the fine spirit which is in his soul, and instead of attributing to himself the perfection emanating from himself, shapes it into another existence and pays it divine honours, at the expense of his own glory!"

"See you not," cried another, "see you not clearly then that the more exalted a religion is the

more debased is he who acknowledges it?—it rises as he falls—the grander it is the poorer he grows, since he robs himself to create it! Let man call back his own, let him no longer send forth his power; let him concentrate it and know himself for the true Divinity."

"Sublime thought!" echoed the bemused students, with universal enthusiasm, "the patrimony of man shall thus be restored to him."

As they advanced in the discussion, these incomprehensible arguers reasoned themselves into still deeper darkness, which they were in the habit of mistaking for light—they were the followers of Arnold Ruge; but, there were also in the garden partizans of a philosopher, who has proved that there are even in the lowest depths several lower still; the Bruno-Bauerists, the Straussists, the Rugists are triumphed over yet in the intensity of obscurity by the worshippers of Stirner, the high priest of *The One Alone.*

"Away with all theories—all dreams," cried one of these illuminati, "humanity does not exist at all, nothing exists but *I.* Out of *I* there is nothing. Let each man seek his *I*, let each man acknowledge his *I:* let each man fall down and worship his *I.*"

Meanwhile, all these enlightened individuals thus preparing themselves to instruct and improve

the world continued to drink beer, smoke tobacco in the sun, and sigh away their souls in listening to the concord of sweet sounds, proving themselves by this means harmonious brethren of one great community, the object of which is to enjoy their lives and pass away the time. Then home to sauerkrout and sausages,

> "With what appetite they may."

Clara had been unable to avoid hearing some of these discussions, as she and her charges wandered round the enclosure, pausing from time to time, amused at the novelty of the scene.

At length they were summoned to a table which had been prepared on a slight elevation above the smokers where they found ices waiting for them, and while enjoying this refreshment, accompanied by renewed strains of the inspired musicians, Sir Anselm was accosted by a personage in a student's garb, with long, fair hair hanging confusedly about his face, spectacles on his nose, a wild, forked beard, and very conspicuous moustaches. The coat he wore was wrapped round his figure like the robe of a priest and quite concealed his proportions; he was tall, and his air was less awkward than might have been expected from the rest of his appearance.

He spoke in German, and was recognised by Sir Anselm as an old acquaintance.

"Ah! Herr Ludwig," said he, "I am happy to have met you thus early in my journey; I did not reckon on seeing you till we reached the Danube; to what fortunate chance do I owe this pleasure?"

The student replied that he had been visiting various colleges lately, and was now returning from Göttingen and Bonn and was on his way to the University of Würtzburg, from whence he should return to Vienna by the Danube.

"I can, I hope, be of service to you, then," said Sir Anselm, "as our route precisely accords with yours; I have a seat in my carriage at your service, and I trust you will be my guest—I ask it selfishly, as the advantage of your society and valuable information will be so great to me."

The student bowed very humbly, and replied—

"You not only honour me by the proposal, but will do me a great service. I have chiefly performed my journey on foot hitherto, and have rather over-tasked my strength, and, as you know, the purses of us students are seldom heavily filled, I cannot expect to get on very conveniently without a helping hand. Our profession is poverty, as you are aware, and we are by no means ashamed

to beg; I approached your party, seeing that you were foreigners, with the view of asking alms, but I did not expect to find good fortune so close to me."

The student smiled as he said this, and the modest humility with which he spoke enlisted most of his hearers in his favour. He was a very singular-looking being, and it seemed as if the strange costume he wore added some years to his age. He was not, however, dirty or slovenly, like most of the young students they had seen; his coat was, though rather threadbare, well brushed, and his wild beard and hair were combed with care.

"I wish he would push his long curls out of his eyes," whispered Claudia, "one can scarcely make out his face; he can't be vain, at all events, for he makes himself hideous enough by his dress. His nose, which is handsome, is all of his face one can see, except his white teeth. I rather like him, but I wish he would speak something besides that dreadful German, not more than half of which I can understand."

"Yet his accent is softer than one generally hears," said Clara, "we must try to improve ourselves by talking to him—one can learn something from everybody."

"You are always thinking of improvement,

you tiresome darling," exclaimed Sybilla, "now we only want to be amused, that is quite enough for us, so don't let us try to learn any thing all the time we are travelling, it will be time enough for that stupidity when we are settled again."

Sir Anselm, who had overheard this remark, laughed as he said—

"Sybilla is a true philosopher, and is content with the present; I suspect all the researches of my friend, Ludwig, will scarcely bring him to a happier conclusion."

"Oh, I shall like Herr Ludwig," exclaimed Sybilla, "if he agrees with me—I don't like to be contradicted; but," she whispered, "can he speak anything but German?"

"He speaks all languages, even English, I believe," said Sir Anselm, and added, addressing the student, in Italian—"these ladies, my friend, are quite ready to admit you into their intimacy provided you manage to render yourself intelligible to them: I give them over to you, and beg you will use all your endeavours to secure their good-will, for I assure you it is worth having."

The student bowed humbly and timidly, and seemed to shrink back into himself at this remark.

"He is too little conscious of his own merits," said Sir Anselm, in a low voice, to Clara, "you

must make advances to him or he will never be at home with you, and he is the most original, entertaining person you can imagine when you once have broken the ice of his shyness. He will amuse you with his odd theories, and he has a host of legends and stories which will, I am sure, pleasantly beguile your time; we once travelled together through Calabria, and I never passed so agreeable a time."

On this hint Clara addressed the Herr Ludwig, who seemed flattered by her notice, and the party soon became more familiar.

Lady Seymour had not accompanied them on this excursion, for she generally contrived to be taken ill wherever there was anything to be seen, and passed the greatest part of her time in her own rooms at an hotel, lying on a sofa and lamenting the delicacy of her nerves, which prevented one so passionately fond of the beauties of nature and the glories of art from enjoying them as she desired. She nevertheless gathered from he companions all that had happened of interest in their different adventures, and these she retailed to her numerous correspondents in England as the result of her own experience.

"You will be surprised," she would say, "that I, with so fragile a frame and such delicate health, am able to go through all this fatigue and excite-

ment; but, my beloved friend"—it was always to a beloved friend, of course, that she wrote—"it is energy that supports me—I am all mind, and I am, besides, urged to my exertions by duties which are dear to me and which I have really no merit in fulfilling—those angels to whom I devote myself are never out of my sight—I kill myself for them, but I delight in the sacrifice.

"My sketch-book is already almost full—I cannot keep my pencil still—by this medium we will review the scenes together which I have passed without you—Oh! were you but by me at this moment—Hark! that glorious Austrian band has renewed its strains!—I must pause. Imagine my writing to you on my knees, seated on a bank at the Anlagen of Mayence—Hush! let us listen to the music of the spheres!"

To five or six beloved friends this sort of letter was usually despatched every week, so that, in fact, Lady Seymour's hands were much too full to allow her to participate in the fatiguing pleasures that occupied her companions. It must be confessed that her absence was scarcely noticed by them, and they were quite as content to relate their experiences on their return as to have been obliged to devote themselves to her service, as she generally exacted a great deal of attention when she was of their party.

Mr. Clark had avoided Clara so much of late that the amused young ladies declared he was afraid she would bite, as he persisted in thinking her mad, and Clara cared little what motive induced him to absent himself so that she was not kept in continual agitation by his presence.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ihm hat das Schicksal einen Geist gegeben
Der ungebändigt immer vorwärts dringt
Und dessen übereiltes Streben
Der Erde Freuden überspringt.

Faust.

Clara and her party pursued their journey from Frankfort, where Lady Seymour chose to remain behind, keeping Mr. Clark with her to make a sketch of the Ariadne in her album, which was destined to be exhibited as her own performance.

Sir Anselm proposed that they should make a short pause at Würtzburg where he assured them that the gardens and the extraordinary beauty of the palaces would detain them without weariness several days.

They found this to be the case, and day after day lingered on in enjoyment of the most varied

and beautiful gardens of which any palace can boast in Germany. The trees are here allowed to grow naturally and to throw their branches in graceful arches, enterlacing each other along avenues of great length which afford delicious shade. Every here and there are openings leading to other walks and other vistas where extensive beds of the most brilliant flowers almost dazzle the eye which looks upon them from a shadowy retreat.

The sun of advanced summer at this period drew forth from close ranges of orange and citron trees their exquisite odour, broad fan palms cast their cool shade over the walks, and magnificient acacias of almost incredibls size stood at different distances offering a fine forest-like obscurity as a relief to the dazzling light which surrounded them.

From a fine elevated grassy walk, by the side of what had formerly been a wall of defence, openings in the grove gave glimpses of the distant citadel standing proudly on its lofty Marienberg which rises from the banks of the silver Main, and the picturesque Köppell opposite with its drapery of vines and its glittering chapel came out brightly against the cloudless blue sky.

The two youngest travellers were particularly amused as they sported up and down a long terrace

which overlooked a garden blazing with bright flowers below, to which marble steps led from the airy height in different directions. All along this terrace were statues of Cupids in different disguises, grotesquely attired, some as blacksmiths, some as cobblers, some as woodcutters, and in short representing every kind of trade and calling, and supported by symbols of their occupation.

"What a sweet little face the child has," exclaimed Claudia; "and how arch and good-humoured he looks."

"He is however a dangerous character," said Sir Anselm; "and causes more trouble in the world than he is worth. You see he is thus represented to show that all sorts of persons are subject to his sway."

"Do you think cobblers and tinkers," said Sybilla, with some disdain, "have anything to do with love?"

"Of course not," exclaimed Claudia; "who would fall in love with them in return? and you know there is no use in love if it is only on one side."

"There are classes of persons certainly," said Ludwig, rather mournfully, in his strongly accented English, "who have no right to love, but they, nevertheless cannot guard their hearts always from the attacks of the God anymore than those predestined

beings who become the prey of the evil race of *Ujes-tize* can prevent their hearts from falling a prey."

"What sort of people are they," asked Claudia; "I never heard of them before."

"I will tell you the history of those beings," said Ludwig, "some evening by moonlight, in a desolate spot where there are no roses and smiling flowers to render the effect of the legend null. A story loses most of its charm if told in an uncongenial atmosphere, as the truest vows of affection are but as breath if the ear that listens is unmoved. The belief however in the existence of love is a chimerical notion," added he, abstractedly.

"What," said Clara, who had now become accustomed to the dreamy eccentricity of their new companion and who took a delight in bringing forward his opinions, "do you not really believe in the existence of affection?"

"I believe in maternal love," replied he; "but in no other, the love of a mother to her children is a part of her being which nothing can subdue, it is her life and is only extinct with its cessation."

"Do you think then," said Claudia, "that when I marry I shall not love my husband and that he will not love me? that is quite dreadful!"

"He will at first adore your beauty and grace,"

replied the student, "and as long as the novelty lasts he will be your slave; but, as years creep on, he will become accustomed to that which charmed him, and forget it. You will do just the same and, like all marriages, your union will become a piece of indifferrence long before you are separated by age or accident."

"You have been disappointed I know," said Claudia, looking very sagacious, "and that's the reason you talk in this way; if any one were to fall very much in love with you and tell you so and promise to love you always, you would'nt say so for the world."

"But," said the student, rather bitterly; "that can never be my case. I am poor and insignificant, have nothing to attract or attach. I shall go through the world seeking always for truth in musty libraries and never find either truth or love."

"Then why not seek them in the animated world?" said Clara; "the world is full of love and beauty, so full that it is able to dispense its treasures to all and yet never know a void; hatred and coldness grow in our own bosoms; distrust is the greatest enemy our nature has and as long as we disbelieve in love we shall never become acquainted with him."

"But you, Madam," said the student, "are

young and fair as are these your lovely companions, you are all prosperous and happy and have as little idea of the privations of the world as of the deceptions and wickedness which it produces. Your lives are all summer and you have never known a wintry day nor can therefore imagine its severity."

"The cares and privations of the world," said Clara, "can but little affect the heart; on the contrary, the sharp air sometimes brings forth its richest blossoms which a too brilliant sun kept from blowing. Besides you speak without knowledge in the instance you have just given. I am dependant and one on whom fortune has never smiled as she has on my young companions, yet you class us together; yet, perhaps, you are right in doing so, for a cheerful heart goes far to reconcile us to every position in which chance may place us, and in that respect we are equal."

"And you have never felt distrust or entertained suspicion?" said the student stopping in the shade of an acacia while the rest of the party were descending the steps to the garden beneath. Clara paused too as she saw he wished to pursue the theme he had taken.

"You are wrong again," replied she, "I have distrusted and suspected; but perhaps I describe my feelings falsely. I should say I trusted too

much and suspected too little, it was only certainty which occasioned me to wake from a dream in which I was beginning to indulge. Fortunately I had not slept too long and the pain is less on waking than it might have been."

"You cannot then forgive?" asked Ludwig.

"Not in the case to which I allude," said Clara; "because the injury intended was persisted in even after I had believed in repentance."

"Your wrongs must have been deep indeed; said the student, somewhat scornfully she thought.

"We will not talk of them," said Clara; "perhaps you would not consider them wrongs at all."

"We often imagine injuries," returned the student, "which, were facts explained, would turn out to be benefits. Women are too impressionable to be depended on, but once impressed with a false notion, they are obstinate in retaining it."

"You are singularly severe," said Clara, smiling; "we must use all our endeavours to reform you. Do they teach in your colleges this heresy against women? I knew the Germans were not so gallant as the French, or so just, perhaps, as the English; but I did not know we inspired such feelings of antipathy as your customary remarks lead me to suppose."

"You have already promised," said the stu-

dent; "to forgive all I may venture to say, professing to be entertained by the free exposure of my sentiments, therefore I do not conceal what I think even at the risk of shocking a woman who listens to me. I have never yet in my experience had cause to change my impressions of the female mind, but I am open to conviction when it arrives."

"Were we to be as severe towards men as you are to us," said Clara, laughing, "our quarrels would never cease; but we are indulgent while you are contemptuous. I am sure that there are men of pure exalted minds, in whom there is no guile or deception, whose thoughts are all generous and noble and therefore they can believe no ill in others."

"Do you know such a woman?" asked Ludwig.

"Certainly," replied Clara; "I think such a character common to women, perhaps, because we know less of life and indulge more in ideal than reality. For this cause it is the more culpable to destroy the paradise we so generously make."

"To feel sure of being loved truly, disinterestedly, purely, solely, must be a paradise indeed," said the student; "but such a fate is reserved for few."

"Oh no," cried Clara, gaily; "it may happen to all in their degree. Some minds are satisfied with little, others expect too much."

"Too much," exclaimed Ludwig, passionately, "aye too much—if one expects sacrifice—if one demands devotion unconditional, absolute, exclusive, it is too much. One must be content with quiet indifference, with calm endurance, with patient waiting—such love is worth nothing."

"Such is, however, real love," said Clara; "it is made up entirely of self-sacrifices—it endures all, it sustains all, it lightens all, and it forgives all; passionate demonstrations are nothing worth—they are easily feigned, and quickly vanish: there is no real love that is not founded on truth, and truth is not known till it is sought for."

"He who is the object of your preference," said the student, "will then have a hard trial."

"A hard one, if he does not think as I do," replied Clara; "but if he does, my caution will not surprise him."

"Caution—that is the word," said Ludwig; "caution belongs to woman—passion to man."

"It should be so," said Clara, "and when it is not, she suffers."

"Are you quarrelling?" asked Claudia, as she ran laughing back at this moment. "Do you

know, Mr. Ludwig," she continued, "that it is very difficult to please Miss Fane—she is quite *sauvage* by fits, and takes such antipathies to people! She is so cross sometimes to a poor friend of ours, Mr. Clark, that we are obliged to comfort him, and take his part against her. I do believe she is in love with him, and is trying to prevent our finding it out!"

"You mistake," said Clara, a little confused. "I do not dislike Mr. Clark, and as certainly do not love him or he me; but there is really some danger of my quarrelling with the Herr Ludwig, because he is unjust. However, our dispute can stand over for the present, as we are, I think, going into the palace, and we must carry only pleasing ideas with us, in order to enjoy the splendours that await us."

"You will allow," said the student, "that there is, at least, no mistaking one failing of woman—pomp and show are her passions, and there is little that she will not sacrifice to obtain them."

"A failing, I suppose," said Clara, archly, "from which man is quite free! How generous of him to build palaces entirely for the pleasure of his natural enemy, while he would himself be quite satisfied with a hermit's cell!"

There are few sights that so little repay a

traveller's fatigue as a visit to a royal palace, except it happens to be ancient enough to carry him away from the mere contemplation of gold mouldings, velvet and satin draperies and ornamented furniture — the long ranges of splendid rooms without inhabitants, costly and glittering, but affording pleasure merely to careless strangers, never sought and scarcely ever seen by the royal personages to whom they belong, are not better than decorated coffins, and convey only melancholy conviction to the mind of the insufficiency of splendour to produce content.

Although the Residenz at Würtsburg is precisely in this predicament, and is as deserted as any other royal palace, the possessor of which generally builds him a cottage in a wood to live in close beside, yet it is one of the few really worth visiting. It is on a gigantic scale, and said to contain three hundred and sixty-seven chambers, truly a magnificent assemblage. Most of these are gorgeous in the extreme, and present such a blaze of looking-glass that the quantity seems incredible: the very stoves are faced with glass, some of the ceilings are glass, and there is one beautiful room all shining with glass in every nook and corner. Tables and cabinets, doorcases, shutters, walls, and ceiling, all relieved by exquisite paintings and rich carvings in gold on glass:

flowers, birds, scrolls, wreaths, and nymph-like heads gleaming on the walls; the chandeliers have pendant leaves and flowers of coloured glass, and it is only the beautifully inlaid wooden floor that is not of this dazzling material. This is called the Mirror Chamber, and is a wonder of its kind: whoever designed it, imagined a miracle of grace and taste never surpassed. When lighted up at night the effect must be magical. It lies in the centre of other rooms, each surpassing its fellow in splendour — one arranged to represent the cavern of some sea-goddess, particularly attracted the sisters.

"How charming," cried Claudia, "to live here! I should have this range to myself, and fancy I was a sea-nymph. Look! the walls and ceilings are all painted like coral groves, with enamelled fishes gliding through—minerals of all colours are scattered here and there—what loads of spar of every hue—what broad sea-fans, what beautiful weeds, what pearly shells, and the ceiling a perfect grotto, glittering with light."

"I have found another quite as beautiful," cried Sybilla; "all of malachite!—all green—every table and stand—the walls and the pillars malachite!—and the draperies of the same colour, damasked like the veins."

"But see—I like this room best of all!" cried

her sister, hurrying her along: "dove-colour silk draperies, and pink marble walls with silver mouldings—everything is silver here, and how bright and fresh it looks."

"Don't decide on any preference," cried Claudia, "till you have entered this room; it is all of porcelain, from ceiling to floor, and the rose-coloured velvet and satin curtains are held up by gold cords, and covered with gold embroidery."

"But here is a Pompeian room," exclaimed Sir Anselm; "now you have re-entered your old haunts and behold an old friend."

"Turned giant," said Claudia, as they entered an immense saloon with a dome, fitted up with patterns from Pompeii and dedicated to music, as a beautiful gallery, encircling the upper part of the walls, announces; but music has probably never sounded in these walls for half a century.

The beautiful Chapel, fresh and bright as if it welcomed the devout every day, is only a thing to gaze at, and no evidence throughout this gorgeous abode tells of habitation.

"What marvellous wealth must have been possessed by the ecclesiastical princes who made such a residence for their pride!" exclaimed Sir Anselm; "and they provided almost equally for their latest abodes, for we see in the cathedral

and the churches of Würtzburg how costly were their tombs."

"Man, at all events," said Clara to Ludwig, "seems here to have shown his love of splendour, you will admit. A woman's vanity had nothing to do here, during the thousand years that a race of prince-bishops are said to have borne sway and dwelt in this golden house of riches, undisturbed by the whims and caprices of a sex which they shunned. Humble and worthy men, high examples of self-sacrifice and mortification!"

"Had the sovereigns been abbess-princesses do you think they would have been more self-denying?" said the student.

"Why does not the King of Bavaria live here?" asked Claudia; "he cannot surely have a more beautiful palace any where, or else he is the richest king in the whole world."

"The king," said Ludwig, "is the least important monarch in Europe; yet he has a palace in almost every one of his towns of such surpassing magnificence, that Eastern fables seem realised in their structure. He is, nevertheless, one of the poorest of sovereigns, and his subjects are amongst the least prosperous and the least content of any nation under the sun."

CHAPTER XIV.

Uns ist ganz kanibalisch wohl!

Faust.

An expedition had been arranged to pay a visit, by moonlight, to the citadel on its crowning height above the town of Würtsburg: it is a fine spot on a bright day from whence to look down on the city beneath shining in light, its crowding but handsome streets, its lofty Dom, its majestic Marienkirke—the picturesque bridge adorned with quaint statues of bishops, the swelling river dividing tower from tower and street from street—but seen at sun set and by a brilliant moon the scene is magical.

Sir Anselm and the two sisters began the steep ascent, by the rugged steps which lead from the street in toilsome length, and gay and cheerfully did they climb the precipitous stairs while Clara followed, leaning on the arm of the student, to whom the whole of the scene was familiar and at

whose recommendation they had agreed to attempt the adventure.

They reached the summit of the steep rock, at length, and seated themselves beneath the walls of the castle, looking with admiration on the wide extent of buildings at their feet; countless steeples and innumerable towers rose dark and spirit-like from the mass of buildings, and behind rose the picturesque hill on which grow the vines which produce a wine celebrated in the country and considered the treasure of German vintages. The glittering river, touched with silver light, ran winding through the city and the far meadows beyond, and lost itself amongst the distant heights.

"This is just the place," said Sybilla, "for the Herr Ludwig to keep his promise of telling us that horrid story about people losing their hearts."

"Always an event sufficiently tragic," said Sir Anselm; "but in this case, is it more than usually so, that so solemn a spot must be chosen for recounting the history?"

"Yes," said Sybilla, "he would not tell it in the light of day in those pretty gardens, and I am determined to wait for it no longer."

"Is it some of your Servian lore, Ludwig?" said Sir Anselm, "I know you have possessed

yourself of much concerning that wild but poetical nation."

"No," replied Ludwig, "this concerns Dalmatian superstition, there is, you may remember, a race of people peculiar to that country, who are called *Ujestize,* a kind of witches whose object is to procure the heart of a young person who is beginning to be acquainted with love, and having cooked it on the fire to make a feast of the precious morsel.

"A young man who was about to become a bridegroom, at the age of twenty, was aware that he was the object of desire to these monsters; for he had frequently awaked suddenly just as he felt a hand in his bosom about the region of his heart. This had happened to him so often that he became at last terrified and imparted his fears to his confessor, a good man who was exceedingly attached to him: Father Blaise had never heard of this danger which threatens the human race and, moreover, was hard of belief respecting the existence of beings who possessed such power. He endeavoured to reason his young friend out of the idea, but he was too well aware of its truth and had been accustomed from childhood to hear instances of a terrible nature related to him by certain persons who knew the facts they recounted.

"Father Blaise, at length, proposed to his young friend that he should share his chamber in order to watch over him while he slept, and avert this fearful peril.

"'I feel certain,' said the young man, 'that they will become possessed of my heart before I marry, if I could but escape them till after that event I should be safe, as it is only in my present circumstances that these wretches covet the possession of the human heart. I will therefore, my dear friend, accept your offer and rely on your vigilance to save me.'

"The good father accordingly repaired to the sleeping chamber of the young man, who had already lain down in his bed; he proceeded to utter certain prayers and to use certain ceremonies usual against evil spirits, and then placed himself on a couch near his friend, who, while he had been thus occupied was fallen into a sweet sleep, and was breathing gently without any appearance of disturbance. For some time he remained listening to his regular respiration, and occasionally he raised himself up to glance at his appearance, which was always quiet and settled.

"At length, just after midnight, the priest, whose mind was entirely occupied with reflections which had been caused by his friend's terror, insensibly fell into a reverie which by degrees ended

in sleep. Immediately a vision entered his mind of a most horrible description: he thought he beheld forms such as he had never imagined when awake, hovering about the chamber and, by degrees, approaching the bed where his friend lay; that presently they perched upon his pillow and looked upon him with flaming eyes—then several of the shapes began to contend and struggle with each other, uttering frightful peals of laughter and finally assembled in a circle round his breast, and with long nails began their horrible work—one, in the meantime, was occupied in fanning with a huge pair of black wings a fire which rose from the centre of the floor, and when the rest had taken the heart from the young man's breast it was thrown therein and all began to scramble for a share.

"The priest endeavoured in vain to cry out—at his attempts to do so and the struggles he made to rise, the party seemed disturbed and in a moment they all turned towards him in the midst of their hideous feast and gazed upon him with a fascination in their eyes which paralysed his senses, while they wiped their lips with their long grey hair and grinned in derision.

"As he lay thus the forms began to grow more and more indistinct, and at length all was vacancy—he started up now quite awake and was

rushing to the bed of his young friend, when he saw him endeavouring to rise, and having, with effort, come from his bed he made a few steps forward and then fell lifeless at the priest's feet.

"He examined his breast, but there was no apparent wound, nevertheless, he had ceased to exist. An examination was made of the body, and to the amazement of the surgeons who officiated it was found that, although every part of his interior frame was perfectly sound, there was no heart within his bosom."

"How dreadful!" said the sisters, creeping close to each other, "and what a dreadful man you are to know such stories."

"Oh, I can tell you one more shocking still," said Ludwig, smiling, "if you will not be too frightened to walk back to the hotel afterwards."

"No, no," cried they, "do tell it—we shall not die of fright, and it is so pleasant to feel terrified and yet know that one is safe."

The student continued, therefore, his revelations as follows—

"In Croatia there are certain families who have the misfortune to be what is called *Vukodlack.*

"There is nothing outward to designate persons who are afflicted with this malady; they are usually extremely amiable, gentle, benevolent, and

quiet in their manners, and the harm which is unfortunately in their minds injures no one but themselves.

"They are generally melancholy, in consequence of the regrets they have for what they consider themselves compelled to act in sleep, and they exert every power they possess to do away, by their conduct, the fatal evil to which they are a prey whenever sleep descends upon them.

"They seek every remedy that human science offers; they have recourse to the most severe practises of religion; they will even sometimes submit to the amputation of a limb, in the hope of being cured of their secret sufferings; and sometimes, driven to despair by remorse for the involuntary crimes they commit in their sleep, they put an end to their existence, always leaving instructions that their heart may be transfixed with a stake which shall be nailed to the coffin in which they are laid, in the hope of preventing their spirit from continuing the crimes which they performed during the body's life.

"The nightly occupations of these unhappy *Vukodlack* are these:—immediately that sleep descends on them they repair, in idea, to some grave, and there, with their nails, tear up the ground, and feast on the dead within; or they enter the chamber where a nurse is watching a

new-born infant, seduce her to sleep, and then steal the breath of the child in the cradle.

"When these persons, thus afflicted, die, it is by no means uncommon on opening their graves after some time to find them without signs of decay, so much, it is supposed, has the repose of death refreshed their bodies, for they have at length slept *without dreaming*."

"I hope we are not likely to meet any of these beings on our journey," said Clara; "Germany, I believe, abounds with extraordinary monsters, but, perhaps, they conceal themselves in the brains of the natives, and do not come forth to scare strangers. It is to be desired that people afflicted as you relate keep on the other side of the Danube where they are more appreciated."

"By no means," said Ludwig, with a grave countenance, "I have myself met with persons suffering from the affliction I describe, and that in the very region where you are about to travel. Indeed it is always in the neighbourhood of mountains that these beings are encountered; the air of cities does not breed them. I would not answer for your not meeting with most extraordinary adventures before you reach the beautiful solitude of Como."

"Do you mean that you have known one of these *Vukodlack?*" exclaimed Claudia.

"Yes," returned the student, "and not a native of Croatia either. He came much nearer to the ordinary haunts of society, for he was an Italian, born in Calabria, but settled at Vienna as an artist, where I knew him."

"And what was he like?—and how did you find it out?" exclaimed Claudia.

"He was remarkably handsome, and particularly amiable and gentle in his manners, but he was too generous and noble in his mind to support injustice, and, in an evil hour, he joined a band of patriotic young men who thought to regenerate their country. Their attempt failed, and in consequence he fell under the displeasure of the government and was banished. He had very lately married a young and beautiful girl who was strongly attached to him, and whom he loved with all the ardour of his nature.

"When they left Vienna they were obliged to travel on foot, with scarcely any means of support, and a long journey with an uncertain termination before them. He directed his steps to Germany, where he hoped to obtain occupation, or, if not there, he proposed continuing his way to France.

"They had wandered long amongst the mountains of the Salzkammergut and, worn and weary, were vainly endeavouring to discover some village

where they might find shelter for the night, when the storm which they had been dreading for some time overtook them in one of the most dreary of the snowy passes.

"They were forced to take refuge in a cave, and here they passed the night in great misery, tortured by the pangs of hunger, for neither of them had eaten for several days. In this extremity the strength of the young wife gave way, she was seized with delirium, and in her ravings, as she clung to her husband, entreated him not to die of hunger while her body remained on which he could make a meal.

"Destitute of all remedies and abandoned to their fate, the miserable husband saw her die in his arms, and could only rejoice that her death had preceded his.

"After some hours of insensibility, which supplied the place, probably, of nourishment, he found, on coming to himself, that the storm had passed away, and that nature had resumed her beauties and her graces as if to mock his despair.

"He took the body of his wife in his arms and continued his way till he reached the *cimetière* of the first village, and there he dug a grave for her and buried her with his own hands, placing above the earth which covered her his staff,

which he crossed with the dagger he had worn, thus forming the symbol of the faith which alone supported him.

"By one of those strange accidents which occur in life, he found when he reached Salzburg that his sentence had been reversed and that he was no longer an exile; but he had lost all that made existence valuable to him, and the subsequent success of his genius, which was great and which still impelled him to action, could no longer afford him either happiness or consolation; he had no beloved friend now to share his triumphs or to sympathise with his feelings.

"It happened that circumstances led him into the society of an eminent physician whose benevolent and amiable character induced him to cultivate his intimacy, and who, seeking to soothe his mind, which he found strangely disturbed, and, observing that medical skill alone was inefficient to relieve him, at length succeeded in obtaining his confidence, and to him was related the history of his early misfortunes.

"By a series of kind attentions and watchful cares, his friend was able, in a great degree, to calm the nervous state of mind in which the artist was plunged; but the physician was not aware, to the full extent, of his sufferings, till on one occasion they had agreed to make an excur-

sion together into that beautiful part of Bavaria known as the Franconian Switzerland; for the painter had never cared to return, even after his pardon was granted, to his native Italy, and continued to reside at Nuremburg, making visits occasionally to the other towns of the kingdom.

"They had been together through the beautiful vallies that extended from Streitberg to Bamberg, and had explored the charming and varied district of the vale of Muggendorf; the health and spirits of the young painter seemed to have revived, and his original character, which was lively and energetic, broke forth from the cloud of sadness which usually shrouded his mind.

"They were on their return to Nuremberg, and had arrived late in the evening at the village of Streitberg, where they intended to pass the night: the only inn was so full that it was impossible to procure more than one small room, in which a second bed was placed on the occasion, and this was the only accommodation they could procure.

"To the surprise of his friend, the young painter expressed himself very much annoyed at this arrangement, and his spirits appeared to sink as the night approached and it became time to repose.

"At length he said to his companion, as he

stooped down to a portmanteau in which his necessaries were contained, and produced a coil of strong cord—

"'My good friend, since there seems no remedy to our sharing the same apartment, I have but one request to make to you, which is, that you will, as soon as I am asleep, bind my hands and feet tightly to the bed in such a manner as to prevent my moving.'

"His friend remonstrated with him, and attempted to turn into ridicule the strange wish he had expressed.

"'I do not jest,' said he, with an expression of deep distress and a strange wildness in his eyes, 'I entreat you to do this if you would sleep without danger in the chamber of a wretch, who is under the controul of an evil demon. I have not yet told you all the miseries to which I am subject, I have not revealed to you the worst, that not a night passes but I behold the corpse of my unfortunate wife in the spot where I placed her, and that I do not hear the words uttered in her delirium—Do not die of hunger while my body remains for a meal!'

"'No sooner do I sleep than this image takes possession of me—I rise from my couch—I hurry into the open air amongst the mountains, there

close to Ischel, where she died—I hasten to the *cimetière*—with my nails I disinter her corpse and my frightful hunger is appeased!

"'Am I a being,' he continued, wildly, 'in whose chamber a man could sleep if he were not tied in his bed?'"

"How hideous!" cried Claudia: "and what became of the unfortunate young man?"

"His friend," said the student, "soothed and persuaded him, and having promised to watch him all night, and not to attempt to sleep in his company, he consented to take some rest. They returned together to their usual residence, and the patient was at last induced to go back to his native Italy, where the climate and the country were more congenial to him. I have never heard more of him since, therefore cannot tell you the rest of his history."

"It is a fearful one," said Clara, "and if invented to suit our moonlight ramble is singularly appropriate. We shall, however, sleep, I imagine, after our fatigues of to-night, without fear of the *Vukodlack*."

CHAPTER XV.

So gefällst du mir.
Wir werden, hoff 'ich, uns vertragen!

Faust.

The day after their excursion by moonlight to the Citadel had been fixed for their continuing their journey, but Lady Seymour had not yet arrived to join them. It was late in the afternoon as they were wandering amongst the groves of the palace-garden that, at the end of one of the vistas, Clara and her party observed a well-known figure approaching them, and had no difficulty in recognising Mr. Clark, sent to announce the arrival of Lady Seymour, who, being fatigued, was reposing in her room at the hotel.

The two girls flew to meet him, but Clara, unable to repress her agitation, turned away and walked along an opposite path. She was followed

instantly by Ludwig who paced slowly by her side, which she was not aware of until, looking suddenly up, she observed his eyes fixed on her face, with so remarkable a meaning that she could not help starting—she scarcely knew why. She seemed to recognise the very expression which at that moment was so vivid in her mind, and which she had fled from their disguised visitor to avoid.

"Pardon me, madam," said the student, "I fear I intrude on your privacy; but my nature is retiring and obnoxious to strangers, and the aspect of the person I saw advancing and so welcomed by our young friends, was distasteful to me. There are some natures which have antipathies to each other, and it is felt at first sight—towards others the heart is involuntarily borne, and recognises a friend at the first glance. We Germans are full of such dreams and fancies, which, whether right or wrong, affect us—perhaps you cannot comprehend this feeling."

"It is one," said Clara, "which is, I believe, acknowledged by every one, and cannot be accounted for except by Mesmerists, whose theories make all such mysteries easy. I confess, that like yourself, I have a wish to avoid Mr. Clark, the person to whom you allude; but it is not from any antipathy I feel towards him: circumstances have caused me to wish that I was not forced into

his society, and whenever he appears I endeavour to absent myself."

"And will he travel with us all the time?" asked the Student, with some anxiety.

"I fear so," replied Clara; "he usually accompanies Lady Seymour, but as he is supposed to be engaged to give lessons to the young ladies in drawing, no doubt when we arrive at picturesque sites, we shall have his company."

"He is an artist then?" said Ludwig.

"He is called so," replied Clara; "that is his present profession."

The Student stopped a moment, looked at Clara with the same singular expression as before, and then burst into a fit of laughter, such as she had never seen him indulge in before.

"What occasions your risibility?" she asked at length, a good deal surprised.

"I laugh," said he, recovering himself, "at a thought which entered my head, at the extreme absurdity of which I cannot help being amused. When this man's name was uttered by Miss Claudia, you started, blushed, turned pale, and seemed ready to faint. You then hurried away, evidently in agitation, and my imagination pictured a fantastic dream of love—with this awkward man for its hero, and you, the fairest of your sex, for the heroine. Since I have reflected on your

words, I behold the folly of my surmise, and cannot recover from the effect its stupidity causes me."

"It was, indeed, an extraordinary fancy," said Clara, turning away her head and avoiding the looks of the Student, which seemed to seek hers, "but the object of our antipathy is gone, and I will now return to Sir Anselm."

From that time, during the whole of the period when chance threw them together, Clara observed that Ludwig avoided Mr. Clark as much as she did herself, but what surprised her more was that the latter never made the least attempt to address her or be near her, and even, if they were compelled to exchange a few words, appeared to shrink from doing so, and to be delighted at any means of escape.

One day Claudia came laughing to her and said that she and her sister had contrived to frighten Mr. Clark out of his wits.

"Imagine," said she, "my having repeated to him all the histories of *Vukodlacks* that Ludwig told us, and persuaded him that the Student himself is one of those horrible beings without a heart and very dangerous. He says he never liked his looks from the first moment, and that as for you, he is certain you are not to be trusted. Poor dear man, there is no absurdity he will not be-

lieve, and as he hardly ever can sleep, as it is, for fear of ghosts, I don't know how he will exist, now that he thinks himself surrounded by such odd beings as you and Ludwig."

"This is carrying the farce great lengths," said Clara to herself, "I cannot comprehend his conduct in any way. I am resolved however to put an end to these absurd scenes which can, when explained, edify no one."

Full of this thought, she sought Sir Anselm Fairfax, with whom she had, of late, had few opportunities of conversing.

"I am afraid Sir Anseln," said she "that you will think the step I take very extraordinary—it would perhaps appear more proper that in any difficulty like the present, I should consult Lady Seymour, but I feel that it is in you that I ought to confide; you have expressed interest in me, and would I feel sure, be sorry to know that I am rendered unhappy, by an occurrance which you could perhaps do away with."

Sir Anselm, not by words alone, but by the kindness of his manner, reassured her and begged she would at once point out in what manner he could serve her.

"I hardly dare to tell you the truth," said she, "but I have resolved to do so. You are aware that when I paid my visit to Rose Cot-

tage at the time I was first so fortunate as to see you, I met a gentleman there who—"

"You mean," said Sir Anselm anticipating her words, "you mean a man then without a name, since known to you as Mr. Edmond Loftus."

"I do," said Clara blushing, "that gentleman from a caprice which I imagined he had since regretted, followed me into the country, where I was engaged in a humble position, and thought it suitable to assume the character of an artist, and to introduce himself where I was. After a time he discovered himself and I recognised in him the person I had seen at Rose Cottage. An accident carried me to Loftus Hall, other events introduced me to the society of the neighbourhood, and I became acquainted with Mr. Loftus in his proper person. The change in his manner towards me made me hope that he altogether regretted the unworthy step he had formerly taken. I left that part of the country, having experienced much mortification owing to the reports circulated to my detriment in consequence of a man well known in his own county having assumed a disguise which was detected. But that I was protected by firm friends, I must have suffered in reputation from this business, and

even yet, I find that I have not entirely escaped calumny. Judge of my surprise then, when, after having been accustomed to see Mr. Loftus in the house of my friends and when disguise was useless, he re-appears in his former assumed character."

"How do you mean," said Sir Anselm, "when has he so appeared?"

"He assumed his disguise again for a purpose, which though sufficiently annoying to me, I am not obliged to know," said Clara hesitating, "but what concerns me nearer, he has attached himself to this family and wears the same carnival habit by which he first chose to degrade himself."

"The same!" said Sir Anselm, "and you have recognised him at once?"

"I could not doubt that it was he," said Clara, "although he has so much overacted his part this time, that I might have been forgiven if I had been deceived, as it is evident both you and the rest of my friends are on the subject."

"Then who do you suspect?" said Sir Anselm looking a little astonished, "you concealed your suspicions so well that I never imagined you were disturbed."

"This the more surprises me," said Clara, "for the agitation I am thrown into is so great,

that it has not escaped the notice even of a stranger, M. Ludwig perceived it at this very time, the moment the supposed Mr. Clark made his appearance in the gardens of Würtzburg."

"The supposed Mr. Clark!" exclaimed Sir Anselm, "why who then do you imagine Clark to be?"

"I know him to be no other than Mr. Loftus," said Clara, "in that character he came to the school where I was staying, and in that character he now appears."

To Clara's great surprise, Sir Anselm fell back in his chair at these words and indulged in a long fit of merriment, so unusual with him, that she was quite bewildered to behold it. At length he said—

"My dear Miss Fane, you must forgive me—for truly in this case—

'To be grave exceeds all power of face.'

There never was anything more exquisitely comic than the notion you have allowed to strengthen in your mind. The man you accuse is altogether innocent—deprive poor Clark of his spectacles, his wig and his Hessians, and he would never become, from such a chrysalis, the fine butterfly Edmond Loftus. No, make yourself quite easy and content, he is exactly what he

appears—an eccentric, half witted, industrious and not very highly gifted artist. With no remarkable mind, but quite without any bad propensities or feelings.

"That Loftus was imprudent enough to assume his garb for a travesty, I can quite understand, because he had already acquired great fame in imitating poor Clark to the life, and at a certain carnival at Rome the world was strangely mystified by three Clarks appearing, two besides the original, who worried him to such a degree that the poor man, who is very superstitious, thought himself a prey to the evil eye and believed he was bewitched for some time afterwards.

"Loftus was one of his chief patrons, and though he laughed at him, was substantially his best friend; he was more patronised in Italy for his good qualities than for his genius, and the father of these children and myself have never lost sight of his interests. As for Loftus, his intention was to meet us at Venice and I parted with him, in London, on the very night that I saw you at the Opera."

Clara remained silent with amazement and confusion, Sir Anselm continued to laugh and maliciously to enjoy both.

"Mark, how a plain tale can set you down," said he, "now you have nothing more to do than

to feel quite at your ease and to make friends with Clark as soon as you can. This explains his terror of you, which those children have been exciting still more: no doubt, your looks have been lightning to him, and you have considered him as the most dangerous and accomplished monster that ever crossed the path of a devoted damsel."

"I am thoroughly ashamed," faltered Clara, "of my absurd suspicions, and will do all I possibly can to repair my error by showing every kind of civility to Mr. Clark."

"You ought, indeed," said Sir Anselm; "for if you had known his story you would esteem him. He supported for many years, by his labour, an infirm brother, one of the most ill-natured and ill-conditioned beings that ever existed, who moreover, was the cause of his poverty, having dissipated his means by his extravagance and profusion, and kept Clark a beggar all his life and when he could no longer carry on his amusements, owing to paralysis in all his limbs, he returned to the man he had injured who gave him shelter and supported him till his death, which happened not long since and left my old friend free. Now that you know that he is no lover in disguise, you will fall straight in love with him yourself, I know."

"Oh, directly!" exclaimed Clara, wiping away a tear from her eyes, "it is my duty to do so without delay, and to declare the same to him. Pray keep my foolish secret, dear Sir Anselm: how fortunate that I did not apply to Lady Seymour instead of you; she would have misunderstood the whole affair, and I should have caused the very scandal and confusion I was endeavouring to avoid. I will never again suspect anyone."

"Oh," said Sir Anselm, "that is going too far the other way.

Trau. Schau. Wem.

is a very safe motto."

Clara started and trembled—she recollected instantly that those were the very words engraven by Sir Anselm's hand on the rock by the cascade, in Loftus park, the sight of which had agitated her so much. She was about to pursue the subject and to ask of Sir Anselm some explanation of his reasons for having adopted the motto and having placed it in that spot; but she observed that a sudden change had taken place in his countenance, that all the gaiety which had enlivened it in a more than ordinary degree a moment before was fled, and that some painful recollection had saddened his mind. He leaned his arm on the table, rested his head on his hand, and fell

into a reverie so deep and mournful, that she could not venture to disturb it, and thinking it more prudent not to attempt to do so, she softly quitted the room and retired to her own to ruminate on the singular and vexatious mistake into which her fears and over caution had led her.

One reflection consoled her in the midst of all.

"If," said she, "I have been so deceived in Mr. Loftus in this particular, I may have done him injustice in another of more importance. This is, certainly, the Clark who lodged at Mrs. Spicer's, and this man is not Mr. Loftus: it is not likely that he is the deceiver of that silly girl, Celia Sawyer, and I may do Mr. Loftus injustice in thinking him the culprit. Would that one suspicion were dissipated as perfectly as the other! Would that he had never condescended to this deception at all, for, having been once deceived by him, I dare not give him my confidence. But why do I dwell on this?—what is he to me? or I to him? I was merely a passing shadow that attracted him and he, being once gone, is never likely to re-appear on the horizon of my existence."

CHAPTER XVI.

Sie hören gern, zum Schaden froh gewandt,
Gehorschen gern, weil sie uns gern betrügen,
Sie stellen wie vom Himmel sich gesandt
Und lispen englisch, wen sie lügen.

Faust.

"And do you really believe all this, my dear Mr. Clark?" said Claudia to her drawing-master, as she paused from one of the first lessons he had had time to give, released from Lady Seymour, and desirous of assisting his two young pupils in making a sketch from the walls of the old Castle of Nuremberg, of the house of Albert Durer.

"Believe it?—of course I do, Miss Claudia," replied he: "throw a little more force into the shadow of the roof, if I may be allowed to dictate—certainly I cannot do otherwise—have seen things like it myself—witnessed the acts of the Interior Man—know him to be a separate being from the Bodily Man."

"What," said Claudia, suspending her pencil, "have you seen him do?—now tell me directly, for I long to hear all about him, he is quite a new acquaintance."

"Why, Miss," said Mr. Clark, "continuing to sketch as he talked, "I would not believe it myself for a long time, but I agreed with my German friend to try experiments. Miss, we settled that he should watch while I slept; he saw me asleep, and plainly saw, too, the Interior Man exit like a sort of shadow and disappear. When I woke he told me, and bade me have faith and watch myself and I could see him too.

"Next night I resolved not to sleep but watch—did so till I could keep my eyes open no longer, and went off—saw nothing—tried three times. Third time kept on waking, waking, till suddenly I saw him stealing out of *me* and making his way towards the door—I could'nt keep still, and looking after him called out—'Ha! ha! there you are, old fellow!—there you go!' and instantly back he was, with a bang on my chest, whipped in again!"

"Well, but," said Claudia, looking as grave as she could, "if you had not called out what would the Interior Man have done?"

"Oh, I should have been able," said Mr. Clark, "perhaps, to follow him and see where he went to. When we dream it is when he goes out

of us and leaves us, then he is off amusing himself, when he comes back we wake."

"Of course you have seen a ghost, Mr. Clark?" asked Claudia.

"Lord bless us, Miss!" cried Mr. Clark, "don't talk of it! of course I have—but let us go on with our drawing, here come Miss Sybilla and Miss Fane—I hope she won't look at me—can't stand it."

"Have you not got one of the spells of Naples?" said Claudia, "you are safe with that from the Evil Eye."

"Yes," said he, gravely, "always carry one to my watch and wear one at my breast pin, besides always keep my hand in the right form whenever she is near."

At this moment Clara and Sybilla approached the parapet over which the artists were leaning.

"My dear Mr. Clark," said Clara, in a soft voice, "how beautifully you are sketching that charming old house; I hope you will do something for me afterwards. I am so anxious to have a *souvenir* of Queen Cunegonda's linden tree in the centre of the inner castle court."

Mr. Clark started and let fall his pencil, which Clara picked up and gave him with so gracious a smile that he remained staring at her with his mouth open.

Claudia whispered in his ear—"It is the *gettatura!* depend on it, you have got the better of the Evil Eye!"

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed Mr. Clark.

"Now tell me, Mr. Clark," said Clara, "do you not think this strange old town of Nuremberg the most extraordinary in Germany? Every house is a history in itself; one expects every moment to see the ghosts of the old burghers of times gone by, knocking at their own doors, as if just returned from some excursion in the neighbourhood which had detained them three or four hundred years, without having in the least changed the appearance of anything they had left behind."

"Wonderful place, ma'am," replied Mr. Clark, gaining courage; "the Armed Knight, you know, does come every year, on New Year's Eve, and knocks at the Gates of Nuremberg."

"The Armed Knight!" exclaimed all his hearers.

"Yes," said Mr. Clark; "there's his effigy in that corner—where the glass painter lives—spear, and helmet, and all; and many in the town have seen him come, at twelve o'clock at night, to the great gate there with the high watch-tower, where the carriage came through—there, just where Sir Anselm and Mr. Ludwig stand now—and knock

with his truncheon, demanding to be let in—Wonderful place this—no town more!"

"He seems the Exterior Man," said Claudia, laughing, to the artist.

"Ah! Miss—young ladies may laugh," said he, "but it's true enough. Nothing happens in Nuremberg like other places." As he spoke he glanced at Clara.

"Mr. Clark has been telling us such marvels," said Clara to Sir Anselm, who joined them at this moment with the student, "you, probably, can explain to us this legend of the Spirit called the Armed Knight, who knocks at the Gates of Nuremberg once a year."

"Oh! the *Waffen-Knecht*," replied he, "is no spirit, except he personifies the spirit of liberty or power. It was a ceremony performed every year as a symbol of the power of the citizens of this Free City. A man in full armour rode up to the gates, and, knocking authoritatively, demanded admission in the name of the Emperor; to which demand it was customary to reply—That the Burghers of Nuremberg acknowledged no master. The frustrated knight then went his way, leaving the proud and powerful citizens to their triumph and their repose. But let us proceed on our exploring expedition through the most marvellous old castle in Europe."

They accordingly continued their way through several gates of great antiquity, passing antique towers, some round, some square, with overhanging crowns swelling out at the top, and watch-towers perched so as to overlook the wide expanse of country spread far beneath like a panorama. Several covered ways succeeding each other conducted to the inner court, where stood the famous linden tree, six centuries old, which Clara, in her impatience, had already seen while they were waiting for the arrival of some of the party.

All round this court are balconies—carved as they carve at Nuremberg only—from whence, in days of yore, fair eyes looked down on the feats of arms of the knights who jousted on this spot striving for their favour. A splendid stone staircase, so finely cut that it seems of lace-work, led them to the entrance hall, a low chamber supported by one huge round Saxon pillar in the centre.

The sisters flew to the windows of this room, of which there is a long range.

"Oh, come, Miss Fane! Sir Anselm, come!" exclaimed they, "oh, Mr. Clark, if you could but draw all this! it is even beyond you!—Look! the whole wonderful town is spread out beneath us, with its gable fronts running up like pyramids in all directions—what a forest of towers, and

spires, and roofs!—everyone of them odd and strange, and unlike any others that were ever beheld. How close the streets look together!—and yet they are very wide in reality—I can't believe that we can be alive in the common world looking at such strange old things. See! there's Albert Durer's house, at the corner of the Platz, but it looks even more extraordinary and ghost-like as we see it from here—what a number of stories and windows, narrowing up to one, beneath the roof, and all the roof covered with windows too!"

"You said you hated antiquities, you know," said Clara, "I did not expect these raptures from you, Claudia."

"So I do hate old things," replied she, "but Nuremberg is so very odd and *new*."

"I will show you some of the *newest* pictures you ever saw," said Sir Anselm, "let us follow the guide through these chambers, whose walls are covered with the works of those precious early masters who have taught so much."

"The gold grounds," exclaimed Claudia, "are burnished bright—you may well call them new, for they look so; but, oh! what funny stiff figures so beautifully dressed in embroidery, off which you could pick the jewels. But what amuses me most is the lovely stoves so finely adorned, and

these enormous ones in porcelain, painted in such bright colours."

"They are a peculiarity here," said Ludwig, "and are as old as the time of Maximilian, that fortunate knight who won the hand of the greatest heiress and most beautiful girl in Europe; here are some scenes of his life in these sunk medallions round this fine green porcelain stove."

"Mary of Burgundy was never in her husband's dominions, I think?" asked Clara of the student, "her career was cut short before he was Emperor."

"No," replied he, "Maximilian devoted himself altogether while she lived to rescue her possessions from the gripe of that vulture, Louis of France; but Nuremberg is, nevertheless, full of them both—the author of the famous poem that relates their loves and adventures lived and wrote here. We shall see his house in the town."

"Mary's career was a stormy one and ended just as she had learnt to be happy," said Clara.

"She loved and trusted," replied the student, "but her lover-husband might have changed in after years, therefore it was better she should die while she knew him only devoted to her."

"It was the force of circumstances that made Maximilian's character less interesting in his later than his earlier days," said Sir Anselm, "but he

would never have changed to the object of his first love. The tenderness he showed his daughter Margaret was a proof of what his heart was made of—he always leant on female support and he was not deceived in either instance."

The laughter of the young explorers, which sounded from another chamber, interrupted their conversation, and they entered a room where they found Mr. Clark examining, with an artist's eye, a most singular attempt of an early German artist to present the goddess Venus and her dangerous son in a bodily form. So grotesque are the figures, that the laugh became general as they were looked upon, to the indignation of the guide who protested that the picture was a *chef d'œuvre* of the painter. Nothing, in fact, can equal the perfection of detail, the laboured minuteness of the execution—the colour of the life-sized goddess is admirable, and every hair of her waving golden tresses seems painted separately: she is pacing along in what would seem a street, paved like the streets of Nuremberg with rough pointed stones, and might rather pass for Lady Godiva seeking for her palfrey in the court-yard. Her broad full face is perfectly German in expression and feature, and as far removed from classical beauty as possible, and her figure resembles in no point the statue that enchants the world.

"This," said Sir Anselm to Ludwig, "was, nevertheless, the ideal of the painter's fancy, on which he evidently squandered his whole mind and energies, to produce a result which conveyed no idea but of deformity to any eyes but his own."

"Except those of our guide," said Claudia, "who is closing the curtain in disgust before that squat little Cupid has had time to pierce his clumsy mamma with the arrow he aims so dexterously."

"Don't waste your time, Clark," said Sir Anselm, "getting into extasies at that Albert Durer, it is a copy, good as it is—the original was stolen and adorns the gallery of the Bavarian capital—rather hard on Nuremberg. But there is in the town a portrait painted by him of a rich burgher, the most perfect gem of early art that he ever contributed to the wonders of his native city. It has been kept by the family with such reverend care, from father to son, that it is one of the most undoubted treasures in Germany."

"But I can only laugh at German pictures," said Claudia, "they seem to have no idea of beauty out of Italy—nothing can be more faithful portraits, but one does not care for such ugly, stupid-looking people: one would rather forget

them. The very earliest Italians never paint such frightful creatures as they do here."

"You must blame nature not art for that," said the student, "Italy is the true region of that grace which Germany is always striving to attain. Those are not unbiassed judges of the old German school, who have already adored the creations of Italy's immortably poetical and harmonious sons."

"You defend your own," said Claudia, "but we are Italians, so we shall do the same—oh! Sir Anselm, don't stay looking at these odd old things any more, in spite of the Herr Ludwig, who is capable of comparing this grim old castle to charming gay Wurtemburg. I begin to get frightened, everything looks so solemn and sad in the sun-set. Don't you think, Mr. Clark, that the place is haunted?"

Mr. Clark immediately, on this suggestion, closed the sketch book to which he was transferring certain treasures from the walls, and began a bustling retreat; Clara begged his arm as they descended the steep, stony road where their carriage was left, and he gave it with a certain tremour, encreased of course by the hints of Claudia.

"Everyone knows," said he, "that Nuremberg

is full of terrible sights—one can't walk on the castle height in safety after the moon rises. Albert Durer, Adam Kraft, and Veit Stoss meet in the Platz and quarrel about their fame. They all come from the Gottesacker outside the town where they lie, and they stop at all Martin Ketsel's stations by the way, so that it isn't well to go that road after dark. Lord bless us!—it's quite awful. And as for the hotel where we stop it's no better: one might as well be in a tomb. They say Frederic Barbarossa walks there, and Wallenstein too."

Mr. Clark was certainly right as regarded the aspect of the hotel, although the first in the town there was something strangely mysterious about it; the carved staircases, numerous galleries of dark wood, the stone doorways, and low vaulted passages gave the house a mournful "auld world" effect, which oppressed the spirits.

The chamber in which Clara slept, next to a very large one occupied by the sisters, was a long passage shaped room with four high windows in it that looked to an inner court, round which extended a range of apartments that seemed unoccupied, so enormous was the building. On one side, the sluggish dark river, which runs through the town flowed sullenly, crossed immediately beyond by one of those numerous bridges

which from their frequency remind the stranger of Venice.

That night, her mind filled with recollections of the ancient castle and much that she had seen besides in Nuremburg, Clara could not sleep; a bright moonlight checkered the floor of her room with the reflection of the iron bars of the windows shaded only by very thin muslin curtains, and she could not help fixing her eyes on the forms that seemed traced there.

Finding that to attempt to rest was vain she rose, and taking a light which burned in the chimney, sought for a book to distract her attention, but she looked about in vain to discover the box in which her books were packed, when she suddenly remembered having heard the waiter desire a porter to take some of the packages into an adjoining chamber which was not used, where they would be secure during the excursion Sir Anselm proposed to make to the Franconian Switzerland, one usually made from Nuremburg, which the railroad assists.

She opened the door which led to this adjoining chamber and almost started to observe the enormous size of it. She could not see to the end, but the glitter of the moonlight on apparently innumerable casements told her it was of vast extent: she entered, impelled by curiosity,

and looked round her. There was very little furniture in the room, but, just as she steped in, a large clock with a deep tone, struck *one* in so solemn a voice that she shuddered as she listened.

Not recognising the object of her search, she advanced further and placed her hand on the lock of what she imagined to be a closet, on opening which, to her amazement she found that a room much larger than that in which she stood extended its dark walls before her. A long table occupied the centre, and high-backed chairs were drawn close to it, as if numerous guests usually occupied them. An enormous chandelier of metal, elaborately carved and ornamented, and throwing out countless branches holding sconces hung from the ceiling. A high gallery for musicians occupied one end of this hall, the iron balcony of which was carved most delicately as were the frames of the small panes of glass in the numerous windows, for Clara advanced her light close enough to these objects to perceive them clearly.

She had reached the furthest extremity of this hall and observed that over the arched doorway was a coat of arms carved in stone; she pushed the heavy wooden door, which gave way to her slight pressure, and found herself standing at the top of a small stone staircase, half way down which was a

landing place, from which a long dark passage opened. She did not feel inclined to explore further and was drawing back into the arch way when a door opposite was thrown open, and from the dark passage below, appeared two figures advancing up the steps.

She had scarcely time to dart back and close the wooden door, and ashamed of her imprudent curiosity she hurried along the dim hall, through the second chamber and reaching her own room shut and secured the door and then sat down to breathe.

It was true that the apparition she had beheld was probably no more than the figures of two travellers who had sat up late and were returning to their rooms, but she felt a strange shuddering fear for which she could not account, and repented of having been induced to attempt exploring the mysteries of the secret chambers of an hotel at Nuremberg.

No sound however told that she had been pursued or perceived, and she was beginning to compose herself to sleep, when a strain of music, as if issuing from the adjoining chamber, caused her to start and listen. The tones were those of a flute, and presently the air shaped itself, after several plaintive preludes, into onc familiar to her, and she recognised with surprise the same

which she had so often heard played by Mr. Loftus in the grove at the end of the garden at Mrs. Trumbel's. The notes died away by degrees as she listened, and the player seemed receding, till they were lost in the distance.

"It seems strange!" thought she, "but after all the air was a German Wiedersehn and might be played by any body."

Nevertheless it revived so many recollections that the image of Edmond Loftus was not banished from her mind during the night.

CHAPTER XVII.

In die Traum und Zaubersphäre
Sind wir, scheint es, eingegangen.

Faust.

The next day the travellers devoted to the churches of Nuremberg, which have this peculiarity that, although filled with chapels elaborately decorated, with altars magnificently ornamented, with crosses and shrines and every sort of Roman-catholic adornment, they are, all but one, dedicated to Protestant worship.

Into the beautiful Lorenzkirche it is difficult for the amateur to make an entrance, so instantly is he arrested by the exquisite portals whichever way he attempts to make his way, for the eastern door is unsurpassed in splendid carving, and the Bride's-porch on the north is equally seducing. Then he is dazzled by the brilliancy of the Vol-

kamer window, which shines in the sunlight and eclipses all its glowing brethren, asserting its right to be renowned as the finest in Europe. But the crowning glory of this exquisite church is a fairy pyramid, rising like a wreath of smoke waved by the wind, from the floor to the roof, as if it were vapour issuing from the vase of some genii of the earth, striving to reach to heaven above those vaulted arches.

As it rises it shapes itself into garlands of the most graceful flowers, supporting scrolls and birds, and leaves and branches, and tendrils and flames, and knots and spiral points till, the highest summit reached, it bends its graceful head with the bending arch, and looks down on the ground again as if in sorrow for being checked in its upward ascent.

The wizard who constructed this marvel and two of his assistant spirits, crouch beneath, and support the light, gossamer-looking fabric which it is impossible to believe is really carved in stone, even though Adam Kraft is there to attest it.

"Oh for a model of this lovely toy!" cried Clara; "it is more exquisite than any ivory cut by the minute instrument of an Indian graver. It look as if a breath would blows it away, or a touch destroy it, yet it is as solid as if built of iron."

"It is like the enduring love of a firm-hearted and delicate woman," said Sir Anselm, "which braves the ravages of years and time, and though it seems but slight and frail, is strong in its apparent weakness and lasts uninjured when mighty walls are crumbling round."

"There! dear Sir Anselm," said Claudia, "you are always so good to woman; but Mr. Ludwig is very severe: I know he does not think that we deserve such a compliment. Do you think he does, Miss Fane?"

Clara, thus appealed to, could only laughingly say—

"Perhaps he would rather liken us to that lovely stained window—glorious while the sun is shining on it, but, however beautiful, appearing dim and unattractive in the shade."

"You mean that women never care to show their beauties nor their attractions except there is a sun to gaze upon them," said Ludwig, rather sullenly.

"No; I mean," replied Clara, "that they require the sun of kindness and indulgence to bring out their hidden merits."

"No doubt the greatest number of the brides who entered by that gorgeous portal," returned Ludwig, "were only hoping for the sunlight to gild their hour of vanity, and were content that

dim shade should fall upon their husbands afterwards."

"You ought to have been a monk!" exclaimed Claudia, pettishly.

"You are impressed with the recollection of poor Albert Dürer's ill-fortune, I suspect," said Sir Anselm, "whose shrew of a wife is said to have worried him to death, though, like old Pepys, she is the heroine of his curious journal, and he seems to have paid her every sort of attention and exacted it for her from others."

"How beautiful this stone pulpit is!" exclaimed Claudia; "is that done by that dear old Kraft, too?"

"No," said Sir Anselm; "it is by a modern artist of the town, for though the great commerce of Nuremberg is gone, and her glory strangely departed, genius revives occasionally in her atmosphere, and one sees better carving here than in any town in Europe adorned by modern hands."

"Oh yes!" said Claudia; "the little Gansmann in the market-place is modern, too, and he is quite a gem, holding his two geese under his arm, and wherever you turn you may see beautiful figures at the corner of the streets one would give the world to take down and carry away. But of all those things I should delight to run off

with the Schöner Brunnen, in the great platz; it is quite a shame one can't buy these things."

"There is but one such in the world, you know," said Sir Anselm; "you must not carry them away as patriotic travellers and savans do the monuments of Greece and Egypt, and stick them up in a fashionable square. You will be equally covetous of Peter Fischer's Shrine in St. Sibald's when you see it, for that is another wonder, and I will then show you a treasure at the banker Mirkel's, which I fancy it will be dangerous for him to allow you to behold."

The unapproachable shrine, as delicately worked in bronze by Fischer as the Sacrements Haüslein by Kraft, standing in the centre of the choir of St. Sibald's, does indeed invite an *enlèvement*, if there were any airy spirits who could be engaged in the service, for a more etherial structure was never imagined by man or executed by mortal hands. The fame of the great and humble artists of both these chef d'œuvres was their reward: they each devoted a whole life of patient labour to produce marvels like these for the love of art itself, and the hope that the devotion which kindled their spirits would meet its due appreciation in a world to come.

"If men could live as simply as these excellent and patient and single-minded artists," said Sir

Anselm, "the present age would not, perhaps, want works of equal value; but the artists of our day work for gain, not for fame: they wish to enjoy the present and leave the future to destiny. As one race after another of modern artists are swept away, we are obliged to fall back on those of a period long past, sighing to think that art has advanced no jot since those early times. Few pupils have taken their master's places—our painters and sculptors are both too rich and too poor."

It was their last day in Nuremberg when the whole party sallied forth from their hotel on the banks of the dark and muddy Pegnitz, whose swollen waters sometimes mount high along the walls of the crowding houses, which rise in colossal dimensions on either side of the stream. They walked up the rugged street till they reached the abode of the courteous banker whose domicile alone is one of the curiosities of the curious city, although by no means so fine a specimen of its original and ponderous architecture as many others, more difficult however of access.

Long dark staircases, with rich balustrades, dim, low passages of dark wood pannelling conduct to numerous floors containing almost countless chambers: to the very highest flat did the good-natured banker conduct his guest—the more expe-

rienced amongst them wondering at the possibility of a man of business sparing so much time to satisfy the curiosity of idle strangers, and the rest tripping along the dark corridors and pausing at length before a heavy wicket of wooden lattice-work, which defended the approach to a long, low chamber in which a store of treasures is collected—

"Able to draw men's envy upon man."

Here are portfolios full of original engravings of Albert Dürer, his *chef d'œuvres,* in which all the glory of his knowledge is displayed—the same etching exhibited in half-a-dozen stages till the great end is attained and the wonderous master stands confest.

But while Clark was busy pouring over some of these gems and the rest were turning the leaves of invaluable books, where the marvellous execution of Albert Dürer's famous Fortune, a fat divinity, copied from his passionate but rather handsome wife, was exciting their admiration, a scream of delight from the other side of a long table where they were engaged, drew them to the spot where Claudia and Sybilla were standing with the banker who, with much ceremony and a happy and satisfied expression of countenance, was lifting from a large case a

beautiful gold and silver ornament the pride not only of his collection, but of his native town, and not only of Nuremberg, but of all Germany.

This was the far famed piece of workmanship of Wenzel Jamitzer, in which all that can be conceived of delicacy and grace seems concentered. A golden figure of Fortune stands supporting a covered cup, herself supported on a pedestal of leaves and flowers, every fibre and curl of which seem worked by nature herself. Minute insects climb amongst the delicate feathery grasses, some wrought in silver, some in gold, of hair's-breadth texture, of spider's-web thinness.

"Oh, what perfection!" cried Claudia; "look at the little flies and beetles clinging to the small leaves, and the tiny tortoises concealed beneath. Look at the miniature heads amongst the scrolls round the cup—the hair-bells and moss, and almost invisible buds, all finished as if with a microscope. A fairy must have done this—not that venerable-looking old man with a long white beard—impossible!"

"You are not the first who has considered this perfection, young lady," said the banker; "many of your country come here, and all go away in extacies. I have been offered an English fortune to part with it: my father bought it of the town when Nuremberg ceased to be a free

city and most of its treasures past away from its walls—more's the pity. Everything is carried off to Munich now, so we are the more proud of those few that remain to us."

It was not to be wondered at that Clara, instead of sleeping that night sat recording the beauties of this mysteriously precious vase, unrivalled in Europe.

It was to Miss Clinton that she sent her account with its explanatory preface, for she, with the pardonable weakness of a professor of the gentle science, felt sure of her sympathy and was confident of arresting her attention to the verses she hazarded. She kept the secret of her poetical propensities, knowing that a poet seldom gains golden opinions from friends in immediate vicinity.

"THE LOST BELL AND THE MARVEL OF NUREMBERG.

"In the mythology of fairies exists a belief that there are certain 'underground people,' the most innocent and beautiful of their race, whose sole employment, *in winter*, is fashioning works of gold and silver, the texture of which is too delicate for mortal eyes to discern. They appear, in the fine days of summer, in shady places, and wear little bells on their caps, which, should they have the misfortune to lose, they are in great

tribulation, as they are banished from their fairy homes till the lost treasure is found. The tinkling, rustling sounds, which mortals sometimes hear in the woods in summer and think proceed from the bills of birds, are caused by these invisible bells; and the soft sighs, which are imagined to be created by the wind, are no other than the lamentations of the little fairies who have lost their bells.

"No nest, amidst the highest trees,
No flower-cup, trembling in the breeze,
No shady nook, no dusky dell,
But I have sought to find my bell!
The birds have paused amidst their song,
To hear how I have wandered long;
The flowers have wept to hear me tell
How I have striven to find my bell!
Oh fatal hour! when from the earth
We leaped with dancing glee and mirth,
And round the giant's graves at night
We whirled our circles of delight:
The stars stooped from their clouds on high,
And lighted up our revelry.
How gallant was our quaint array!
Our caps, with bells that rung so gay,
Our doublets of ripe berries' hues,
Our flaunting cloaks, and crystal shoes,
Our bright, clear eyes, and floating hair,
And little feet, as rose leaves fair,
That lightly pressed the thymy heath,
Which welcomed us with perfumed breath.
The dews gleamed in the glow-worm's ray,
And still we danced till dawn of day;
But, when the revels all were done,
I stood beside our hill—alone!

I saw my beck'ning comrades flee,
But ah! the caves were closed to me;
My grief—my terror, who shall tell!
Fled was my power— and lost my bell!
No more my sports may I renew,
No more my fairy dwelling view,
No more the secret caves explore,
Where diamonds light the precious ore,
Where rainbow-opals gleam around,
And crystal strews the sparkling ground.
All rest, all sleep I must resign,
Till once again the bell be mine!
On heavy earth, in day's broad glare,
My life must pass in mortal care—
I, who at eve and moonlight gay,
Came but for sport, and then away!
The sun is hot—its rays are flame,
The winds are harsh and chill my frame,
I was not formed on earth to dwell—
Oh, mortals, have ye found my bell?
Ye may have plucked it in some bud,
Ye may have fished it from the flood,
Or seen it in the wild bee's nest,
Or mark'd it where the swallows rest:
Oh, rare and rich the prize shall be
Of him who brings that bell to me:
None can the fairies' work excel;
And I will work to gain my bell.
From that good hour his mortal hand
The fairies' skill shall understand;
Then in the world his fame shall rise;
And mortals gaze in charmed surprise,
At gold and silver wrought so fine,
As though we worked it in the mine,
Where, when the earth is white with snow,
We labour, by our fires, below.
I'll give him patterns of our art,
To please his eye and glad his heart;

I'll weave, in silver, webs so light
Their lines shall dazzle human sight,
And mortal eye can scarcely trace
The meshes of that shadowy lace:
All stars that spangle ether's face
Shall crowd within a narrow space,
The mote that haunts the sun alone
A spot so small can rest upon;
And chains as delicately thin
As the soft thread that silkworms spin;
And cups in whose frail round shall be
Graved all the forms of earth and sea—
The smallest insect of the field,
All grasses that the meadows yield,
Each feathery spire, each forked head,—
The golden dust upon them spread,
Till metal wonders shall be known
More beautiful than Nature's own:
All this, and more the gift shall swell,
Of him who gives me back my bell!"

* * * * *

The fairy's bell a mortal found,
And bore it to that charmed ground
Where, 'midst Franconia's mountain dells,
A little world of beauty dwells—
Sought only by the curious eye—
The Eden of fair Germany.
The grateful faries granted then
A gift before unknown to men:
For Jamchid's wondrous vase of price
Was formed by art in Paradise;
Jamitzer's cup, by magic wrought,
Reveals by whom his skill was taught;
And ancient Nuremberg can tell
What hand restored the fairy's bell.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Will you grant with me,
That Ferdinand is drowned?

Tempest.

Clara was not a little amused while they were wandering in the lovely vallies of the Franconian Switzerland, that Paradise within a few hours of Nuremberg, where they spent some days, to hear Mr. Clark relate a vision with which he had been visited at the inn they had quitted.

He recounted that he was talking to a person belonging to the hotel till it was rather late at night, and had heard a great deal about the apparitions which were known to haunt that very spot. For tradition, said that Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden had lodged in that inn when he was defending himself against the attacks of Wallenstein, and when both armies suffered so fearfully from famine, that thirty thousand of his followers perished within the walls in a few weeks.

"And are all these thirty thousand people supposed to revisit the scenes of their sufferings?" asked Clara.

Mr. Clark replied, gravely, that he believed not all, but a good many of those who could not find burial did, and might be seen on the ramparts of the castle at midnight.

"But both Wallenstein and Gustavus haunt that very hotel," said he, "for it was there they had a conference; a spirit, it seems, appeared to Wallenstein and offered to guide him into the town by a subterranean way, which ran for miles out into the country close to his camp. He agreed to go and to meet Gustavus in the little tower which, you may remember, hangs over the river. The spirit went before him through the dark passage, holding a torch which shone so brightly that he saw as clear as if it had been day till at last he arrived at the great banquet hall, where the Swedish king was sitting alone at a table with a flagon of beer before him and some dice.

"They had a long talk together about their armies, and at last Gustavus asked Wallenstein to pledge him in some Bavarian beer, which he consented to do, when, growing familiar, they began to throw the dice, and the spirit who had stood near them all the time and kept filling up their

glasses as soon as they were empty, offered to join with them in their chance. They soon got all three very warm on the subject, and at last the spirit proposed that they should throw for the two armies.

"'You may throw for their bodies,' said the spirit, 'and I will throw for their souls.'

"They did so and the spirit won the stake.

"Both commanders were very much frightened at this, and repented having neglected their important affairs for a match at dice. There was nothing now for it but for Wallenstein to go back to his camp, which he did, guided as before, and the next day Gustavus sallied forth and attacked him.

"The Imperial general lost almost as many men as the Swede, and the evil spirit is said to be always wandering about this place, claiming the souls which the priests try to keep from him; but as there are so many Protestant churches in Nuremberg, they have a great deal of trouble to manage it.

"At one o'clock at night, the spirit is often seen walking from the great banquet room and descending the stairs of the little round tower, which lead to the subterraneous passage, which cannot now be found."

"And did you see the spirit?" asked Clara.

"That's what I'm coming to," said Mr. Clark, "frightful business, ma'am—my friend and I had talked so late that it was near one o'clock, and I confess I did not care to go wandering about that great rambling place alone, all the way from the coffee room to my bed chamber, which was unluckily just opposite the very suite of rooms where the banquet hall is still. So he agreed to show me to it, when just as we had got to the small staircase we saw, as plainly as I see you now, ma'am, the spirit itself, dressed in black, holding a light, standing at the entrance doorway of those very rooms. It was quite awful—we were struck dumb and stood looking at it, when it suddenly vanished and we got away as quick as we could.

"I havn't had a good night's rest since we've been in that den of a place," added he, "and I hope we shan't stay there again; for it's a perfect nest of spirits of one sort and another."

"Did you ever hear music at that hour?" asked Clara.

"Did you, ma'am?" was the scared reply, "because they say, there's a ghost with a flute haunts one of the courts."

"He plays very well too," said Clara, laughing, "but his *time* is not good—for he disturbs drowsy

hearers with his melody who would rather be asleep."

"Ah! I see you don't believe these things," said Mr. Clark, reproachfully; "but I saw it with my own eyes."

"I cannot doubt you," replied Clara, "and if I had been returning to my room so late and met two men wandering about the staircase, I should have been frightened too."

In all Germany there is no more beautiful spot than the series of vallies which extend between Streitberg and Bairouth, in the region called the Frankische Schweitz. The picturesque heights are crowned with the ruins of feudal castles as numerous as those on the banks of the Rhine, and the clear winding silver stream of the Wesent runs cheerfully along the wide vallies, in the centre of which lie charming villages perfectly Arcadian in their character. The peasantry are a handsome and healthy race, and their costume is pretty and formed of glowing colours.

This is the district celebrated for its mysterious caverns, where geologists disintomb the bones of fabulous creatures and bring to light wonders never dreamt of in the days when every cave was peopled by

"Der drachen's alte brut."

Rambles on foot, from the charming little inn at Steitberg, close under the wild ruins of the old castle, are interesting beyond description, and climbing expeditions amongst decayed watch-towers, which stand perched on the highest points of almost perpendicular rocks, are extremely exciting.

Day after day the party was induced to linger in these charming solitudes, where even Lady Seymour sometimes accompanied them, though she generally preferred remaining at the inn to write letters, and as the view from thence was exquisite and she could enjoy it without fatigue, she was certainly not to be blamed. Nevertheless, the more adventurous wanderers enjoyed their strolls extremely amongst the ruins of the Castle of Niedeck, which stands perched on a rocky mountain overlooking the beautiful valley.

There they would sometimes remain for hours in woody walks which look as if the hand of art had fashioned them, where bowers and shady seats occur at every turn of the easy road, from whence fine views of the open country beneath break forth.

In small grassy theatres they would sit and converse, Clara leading as much as she could the minds of her pupils to dwell on themes she thought would spiritualize their minds, alive to all

of beauty in nature and art, but hitherto allowed to run into wilderness for want of culture.

The conversation of Sir Anselm was always pleasing to them, and they would listen with patience even to his gravest discourse. The Student they generally found too serious; but occasionally, although he spoke but little, they drew him into animated discussions: he spoke principally in German, which they were labouring hard to understand, and they were content to let him instruct them in their own way by reciting verses which they made Clara explain and translate.

This was one of their great occupations in the Franconia Switzerland, and here they loved to hear the Student's version of the wild songs of the people of the Ukraine, amongst whom he had sojourned for some time, and imbued his mind with their lore. The lays he would sometimes accompany with his voice, which was deep and sweet, and as the melody of the combination had peculiar charms for Sir Anselm, Ludwig, who seemed attached to him by some ties of former friendship, was happy when he could indulge his dreamy fancy with the songs of the Cossacks, and engage Clara to keep pace with him in explaining them in English verse.

Before Clara left Nuremberg she had done as

all English travellers do with anxious care, sent to the post-office for letters. She found several, all of which interested her extremely. Mrs. Fowler sent her news of Llangollen, and wrote in the most affectionate and encouraging manner. She informed her that her nurse, Susey Love, was going on very prosperously, and that her husband had given up the idea of going to sea again, so that they would be able to enjoy the fruits of their industry and perseverance, having taken a neat house at Birkenhead, where they seemed very snug and happy.

"Beloved child," said Mrs. Fowler, in her letter, "I have no fears for you—you have ever been remarkable for rectitude of conduct and purity of feeling, and I am sure have so much delicacy of mind that it would be impossible for you to make a wrong choice. You tell me you cannot help feeling a preference for Mr. Loftus, but this does not make me uneasy: if he shows himself unworthy of your purity and just feeling of duty, I know you too well to fear that you will listen to your heart rather than your judgment. All deception is wrong; and they who mistrust are seldom without fault themselves. You must not allow your fancy and imagination too much power; they are a blessing and a resource, but may become dangerous if not kept in check by good

sense—but that you have, and will regulate those wild companions of your reason as you seem to be doing to your interesting pupils. I do not like their father at all; but he shows himself for what he is, and cannot be dangerous to you. Sir Anselm I am disposed to trust in, in spite of the weakness which led him to humour Mrs. Trillett's follies. You will be able to observe his character more closely as you proceed on your journey."

"Why is she not my mother!" exclaimed Clara as she kissed the letter; "I feel the affection of a daughter to her, yet I have no legitimate right to do so. This is one of the hardships of my life, to have no natural ties."

Miss Clinton wrote from Derbyshire in the most affectionate strain. She mentioned Mr. Loftus only as having left England, and that they had not heard of him since his departure.

From Maria Spicer she received the following letter—

"I have been very ill since you left London, and all brought on partly by a fright I had and partly in consequence of catching a bad cold. I continued to receive letters from dear William, which his mother, who must be a very amiable old lady, sent me herself from Derbyshire: she wrote and said her son had praised me so and that you had said so much in my favour, that she

felt quite glad William had chosen me for his wife. Dear Miss Fane, how can I thank you enough for your good opinion, and for the great benefit it will be of to us!

"This made me as happy as possible, and I began to think that all was sure to answer with us, and made up my mind directly William came back to pursuade him to set up in business some where, as his mother says she wishes too, and then we can marry and have no more uneasiness. You know I am not like some people who are engaged, afraid he will ever change or care less for me. I trust him entirely because I am sure, loving him as he knows I do, he cannot help being just as fond of me as I am of him, besides he always says so, and I believed every word he said from the beginning.

"Well, I cannot tell you how comfortable I felt, when one day old Mr. Sawyer called; he very seldom used to—and since that affair of Celia he never had been near. He came in and sat down, and looked, we thought, very pale and bad, but he said he was very well. He was always a spiteful kind of a man, and 'ma says, when poor 'pa was alive, was very ill-natured to him and always envious and jealous, particularly about Celia and me, because he thought her the prettiest, which of course she was, but 'ma didn't like him to say so.

"'Ma was very kind to him and made him drink a glass of wine, because, though she did not like him, she wanted to seem kinder now that he had had trouble. He drank the wine and seemed in better spirits, and then all of a sudden began to talk of Celia.

"'Well,' he said, 'she hasn't made so bad a business of it after all, as folks wanted to make out. She's got a beautiful house and furniture and a fine carriage, and has plenty of money to spend and give to her friends. I'm going there to dine to-day and mean to be jolly. She's living with a great man, who doesn't think gold too good for her to eat.'

"'But,' said 'ma, 'good gracious! she isn't married to him!'

"'Suppose she aint,' said he, 'she's as much married as a good many, and can provide for her father too; after all it is all nonsense about that, so long as one has one's pockets full.'

"And he began to laugh just as if he wasn't in his right mind: suddenly he looked at me and said—

"'Well, Maria, I thought to see you all in the dolefuls about young Wybrow; but girls are all alike—out of sight out of mind. I thought you were to have been married to him, though he wasn't much better than a beggar.'

"'Ma answered very sharp, but I made a sign to her not to be angry, for I thought the wine had got into his head, and he did not quite know what he was saying; but he went on.

"'Ticklish work that sailing about amongst aligators and rhinoceroses—I never expected it would come to good, no more it has, you see. I could have told him what would happen, but he was an obstinate chap and as proud as a peacock—my Celia used to say she'd show him other folks had better taste than he had, as conceited as he was.'

"He went on muttering to himself and I got quite frightened thinking he was flighty, when suddenly he turned round and looked me full in the face and laughed.

"'Well,' he said, 'you're a sensible girl, Maria, and not such a yea nay fool as I took you for. After all I dare say you aint sorry to be rid of him—there's as good lovers as he to be got any day.'

"I answered, because I thought he seemed to be waiting for me to say something.

"'Whether Mr. Wybrow is here or abroad, it can make no difference in our regard for each other. I look upon him as my husband already, and it is of no use now, Mr. Sawyer, to say any-

thing against him, for you must know it can't be agreeable to me.'

"'Oh, no,' he replied in a scornful way, and with such a spiteful look that it made me shudder, 'oh, no; we won't speak ill of the dead—why should we?—they can't harm us, except their ghosts come back to frighten us.'

"'What do you mean?' cried 'ma, who did not like his odd manner any more than I did.

"'Mean!' exclaimed he; 'why you seem as if you didn't know the news.'

"'What news?' said we, both together, for a dreadful thought came into my mind.

"'Why, about that boat upset on the Nile,' said he, 'what all the papers are telling about. I suppose, as Wybrow was of the party, he went to the bottom with the rest, and no great loss either.'

"I heard those words he spoke, but after that I did not know what happened. 'Ma say that I turned deadly pale and then crimson, and that I started up from the floor as if I had been shot, and fell down again without a word or a cry and when she lifted me up I was covered with blood. She was dreadfully frightened, for she thought me dead, as I remained insensible for some time, and after I was put to bed I continued ill for a

long time. This is the reason of my long silence, for I have been too weak to hold a pen.

"When I got a little better the remembrance of Mr. Sawyer's sad news came back to my mind, but I was so confused that I thought it all a dream. 'Ma persuaded me that it really was so for some time, and then I used to have other dreams, so beautiful and so curious, that I never felt so happy in my life. I thought William and I were always walking and sitting about by the side of a bright, clear river, covered with little boats filled with flowers, in which sat lovely children with wings, who sang the sweetest songs that ever were heard, and 'ma says I often sang airs myself while I was dreaming, and she never knew me sing so well when I was awake.

"At last I recovered, and then she told me the truth and gave me letters from dear William, in which he related all about the accident on the Nile, which had really taken place, but he was not in the boat which was upset, only it happened to some of his friends.

"It seems that cruel, wicked old man, Sawyer, knew well enough how it was, for the account in the papers particularly mentioned that no lives were lost, and the news had been sent by one of the party on board the boat which met with the accident. William had written directly in order

to prevent my being frightened if we happened to hear it named, and little thought how much I should suffer.

"Mr. Sawyer said he was sorry when he found how ill I was; but he must have done it on purpose to alarm and make us unhappy: it is very strange that people can be so unkind, and I can hardly believe he would have done it if he had been in his right mind. Don't you think when persons are wicked it must be an evil spirit who gets the better of them for the time? I know we are all born evil, and must try to subdue what is wrong in us, but I cannot understand why some are so much worse than others. Celia was always like this, when she was a child, and delighted to say and do things to distress others, for fun, as she said; but I never could see any amusement in it: she was not liked for this reason, but I used to take her part because I was fond of her, and thought she would mend. I am afraid I have a bad judgment, for she has quite deceived me. I shall always depend in future on dear William who, though he is so amiable himself, sees character much quicker than I do, and does not think every one good, as I am too apt to do.

"Well, you will think my story will never come to an end.

"I had got pretty well except a pain in my

side and shortness of breath, and I felt quite happy and content in the expectation of dear Wybrow's return, and in the extreme kindness of his mother, who had come up from the country to see me while I was so very ill, and continued to write me the most affectionate letters, when one night we were waked up by a cry of fire in the street, and starting from our beds flew to the window and saw the whole street in a blaze of light. There was a cry of fire, and it turned out that Mr. Sawyer's house was in flames.

"We were very much frightened, and the night being damp and our windows and doors all open, I caught a bad cold with standing in the draught. We thought every moment our house would catch, but the engines came and the fire, after a time, was got under; however, Mr. Sawyer's premises were quite destroyed. A very shocking thing has come out since. It seems that Mr. Sawyer, was insured to a large amount, and it has been proved that he set his place on fire himself, in order to get the money. He is at this moment in prison for the crime, and it will go very hard with him.

"I cannot help blaming Celia for all, for though he pretended not to care for her conduct and bragged of her grand doings, yet I am sure his pride was hurt and he fretted a great deal, for

he has been a changed man since she left and has taken to drinking: everyone speaks ill of him, but I pity him very much although he is to blame. What will be Celia's feelings when she hears what has happened! I dare say she will repent, and come back to her poor father in prison.

"It makes me unhappy when I think of it, but I have everything on my own account to cheer me, for I have reason to hope that dear William will come back sooner than we originally expected, and he says this shall be his last journey of the kind. He means to write his travels and publish a book, which will bring a good deal of money. I shall be so proud of his being an author! and I am certain it will be the best book that ever was written.

"We shall then settle down quietly for the rest of our lives and be so happy! and then you must come and see us, you and his mother will be just suited to each other and she is to live near us, for Mr. Loftus, who is the best friend in the world to William, promises to do all in his power to get him on in his profession."

There was much more in Maria's epistle breathing the same spirit of happy expectation, and she concluded by saying that her health was

daily improving and everyone said she had never looked so well in her life.

Clara was extremely satisfied, on the whole, with her account of herself, and dwelt with pleasure on the peaceful prospects which seemed spreading out before the amiable and interesting young lovers.

CHAPTER XIX.

> Nun kam ich auch Tag aus, Tag ein,
> Es ging uns beiden durch den Sinn:
> Bei Regen und bei Sonnenschein
> Schwand bald der Sommer uns dahin.
>
> *Chamisso.*

AGAIN and again did Clara and her party visit the scenery of the Franconian Switzerland with the same pleasure, always accompanied by the student Ludwig, who, although he did not grow in favour with the young ladies, had something in his grave quiet manner which pleased Clara.

She was fond of leading him to converse on the subject of German life and literature, and was delighted with his readiness to afford her instruction: he appeared to possess a singular facility in languages and understood English perfectly, although his timidity prevented him from trusting himself to converse in that tongue.

His ideas were somewhat wild and overstrained

respecting the rights of his countrymen, and his theories partook of the romantic style of the youth of his class, but he expressed none of the dangerous opinions on religious matters common to German reformers; on the contrary he seemed anxious to awaken a better feeling in the country and to engage his fellow students in the love of literature rather than in the indulgence of political and religious visions.

He had travelled much in Russia, chiefly with a view of collecting a knowledge of the manners of the people, and Clara amused herself in listening to his versions of the ballads he had picked up in his wanderings.

The letters of Clara to Miss Clinton were full of him, and the wild lore he imparted.

"This Herr Ludwig," she said, "interests me singularly although he is a strange person, and the rest of the party do not enjoy his society as I do: he consequently avoids them and generally attaches himself to me in our rambles. I fear you will think me very visionary when I tell you that I cannot divest myself of a notion that the tone of his voice is not unfamiliar to my ear, yet that we never met before is as certain as that he has never been in England. His life appears to have been passed in wandering over lands unknown, and the distant parts of Russia are familiar

to him. I delight in listening to his German versions of the songs of the Kosacks, amongst whom exists a poetical feeling of which I never suspected them.

"I send you a few translations of my own, but, of course, they suffer much in the transfer from the original to two other languages—but you shall have Herr Ludwig's version also, in order to approach nearer to their first simplicity.

"I must explain to you that these songs are sung in those wild *steppes* where the Kosack and his family lead their wandering lives: there is nothing oriental in their character, but, as you see, much beauty and tenderness in the simple images they present. Occasionally touches of deep feeling render them highly poetical, and their wildness and dreaminess are sometimes very startling. This singular people, impatient of control and delighting in all the freedom which predatory habits allow, place their shifting habitations between the Don and Dneiper, and, regardless of the comforts and conveniences of refined and sophisticated life, enjoy an independance which they are usually obliged to secure with their own lances. The plunder of a caravan and the attack on a party of travellers was formerly looked upon by them as a part of their occupation, and it must be confessed that their ideas of

justice are still rather peculiar. Their hand, in fact, is against every man and equally is the hand of every man against them, either for attack or defence, for, though greatly subdued of late years, the inhabitant of the Ukraine is still a wholly untameable being.

"The theme of their lays is generally mournful: alluding to the parting of lovers, the separation of near relations, and the sad accidents of war. In all of these there is remarkable tenderness exhibited, and a delicacy scarcely to be anticipated in so rude a state of society. Nature, however, whether rude or cultivated, cannot be changed, and fine spirits are touched to fine issues in every country and in every position.

"A people who can delight in such songs as these cannot be looked upon as mere savages or as incapable of improvement, and, in the present *animated* state of Europe, any outbreak of such a nation against real or supposed oppression may well be expected.

"Female influence is evident throughout these lays, and a chivalric tone predominates. Is not the following an instance?—

LAMENT OF A SISTER TO HER ABSENT BROTHER.

It is not the blue Cuckoo, the dark woods among
Where the branches are waving, that sways to and fro,
Nor the small bird that wakes in the garden his song,—
But a sister her brother lamenting in woe.

Her eyes with tears flow over,
She calls to him in vain :
'Oh, brother!—oh, my dear one,
Bright Falcon!*—come again,
Come, whence thou rov'st in lands remote and drear,
That in my hour of need thou may'st be near.'

The brother is here supposed to answer, and the dialogue goes on—

'Dearest sister, gentle dove,
Mourn not in thy lonely home,
I would fain be near thee, love,
But, alas! I cannot come!
Dark the woods,
The deserts wide,
Streaming floods,
Us two divide."

The sister continues—

'Take, like a falcon, through the woods thy flight,
Swim, like a white swan, through the waters bright,
Haste o'er the *steppe* as runs the rapid quail,
Come to the cot, on dove's wings shalt thou sail.
Speak words of comfort to me!
Banish my grief and let not woe subdue me!
The maids from church on Sundays crowd,
Like bees their voices humming loud,
They give the feast,
They press the guest,
All blest!
But I—deserted one—none thinks on me—
Who once was first where dance and song might be.

* This symbol is frequently introduced in their songs to express a young warrior.

They prized and loved me in that day,
But sorrow since has been my share,
All—all my friends now shrink away
And I am left in my despair!'

"Superstitious allusions are frequent in these songs, and scarcely a bird or flower but is supposed to possess some mysterious property and is invoked to give due effect to the line. The cuckoo is a favourite, for her song is thought prophetic, and the cry of the quail can be explained by the initiated into extraordinary meaning. The flight of the swallow and the starling have great significance, the wood anemone, that

'Sanguine flower inscribed with woe,'

can disclose the secrets of futurity, and the actions of the horse bode good or evil according to certain circumstances.

"The latter belief is exemplified in the fears and uncertainty of a departing warrior, whose mother and betrothed are taking leave of him on the eve of his departure for battle.

The march and countermarch to tell
A fife at midnight Mary hears,
'Tis the Kosack's she knows full well,
She starts—her bright eyes stream with tears.

'Oh, weep not, sigh not so, dear love,
Pray, Mary dearest, pray for me,
To Heaven send up thy pray'rs, dear love,
I cannot bear thy grief to see.'

When the sun sunk and above there shone
The moon so silvery clear,
The mother and her departing son
Came forth with many a tear.

'Farewell, my heart's best love, my son—
Not long away remain,
And when four weeks are past and gone,
Come to thy home again.'

'Oh, I would fain come back, and pray
That such may be my fate:
But my black steed stumbled on the way,
As I pass'd through the gate.*
God knows if I again shall see
My friends and cherish'd home—
Dear Mother, take my Mary with thee,
And let her thy child become.
Take my maiden—and trust we still,
In God's hand are we all;
I may return, or my doom fulfil
In a foreign land to fall.'

'Oh, I will take thy Mary, my son,
For her have little heed,
And she will love me as thou hast done,
And I will love her indeed.'

'Oh, mother dearest, dry thy tears,
For me no longer mourn:
See, where my swift steed paws the ground,†
Yes—I shall soon return!'

"The following, on the same familiar subject, the departure of a young soldier from his family,

* An evil omen.

† A good omen which destroys the other evil one.

is very touching in its details and its mournful close.

The wild wind roars in the oak-wood loud,
  The mist spreads over the mead;
The mother calls to her wayward son,
  'Go—if thou wilt not heed:—
Let the Turk take thee if he may,
Since from thy mother thou wilt away.'

'No, mother, no, 'tis liker far
I shall win the Turk's fleet steed in war.'

The eldest sister his horse has brought,
  The second his lance and sword:
But the youngest to her brother dear,
  Spoke softly a parting word.
'Brother, when from the battle plain,
Wilt thou to our home return again?'

'Sow a handful of earth, I pray,
  Behind yon stone, my sister dear,
And ev'ry day at sunrise go,
  When the morning rises clear:
Wet the earth with thy falling tears,
  And when a blossom thou shalt see,
Thy brother from the battle field
  Shall come once more to his home and thee.'

* * * *

'Tis loud—'tis wild in the dark oak-wood,
  The mist is rising along the mead,
The mother is calling her absent son:
  'Come back!—there is danger, my son, take heed!
Come back! let me comb out thy long bright hair.'

'Oh, mother, the thorn-bushes hold it fast,—
  The storm howls around and the tempests tear,
And 'tis wet in the rain of the wintry blast!'

"The poor young warrior is supposed to have been killed, and it is his spirit which answers to his mother's wail.

"Another very wild and solemn scene is presented to the mind by the picture of a dying soldier stretched on the wide waste without a friend near to receive his last sigh, as he apostrophises the eagle who is watching to pounce upon him as soon as the breath shall have left his body; and there is a fierce irony in the allusion to the reward his valour has found which betrays feelings of no little bitterness for the neglect his services have met with.

The wind howls loud—the long grass sighs,
  The poor Kosack is chill and pale,
His head on the waving branches lies
  His eyes the green leaves veil.
On the ground beside him is his lance,
  His black horse at his feet is prone:
And at his head, with watchful glance,
  A dark grey eagle sits alone.
He guards the young Kosack with care,
On his head he perches, amidst his hair.

The dying man speaks to the eagle grey:
  'Eagle, my brother thou art I ween.
Now, ere thou beginnest to make thy prey
  Of my two eyes with thy beak so keen,
Fly to my mother, oh speed to her fast,
  And bid her sorrows be o'er:

Say, of her son thou hast seen the last,
  And he will return no more.
And when she asks thee how it befel,
To my mother, oh eagle! the tidings tell;

That her son has fall'n by a foeman's hand,
As he fought with the Khan of Tartarland;
That his service has won him a noble bride,
For his death-bed is made on the desert wide!'

"The strain that follows is full of tender grace; it is supposed to be sung by a forsaken maiden.

There came a cuckoo from afar,
  He flew o'er hill and wood,
A feather from his soaring wing,
  Fell in the Danube's flood.
Oh! like the variegated plume
  That down the stream is gone,
My life glides in a foreign land
  Forsaken and alone.
I linger on, as floats the leaf
  Along the wand'ring wave.
Go! wherefore do I keep the ring,
  The gold ring that he gave!

"This is another, on the same subject, possessing much originality—

A hop-vine grew in a garden lone,
  On the ground its branches trailed:
A maid sat weeping bitterly,
  And of faithless man bewailed.

Oh say, thou green and blossoming vine,
Why cling not thy wreaths above ?—
Oh young and gentle maiden tell
Why thou weepest for fate and love ?

Can the hop-plant twine in air on high,
When no prop her tendrils stayed ?—
Can the maidens eyes with joy be bright
By her false Kosack betrayed !

"In the following, the fatal longing for the Fatherland is shown as entertained by the child of the steppe as much as by the Swiss or the Exile of Erin—

By the river bends the plane-tree
O'er the waves that flow ;
Sadly the Kosack is mourning,
And his heart is woe.

Sink not, boughs, beneath the water,
Ye are fresh and fair ;
Young Kosack be light and cheerful,
Time will end thy care.

But the tree will die that slowly
Waters undermine,
And the young Kosack so pensive,
In his grief will pine.

Ride afar, where lance and arrow
Point to battle's fray,
Spur far hence thy coal black charger
Nor in Russia stay.

Still in Russia does he linger,
Mourning, as of yore,
And the Ukraine, loved so dearly,
He shall see no more.

Faint and dying, thus he murmured—
 'Here my grave prepare!'
Many a shrub grew round its bosom,
 Full of berries rare.

Birds the ruddy clusters seeking,
 To that grave would come;
Telling as they swayed the branches,
 Tidings from his home.

"In this wild *morceau*, which is the last I dare ask you to read, several superstitions are made serviceable, both the occult voice of the mysterious bird and the inscribed flower and its properties—

The old witch cries with a voice of wail,
As calls on the island the mournful quail:
The young girl plucks the anemone flower,
And seeks the witch at the evening hour.

Maiden—What tells the blossom so white and red,
Is my Kosack alive or dead?

Witch—The flower in the wild wood grows fair and free,
Who plucks it has sorrow—there's sorrow for thee.
Dry thy tears, maiden, weep not nor rave,
Thou canst not wake Ivan in yonder cold grave."

END OF VOL. II.

W. Ostell, Printer, Hart Street, Bloomsbury; and Burlington Mews, Regent Street.

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