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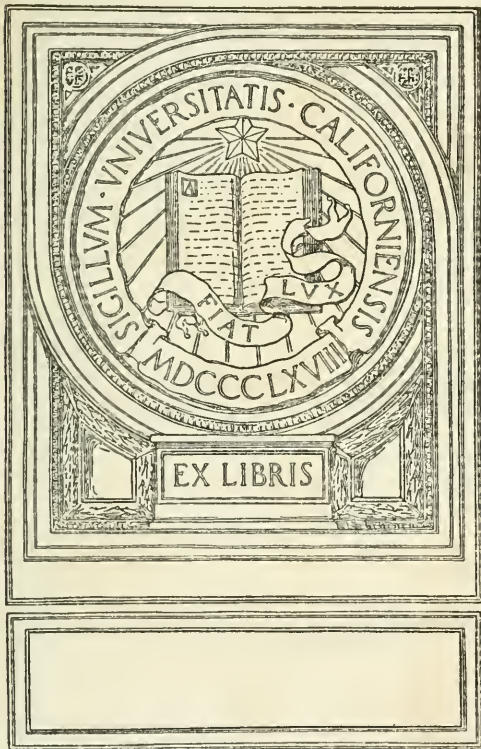




HENRY BATCHELLOR INMAN, M.A.

Bathurstow.
Lincoln

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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PAUL CLIFFORD.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM," "DEVEREUX," &c.

UNY OF CALIFOR
MAY 18 1830

Many of your Lordships must recollect what used to take place on the high roads in the neighbourhood of this Metropolis some years ago. Scarcely a carriage could pass without being robbed, and frequently the passengers were obliged to fight with, and give battle to, the highwaymen who infested the roads. — Duke of Wellington's Speech on the Metropolis Police Bill, June 5th. Mirror of Parliament, 1829, page 2050.

Can any man doubt whether it is better to be a great statesman, or a common thief?—Jonathan Wild.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
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PAUL CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER I.

What is here?—

Gold?

Thus much of this will make black white—foul fair.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

Came there a certain lord, neat, trimly drest,

Fresh as a bridegroom.

HENRY THE FOURTH.

I do not know the man I should avoid

So soon as that spare Cassius? He reads much.

He is a great observer; and he looks

Quite through the deeds of men.

Often he smiles; *but* smiles in such a sort,

As if he mocked himself or scorned his spirit,

That could be moved to smile at any thing.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

THE next day, late at noon, as Lucy was sitting with her father, not as usual engaged either in work or in reading, but seemingly quite idle, with

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her pretty foot upon the Squire's gouty stool, and her eyes fixed on the carpet, while her hands (never were hands so soft and so small as Lucy's, though they may have been eclipsed in whiteness) were lightly clasped together and reposed listlessly on her knees,—the surgeon of the village abruptly entered with a face full of news and horror. Old Squire Brandon was one of those persons who always hear news, whatever it may be, later than any of their neighbours, and it was not till all the gossips of the neighbourhood had picked the bone of the matter quite bare, that he was now informed, through the medium of Mr. Pillum, that Lord Mauleverer had on the preceding night been stopped by three highwaymen in his road to his country seat, and robbed to a considerable amount.

The fame of the worthy Doctor Slopperton's mal-adventure having, long ere this, been spread far and wide, the whole neighbourhood was naturally thrown into great consternation. Magistrates were sent to, large dogs borrowed, blunderbusses cleaned, and a subscription made throughout the parish for the raising of a patrol. There

seemed little doubt but that the offenders, in either case, were members of the same horde; and Mr. Pillum in his own mind was perfectly convinced, that they meant to encroach upon his trade, and destroy all the surrounding householders who were worth the trouble.

The next week passed in the most diligent endeavours, on the part of the neighbouring magistrates and yeomanry, to detect and seize the robbers, but their labours were utterly fruitless; and one justice of peace, who had been particularly active, was himself entirely "cleaned out" by an old gentleman, who, under the name of Mr. Bagshot—rather an ominous cognomen—offered to conduct the unsuspecting magistrate to the very spot where the miscreants might be seized. No sooner, however, had he drawn the poor justice away from his comrades into a lonely part of the road, than he stripped him to his shirt. He did not even leave his worship his flannel drawers, though the weather was as bitter as the dog days of eighteen-hundred and twenty-nine.

"'Tis not my way," said the hoary ruffian, when the justice petitioned at least for the latter

article of attire; “ ’tis not my way—I be’s slow about my work, but I does it thoroughly—so off with your rags, Old ’un.”

This was, however, the only additional instance of aggression in the vicinity of Warlock Manor-house; and by degrees, as the autumn declined, and no farther enormities were perpetrated, people began to look out for a new topic of conversation. This was afforded them by a piece of unexpected good fortune to Lucy Brandon.

Mrs. Warner, an old lady to whom she was slightly related, and with whom she had been residing during her brief and only visit to London, died suddenly, and in her will declared Lucy to be her sole heiress. The property, which was in the Funds, and which amounted to sixty-thousand pounds, was to be enjoyed by Miss Brandon immediately on her attaining her twenty-first year; meanwhile, the executors to the will were to pay to the young heiress the annual sum of six-hundred pounds. The joy which this news created in Warlock Manor-house, may easily be conceived. The Squire projected improvements here, and repairs there; and Lucy, poor girl, who had

no idea of money for herself, beyond the purchase of a new pony, or a gown from London, seconded with affectionate pleasure all her father's suggestions, and delighted herself with the reflection, that those fine plans which were to make the Brandons greater than the Brandons ever were before, were to be realized by her own,—own money! It was at this identical time that the surrounding gentry made a simultaneous and grand discovery—viz. of the astonishing merits and great good sense of Mr. Joseph Brandon. It was a pity, they observed, that he was of so reserved and shy a turn—it was not becoming in a gentleman of so ancient a family. But why should they not endeavour to draw him from his retirement into those more public scenes which he was doubtless well calculated to adorn?

Accordingly, as soon as the first month of mourning had expired, several coaches, chariots, chaises, and horses, which had never been seen at Warlock Manor-house before, arrived there one after the other in the most friendly manner imaginable. Their owners admired every thing—the house was such a fine relic of old times!—

for their parts they liked an oak-staircase!—and those nice old windows!—and what a beautiful peacock!—and, God save the mark! that magnificent chestnut-tree was worth a forest!—Mr. Brandon was requested to make one of the county hunt, not that he any longer hunted himself, but that his name would give such consequence to the thing!—Miss Lucy must come to pass a week with her dear friends the Honourable Misses Sansterre!—Augustus, their brother, had *such* a sweet lady's horse!—In short, the customary change which takes place in people's characters after the acquisition of a fortune, took place in the characters of Mr. and Miss Brandon; and when people become suddenly amiable, it is no wonder that they should suddenly gain a vast accession of friends.

But Lucy, though she had seen so little of the world, was not quite blind; and the squire, though rather obtuse, was not quite a fool. If they were not rude to their new visitors, they were by no means overpowered with gratitude at their condescension. Mr. Brandon declined subscribing to the hunt, and Miss Lucy laughed in

the face of the Honourable Augustus Sansterre. Among their new guests, however, was one who to great knowledge of the world joined an extreme and even brilliant polish of manners, which at least prevented deceit from being disagreeable, if not wholly from being unseen—this was the new Lieutenant of the county, Lord Mauleverer.

Though possessed of an immense property in that district, Lord Mauleverer had hitherto resided but little on his estates. He was one of those gay lords who are now somewhat uncommon in this country after mature manhood is attained, who live an easy and rakish life, rather among their parasites than their equals, and who yet, by aid of an agreeable manner, natural talents, and a certain graceful and light cultivation of mind, (not the less pleasant for its being universally coloured with worldliness, and an amusing rather than offensive regard for self), never lose their legitimate station in society; who are oracles in dress, equipages, cookery, and beauty, and, having no character of their own, are able to fix by a single word a character upon any one else. Thus

while Mauleverer rather lived the dissolute life of a young nobleman, who prefers the company of agreeable demirips to that of wearisome Duchesses, than maintained the decorous state befitting a mature age, and an immense interest in the country,—he was quite as popular at Court, where he held a situation in the Household, as he was in the green-room, where he enchanted every actress on the right side of forty. A word from him in the legitimate quarters of power went farther than an harangue from another; and even the prudes,—at least, all those who had daughters,—confessed “that his Lordship was a very interesting character.” Like Brandon, his familiar friend, he had risen in the world (from the Irish Baron to the English Earl) without having ever changed his politics, which were ultra-Tory; and we need not observe that he was deemed, like Brandon, a model of public integrity. He was possessed of two places under Government, six votes in the House of Commons, and eight livings in the Church; and we must add, in justice to his loyal and religious principles, that there was not

in the three kingdoms a firmer friend to the existing establishment.

Whenever a nobleman does not marry, people try to take away his character. Lord Mauleverer had never married; the Whigs had been very bitter on the subject; they even alluded to it in the House of Commons, that chaste assembly, where the never-failing subject of reproach against Mr. Pitt was the not being of an amorous temperament; but they had not hitherto prevailed against the stout Earl's celibacy. It is true that if he was devoid of a wife, he had secured to himself plenty of substitutes; his profession was that of a man of gallantry; and though he avoided the daughters, it was only to make love to the mothers. But his Lordship had now attained a certain age, and it was at last circulated among his friends that he intended to look out for a Lady Mauleverer.

“Spare your caresses,” said his Toad-in-chief, to a certain Duchess who had three portionless daughters, “Mauleverer has sworn that he will not choose among your order; you know his high politics, and you will not wonder at his

declaring himself averse in matrimony as in morals *to a community of goods.*"

The announcement of the Earl's matrimonial design and the circulation of this anecdote, set all the clergymen's daughters in England on a blaze of expectation; and when Mauleverer came to ——shire, upon obtaining the honour of the Lieutenancy, to visit his estates and court the friendship of his neighbours, there was not an old young lady of forty, who worked in broad-stitch and had never been to London above a week at a time, who did not deem herself exactly the sort of person sure to fascinate his Lordship.

It was late in the afternoon when the travelling chariot of this distinguished person, preceded by two outriders in the Earl's undress livery of dark green, stopped at the hall door of Warlock House. The Squire was at home actually and metaphorically, for he never dreamt of denying himself to any one, gentle or simple. The door of the carriage being opened, there descended a small slight man, richly dressed, (for lace and silk vestments were not then quite discarded, though gradually growing less the mode,) and of an air prepossessing, and *dis-*

tinguished, rather than *dignified*. His years,—for his countenance, though handsome, was deeply marked, and evinced the tokens of dissipation,—seemed more numerous than they really were; and though not actually past middle age, Lord Mauleverer might fairly have received the unpleasing epithet of elderly. However, his step was firm, his gait upright, and his figure was considerably more youthful than his physiognomy. The first compliments of the day having passed, and Lord Mauleverer having expressed his concern that his long and frequent absence from the county had hitherto prevented his making the acquaintance of Mr. Brandon, the brother of one of his oldest and most esteemed friends, conversation became on both sides rather an effort. Mr. Brandon first introduced the subject of the weather, and the turnips—inquired whether his Lordship was not very fond—(for his part he used to be, but lately the rheumatism had disabled him, he hoped his Lordship was not subject to *that complaint*)—*of shooting!*”

Catching only the last words,—for besides the awful complexity of the Squire’s sentences, Mau-

leverer was slightly afflicted by the aristocratic complaint of deafness—the Earl answered with a smile.

“The complaint of shooting!—very good indeed, Mr. Brandon; it is seldom that I have heard so witty a phrase. No, I am not in the least troubled with that epidemic. It is a disorder very prevalent in this county.”

“My Lord!” said the Squire, rather puzzled—and then observing that Mauleverer did not continue, he thought it expedient to start another subject.

“I was exceedingly grieved to hear that your Lordship, in travelling to Mauleverer Park—(that is a very ugly road across the waste land; the roads in this county are in general pretty good—for my own part, when I was a magistrate I was very strict in that respect)—was robbed. You have not yet I believe detected—(for my part, though I do not profess to be much of a politician, I do think that in affairs of robbery there is a great deal of remissness in *the ministers*)—*the villains!*”

“Our friend is disaffected!” thought the Lord Lieutenant, imagining that the last oppo-

brious term was applied to the respectable personages specified in the parenthesis. Bowing with a polished smile to the Squire, Mauleverer replied aloud, that he was extremely sorry, that their conduct (meaning the ministers) did not meet with Mr. Brandon's approbation.

“Well,” thought the Squire, “that is playing the courtier with a vengeance!” “Meet with my approbation!” said he, warmly: “how could your Lordship think me—(for though I am none of your Saints, I am, I hope, a good Christian; an excellent one, judging from your words, *your Lordship must be!*)—*so partial to crime!*”

“*I partial to crime!*” returned Mauleverer, thinking he had stumbled unawares on some outrageous democrat, yet, smiling as softly as usual; “you judge me harshly, Mr. Brandon, you must do me more justice, and you can only do that by knowing me better.”

Whatever unlucky answer the Squire might otherwise have made, was cut off by the entrance of Lucy; and the Earl, secretly delighted at the interruption, rose to render her his homage and to remind her of the introduction he had formerly

been so happy as to obtain to her through the friendship of Mr. William Brandon.—“a friendship,” said the gallant nobleman, “to which I have often before been indebted, but which was never more agreeably excited on my behalf.”

Upon this Lucy, who, though she had been so painfully bashful during her meeting with Mr. Clifford, felt no overpowering diffidence in the presence of so much greater a person, replied laughingly, and the Earl rejoined by a second compliment. Conversation was now no longer an effort; and Mauleverer, the most consummate of epicures, whom even Royalty trembled to ask without preparation, on being invited by the unconscious Squire to partake of the family dinner, eagerly accepted the invitation. It was long since the knightly walls of Warlock had been honoured by the presence of a guest so courtly. The good Squire heaped his plate with a profusion of boiled beef, and while the poor Earl was contemplating in dismay the alps upon alps which he was expected to devour, the grey-headed butler, anxious to serve him with alacrity, whipped away the overloaded plate, and presently returned it, yet more

astoundingly surcharged with an additional world of a composition of stony colour and sudorific aspect, which, after examining in mute attention for some moments, and carefully removing, as well as he was able, to the extreme edge of his plate, the Earl discovered to be suet pudding.

“You eat nothing, my Lord!” cried the Squire; “let me give you (this is more underdone;)” holding between blade and fork in middle air a horrent fragment of scarlet, shaking its gory locks,—“another slice.”

Swift at the word dropped upon Mauleverer’s plate the harpy finger and ruthless thumb of the grey-headed butler.

“Not a morsel more,” cried the Earl, struggling with the murtherous domestic. “My dear Sir, excuse me; I assure you I have never eat such a dinner before—never!”

“Nay now!” quoth the Squire, expostulating, “you really—(and this air is so keen that your Lordship should indulge your appetite, *if you follow the physician’s advice,*) eat nothing!”

Again Mauleverer was at fault.

“The physicians are right, Mr. Brandon,”

said he, "very right, and I am forced to live abstemiously; indeed I do not know whether, if I were to exceed at your hospitable table, and attack all that you would bestow upon me, I should ever recover it. You would have to seek a new lieutenant for your charming county, and on the tomb of the last Mauleverer the hypocritical and unrelated heir would inscribe 'Died of the visitation of beef, John, Earl &c.'"

Plain as the meaning of this speech might have seemed to others, the Squire only laughed at the effeminate appetite of the speaker, and inclined to think him an excellent fellow for jesting so good-humouredly on his own physical infirmity. But Lucy had the tact of her sex, and taking pity on the Earl's calamitous situation, though she certainly never guessed at its extent, entered with so much grace and ease into the conversation which he sought to establish between them, that Mauleverer's gentleman, who had hitherto been pushed aside by the zeal of the grey-headed butler, found an opportunity, when the Squire was laughing and the butler staring, to steal away the overburthened plate unsuspected and unseen.

Despite, however, of these evils of board and lodgment, Mauleverer was exceedingly well pleased with his visit, nor did he terminate it till the shades of the night had begun to close, and the distance from his own residence conspired with experience to remind him that it was possible for a highwayman's audacity to attack the equipage even of Lord Mauleverer. He then reluctantly re-entered his carriage, and bidding the postilion drive as fast as possible, wrapped himself in his *roquelaire*, and divided his thoughts between Lucy Brandon, and the *Homard au gratin* with which he purposed to console himself immediately on his return home. However, Fate, which mocks our most cherished hopes, ordained that on arriving at Mauleverer Park the owner should be suddenly afflicted with a loss of appetite, a coldness in the limbs, a pain in the chest, and various other ungracious symptoms of portending malady. Lord Mauleverer went straight to bed ; he remained there for some days, and when he recovered, his physicians ordered him to Bath. The Whig Methodists, who hated him, ascribed his illness to Providence ; and his Lordship was firmly of opinion that

it should be ascribed to the beef and pudding. However this be, there was an end, for the present, to the hopes of young ladies of forty, and to the intended festivities at Mauleverer Park. "Good God!" said the Earl, as his carriage wheels turned from his gates, "what a loss to country tradesmen may be occasioned by a piece of underdone beef, especially if it be boiled!"

About a fortnight had elapsed since Mauleverer's meteoric visit to Warlock House, when the Squire received from his brother the following epistle:—

"MY DEAR JOSEPH,

"YOU know my numerous avocations, and amid the press of business which surrounds me, will, I am sure, forgive me for being a very negligent and remiss correspondent. Nevertheless, I assure you, no one can more sincerely sympathize in that good fortune which has befallen my charming niece, and of which your last letter informed me, than I do. Pray give my best love to her, and tell her how complacently I look forward to the brilliant sensation she will create, when her beauty is enthroned upon that rank which,

I am quite sure, it will one day or other command.

“You are not aware, perhaps, my dear Joseph, that I have for some time been in a very weak and declining state of health. The old nervous complaint in my face has of late attacked me grievously, and the anguish is sometimes so great that I am scarcely able to bear it. I believe the great demand which my profession makes upon a frame of body never strong, and now beginning prematurely to feel the infirmities of time, is the real cause of my maladies. At last, however, I must absolutely punish my pocket, and indulge my inclinations by a short respite from toil. The doctors—sworn friends, you know, to the lawyers—since they make common cause against mankind, have peremptorily ordered me to lie by, and to try a short course of air, exercise, social amusements, and the waters of Bath. Fortunately this is Vacation time, and I can afford to lose a few weeks of emolument, in order, perhaps, to secure many years of life. I purpose then, early next week, repairing to that melancholy reservoir of the gay, where persons dance out of life, and are fiddled across the Styx. In a word, I

shall make one of the adventurers after health, who seek the goddess at King Bladud's pump-room. Will you and dear Lucy join me there? I ask it of your friendship, and I am quite sure that neither of you will shrink aghast at the proposal of solacing your invalid relation. At the same time that I am recovering health, my pretty niece will be avenging Pluto, by consigning to his dominions many a better and younger hero in my stead. And it will be a double pleasure to me to see all the hearts, &c.—I break off, for what can I say on that subject which the little coquette does not anticipate! It is high time that Lucy should see the world; and though there are many at Bath, above all places, to whom the heiress will be an object of interested attentions, yet there are also many in that crowded city by no means undeserving her notice. What say you, dear Joseph? But I know already; you will not refuse to keep company with me in my little holiday, and Lucy's eyes are already sparkling at the idea of new bonnets, Milsom Street, a thousand adorers, and the Pump-room.

“ Ever, dear Joseph,

Yours affectionately,

WILLIAM BRANDON.”

“P.S. I find that my friend Lord Mauleverer is at Bath; I own that is an additional reason to take me thither; by a letter from him, received the other day, I see that he has paid you a visit, and he now raves about his host and the heiress. Ah, Miss Lucy, Miss Lucy! are you going to conquer him whom all London has, for years more than I care to tell, (yet not many, for Mauleverer is still young,) assailed in vain? Answer me!”

This letter created a considerable excitement in Warlock House. The old Squire was extremely fond of his brother, and grieved to the heart, to find that he spoke so discouragingly of his health. Nor did the Squire for a moment hesitate at accepting the proposal to join his distinguished relative at Bath. Lucy also, —who had for her uncle, possibly from his profuse yet not indelicate flattery, a very great regard and interest, though she had seen but little of him, —urged the Squire to lose no time in arranging matters for their departure, so as to precede the Barrister, and prepare every thing for his arrival. The father and daughter being thus agreed, there was little occasion for delay; an answer to the invalid's letter

was sent by return of post, and on the fourth day from their receipt of the said epistle, the good old Squire, his daughter, a country girl, by way of abigail — the grey-headed butler, and two or three live pets, of the size and habits most convenient for travelling, were impelled along in the huge womb of the family coach, on their way to that city, which at that time was gayer at least, if somewhat less splendid, than the metropolis.

On the second day of their arrival at Bath, Brandon, (as in future, to avoid confusion, we shall call the younger brother, giving to the elder his patriarchal title of Squire,) joined them.

He was a man seemingly rather fond of parade, though at heart he disrelished and despised it. He came to their lodging, which had not been selected in the very best part of the town, in a carriage and six, but attended only by one favourite servant.

They found him in better looks and better spirits than they had anticipated; few persons, when he liked it, could be more agreeable than William Brandon; but at times there mixed with his conversation a bitter sarcasm, probably a habit ac-

quired in his profession, or an occasional tinge of morose and haughty sadness, possibly the consequence of his ill-health. Yet his disorder, which was somewhat approaching to that painful affliction, the *tic doloieux*, though of fits more rare in occurrence than those of that complaint ordinarily are, never seemed even for an instant to operate upon his mood, whatever that might be. That disease worked unseen; not a muscle of his face appeared to quiver; the smile never vanished from his mouth, the blandness of his voice never grew faint as with pain, and, in the midst of intense torture, his resolute and stern mind conquered every external indication, nor could the most observant stranger have noted the moment when the fit attacked or released him. There was something inscrutable about the man. You felt that you took his character upon trust, and not on your own knowledge. The acquaintance of years would have left you equally dark as to his vices or his virtues. He varied often, yet in each variation he was equally undiscoverable. Was he performing a series of parts, or was it the ordinary changes of a man's true temperament, that you beheld in

him? Commonly smooth, quiet, attentive, flattering in social intercourse; he was known in the senate and courts of law, for a cold asperity, and a caustic venom—scarcely rivalled even in those areas of contention. It seemed as if the bitterer feelings he checked in private life, he delighted to indulge in public. Yet, even there, he gave not way to momentary petulance or gushing passion, all seemed with him systematic sarcasm, or habitual sternness. He outraged no form of ceremonial, or of society. He stung, without appearing conscious of the sting; and his antagonist writhed not more beneath the torture of his satire, than the crushing contempt of his self-command.—Cool, ready, armed and defended on all points, sound in knowledge, unfailing in observation, equally consummate in sophistry when needed by himself, and instantaneous in detecting sophistry in another; scorning no art, however painful—begrudging no labour, however weighty—minute in detail, yet not the less comprehending the whole subject in a grasp; such was the legal and public character William Brandon had established, and such was the fame he joined to the

unsullied purity of his moral reputation. But to his friends, he seemed only the agreeable, clever, lively, and, if we may use the phrase *innocently*, the *worldly* man — never affecting a superior sanctity, or an over-anxiety to forms, except upon great occasions; and rendering his austerity of manners the more admired, because he made it seem so unaccompanied by hypocrisy.

“ Well,” said Brandon, as he sat after dinner alone with his relations, and had seen the eyes of his brother close in diurnal slumber,—“ tell me, Miss Lucy, what you think of Lord Mauleverer; do you find him agreeable?”

“ Very; too much so, indeed!”

“ Too much so! that is an uncommon fault, Lucy; unless you mean to insinuate that you find him too agreeable for your peace of mind.”

“ Oh, no! there is little fear of that; all that I meant to express was, that he seems to make it the sole business of his life to be agreeable; and that one imagines he had gained that end by the loss of certain qualities which one would have liked better.”

“ Umph! and what are they?”

“ Truth, sincerity, independence, and honesty of mind.”

“ My dear Lucy, it has been the professional study of my life to discover a man’s character, especially so far as truth is concerned, in as short a time as possible ; but you excel me by intuition, if you can tell whether there be sincerity in a courtier’s character at the first interview you have with him.”

“ Nevertheless, I am sure of my opinion,” said Lucy, laughing; “ and I will tell you one instance I observed among a hundred. Lord Mauleverer is rather deaf, and he imagined, in conversation, that my father said one thing—it was upon a very trifling subject—the speech of some member of Parliament, (the lawyer smiled,)—when in reality he meant to say another. Lord Mauleverer, in the warmest manner in the world, chimed in with him, appeared thoroughly of his opinion, applauded his sentiments, and wished the whole country of his mind. Suddenly my father spoke, Lord Mauleverer bent down his ear, and found that the sentiments he had so lauded were exactly those my father the least favoured. No sooner

did he make this discovery, than he wheeled round again, dexterously and gracefully, I allow; condemned all that he had before extolled, and extolled all that he had before abused!"

"And is that all, Lucy!" said Brandon, with a keener sneer on his lip than the occasion warranted. "Why, that is what every one does; only some more gravely than others. Mauleverer in society; I, at the bar; the minister in Parliament; friend to friend; lover to mistress; mistress to lover; half of us are employed in saying white is black, and the other half in swearing that black is white. There is only one difference, my pretty niece, between the clever man and the fool; the fool says what is false while the colours stare in his face and give him the lie; but the clever man takes, as it were, a brush, and literally turns the black into white, and the white into black, before he makes the assertion, which is *then true*. The fool changes, and is a liar; the clever man makes the colours change, and is a genius. But this is not for your young years yet, Lucy."

"Yet, I can't see the necessity of seeming to agree with people," said Lucy, simply; "surely

they would be just as well pleased if you differed from them civilly, and with respect."

"No, Lucy," said Brandon, still sneering; "to be liked, it is not necessary to be any thing but compliant; lie, cheat, make every word a snare, and every act a forgery—but never contradict. Agree with people, and they make a couch for you in their hearts. You know the story of Dante and the buffoon. Both were entertained at the court of the vain pedant, who called himself Prince Scaliger; the former poorly, the latter sumptuously.—'How comes it,' said the buffoon to the Poet, 'that I am so rich and you so poor?'—'I shall be as rich as you,' was the stinging and true reply—'whenever I can find a patron as like myself as Prince Scaliger is like you!'"

"Yet my birds," said Lucy, caressing the goldfinch, which nestled to her bosom, "are not like me, and I love them. Nay, I often think I could love those better who differ from me the most. I feel it so in books;—when, for instance, I read a novel or a play; and you, uncle, I like almost in

proportion to my perceiving in myself nothing in common with you."

"Yes," said Brandon, "you have in common with me, a love for old stories of Sir Hugo, and Sir Rupert, and all the other 'Sirs' of our mouldered and by-gone race. So you shall sing me the ballad about Sir John de Brandon, and the dragon he slew in the Holy Land. We will adjourn to the drawing-room, not to disturb your father."

Lucy agreed, took her uncle's arm, repaired to the drawing-room, and, seating herself at the harpsichord sang to an inspiring, yet somewhat rude air, the family ballad her uncle had demanded.

It would have been amusing to note, in the rigid face of the hardened and habitual man of peace and parchments, a certain enthusiasm which ever and anon crossed his cheek, as the verses of the ballad rested on some allusion to the Knightly House of Brandon, and its old renown. It was an early prejudice, breaking out despite of himself—a flash of character, stricken from the hard

fossil in which it was embedded. One would have supposed that the silliest of all prides, (for the pride of money, though meaner, is less senseless,) family pride, was the last weakness which at that time the callous and astute lawyer would have confessed, even to himself.

“Lucy,” said Brandon, as the song ceased, and he gazed on his beautiful niece with a certain pride in his aspect,—“I long to witness your first appearance in the world. This lodging, my dear, is not fit—but pardon me! what I was about to say is this; your father and yourself are here at my invitation, and in my house you must dwell; you are my guests, not mine host and hostess. I have, therefore, already directed my servant to secure me a house, and provide the necessary establishment; and I make no doubt, as he is a quick fellow, that within three days all will be ready:—you must then be the magnet of my abode, Lucy; and, meanwhile, you must explain this to my brother, and, for you know his jealous hospitality, obtain his acquiescence.”

“But,” began Lucy.

“But me no buts,” said Brandon, quickly,

but with an affectionate tone of wilfulness; “and now, as I feel very much fatigued with my journey, you must allow me to seek my own room.”

“I will conduct you to it myself,” said Lucy, for she was anxious to show her father’s brother the care and forethought which she had lavished on her arrangements for his comfort. Brandon followed her into an apartment, which his eye knew at a glance had been subjected to that female superintendence, which makes such uses from what men reject as insignificant; and he thanked her with more than his usual amenity, for the grace which had presided over, and the kindness which had dictated, her preparations. As soon as he was left alone, he wheeled his arm-chair near the clear bright fire, and resting his face upon his hand, in the attitude of a man who prepares himself, as it were, for the indulgence of meditation, he muttered:—

“Yes! these women are, first, what Nature makes them, and that is good: next, what *we* make them, and that is evil! Now, could I persuade myself, that we ought to be nice as to

the use we put these poor puppets to; I should shrink from enforcing the destiny which I have marked for this girl. But that is a pitiful consideration, and he is but a silly player who loses his money for the sake of preserving his counters. So, the young lady must go as another score to the fortunes of William Brandon. After all, who suffers? not she. She will have wealth, rank, honour: *I* shall suffer, to yield so pretty and pure a gem to the coronet of—faugh! How I despise that dog! but how I could hate, crush, mangle him, could I believe that he despised me! Could he do so? Umph! No, I have resolved myself, that is impossible. Well, let me hope, *that* matrimonial point will be settled; and now, let me consider what next step I shall take for myself—myself!—ay—only myself!—with me perishes the last male of Brandon. But the light shall not go out under a bushel.”

As he said this, the soliloquist sunk into a more absorbed, and a silent reverie, from which he was disturbed by the entrance of his servant. Brandon, who was never a dreamer, save when alone, broke at once from his reflections.

“ You have obeyed my orders, Barlow ?” said he.

“ Yes, Sir,” answered the domestic, “ I have taken the best house yet unoccupied, and when Mrs. Roberts (Brandon’s housekeeper) arrives from London, every thing will, I trust, be exactly to your wishes.”

“ Good ! And you gave my note to Lord Mauleverer ?”

“ With my own hands, Sir ; his Lordship will await you at home all to-morrow.”

“ Very well ! and now, Barlow, see that your room is within call—(bells, though known, were not common at that day) and give out that I am gone to bed and must not be disturbed. What’s the hour ?”

“ Just on the stroke of ten, Sir.”

“ Place on that table my letter-case, and the inkstand. Look in, to help me to undress, at half past one ; I shall go to bed at that hour. And—stay—be sure, Barlow, that my brother believes me retired for the night. He does not know my habits, and will vex him-

self if he thinks I sit up so late in my present state of health."

Drawing the table with its writing appurtenances near to his master, the servant left Brandon once more to his thoughts or his occupations.

CHAPTER II.

Servant. Get away, I say, wid dat nasty bell.

Punch. Do you call this a bell? (patting it.) It is an organ!

Servant. I say it is a bell—a nasty bell!

Punch. I say it is an organ, (striking him with it,)—what do you say it is now?

Servant. An organ, Mr. Punch.

The Tragical Comedy of Punch and Judy.

THE next morning, before Lucy and her father had left their apartments, Brandon, who was a remarkably early riser, had disturbed the luxurious Mauleverer in his first slumber. Although the courtier possessed a villa some miles from Bath, he preferred a lodging in the town, both as being warmer than a rarely inhabited country-house, and as being, to an indolent man, more immedi-

ately convenient for the gaieties and the waters of the medicinal city.

As soon as the Earl had rubbed his eyes, stretched himself, and prepared for the untimely colloquy, Brandon poured forth his excuses for the hour he had chosen for a visit.

“Mention it not, my dear Brandon,” said the good-natured nobleman, with a sigh; “I am glad at any hour to see you, and I am very sure, that what you have to communicate is always worth listening to.”

“It was only upon public business, though of rather a more important description than usual, that I ventured to disturb you,” answered Brandon, seating himself on a chair by the bedside. “This morning—an hour ago—I received by private express, a letter from London, stating that a new arrangement will positively be made in the Cabinet—nay, naming the very promotions and changes; I confess, that as my name occurred, as also your own, in these nominations, I was anxious to have the benefit of your necessarily accurate knowledge on the subject, as well as of your advice.”

“ Really, Brandon,” said Mauleverer, with a half-peevisish smile, “ any other hour in the day would have done for ‘ the business of the nation,’ as the newspapers call that troublesome farce we go through ; and I had imagined you would not have broken my nightly slumbers, except for something of real importance — the discovery of a new beauty, or the invention of a new dish.”

“ Neither the one nor the other could you have expected from *me*, my dear Lord,” rejoined Brandon ; “ you know the dry trifles in which a lawyer’s life wastes itself away, and beauties and dishes have no attraction for us, except the former be damsels deserted, and the latter patents invaded. But my news, after all, is worth hearing, unless you have heard it before.”

“ Not I ! but I suppose I shall hear it in the course of the day ; pray Heaven I be not sent for, to attend some plague of a council. Begin !”

“ In the first place, Lord Duberly resolves to resign, unless this negotiation for peace be made a cabinet question !”

“ Pshaw ! let him resign. I have opposed the peace so long, that it is out of the question. Of

course, Lord Wanstead will not think of it — and he may count on my boroughs. A peace! shameful, disgraceful, dastardly proposition!”

“ But, my dear Lord, my letter says, that this unexpected firmness on the part of Lord Duberly has produced so great a sensation, that seeing the impossibility of forming a durable cabinet without him, the King has consented to the negotiation, and Duberly stays in !”

“ The devil !—what next !”

“ Raffiden and Sternhold go out in favour of Baldwin and Charlton ; and in the hope that you will lend your aid to——”

“ I !” said Lord Mauleverer, very angrily ; “ I ! lend my aid to Baldwin, the Jacobin, and Charlton, the son of a brewer !”

“ Very true !” continued Brandon, “ but in the hope that you might be persuaded to regard the new arrangements with an indulgent eye, you are talked of instead of the Duke of —— for the vacant garter and the office of Chamberlain.

“ You don't mean it !” cried Mauleverer, starting from his bed.

“ A few other (but, I hear, chiefly legal) pro-

motions are to be made. Among the rest, my learned brother, the democrat Sarsden, is to have a silk gown; Cromwell is to be Attorney-general, and, between ourselves,—they have offered me a Judgeship.”

“But the garter!” said Mauleverer, scarcely hearing the rest of the lawyer’s news,—“the whole object, aim, and ambition, of my life. How truly kind in the King! After all,” continued the Earl laughing, and throwing himself back, “Opinions are variable—truth is not uniform—the times change, not we—and we must have peace instead of war!”

“Your maxims are indisputable, and the conclusion you come to is excellent,” said Brandon.

“Why, you and I, my dear fellow,” said the Earl, “who know men, and who have lived all our lives in the world, *must* laugh behind the scenes at the cant we wrap in tinsel, and send out to stalk across the stage. We know that our Coriolanus of Tory integrity, is a corporal kept by a prostitute; and the Brutus of Whig liberty, is a lackey turned out of place for stealing the spoons,—but we must not tell this to the world. So,

Brandon, you must write me a speech for the next session—and be sure it has plenty of general maxims, and concludes with ‘ my bleeding country ! ’ ”

The lawyer smiled. “ You consent then to the expulsion of Sternhold and Raffden ? for, after all, that is the question. Our British vessel, as the damned metaphor-mongers call the state, carries the public good safe in the hold like brandy, and it is only when fear, storm, or the devil makes the rogues quarrel among themselves, and break up the casks, that one gets above a thimble-full at a time. We should go on fighting with the rest of the world for ever, if the ministers had not taken to fight among themselves.”

“ As for Sternhold,” said the Earl, “ ’tis a vulgar dog, and voted for economical reform—besides, I don’t know him ;—he may go to the devil, for aught I care ; but Raffden must be dealt handsomely with, or, despite the garter, I will fall back among the Whigs, who, after all, give tolerable dinners.”

“ But why, my Lord, must Raffden be treated better than his brother recusant ? ”

“Because he sent me in the handsomest manner possible, a pipe of that wonderful Madeira, which you know I consider the chief grace of my cellars, and he gave up a canal navigation bill which would have enriched his whole county, when he knew that it would injure my property. No, Brandon, curse public cant, we know what that is. But we are gentlemen, and our private friends must not be thrown to the devil, unless, at least, we do it in the civilest manner we can.”

“Fear not,” said the lawyer; “you have only to say the word, and the cabinet can cook up an embassy to Owhyee, and send Raffden there with a stipend of five-thousand a-year.”

“Ah! that’s well thought of; or we might give him a grant of a hundred thousand acres in one of the colonies, or let him buy crown-land at a discount of eighty per cent. So that’s settled.”

“And now, my dear friend,” said Brandon, “I will tell you frankly why I come so early; I am required to give a hasty answer to the proposal I have received, namely of the Judgeship. Your opinion?”

“A Judgeship! *you* a Judge? What! forsake

your brilliant career for so petty a dignity!—you jest!”

“Not at all,—listen. You know how bitterly I have opposed this peace, and what hot enemies I have made among the new friends of the administration: on the one hand, these enemies insist on sacrificing me; and on the other, if I *were* to stay in the Lower House and speak for what I have before opposed, I should forfeit the support of a great portion of my own party; hated by one body, and mistrusted by the other, a seat in the House of Commons ceases to be an object. It is proposed that I should retire on the dignity of a Judge, with the positive and pledged, though secret, promise of his Majesty and the Premier, to give me the first vacancy among the chiefs. The place of Chief Justice or Chief Baron is indeed the only fair remuneration for my surrender of the gains of my profession, and the abandonment of my parliamentary and legal career; the title might go (at least, by an exertion of interest) to the eldest son of my niece, in case she married a commoner:—or,” added he, after a pause, “her second son in case she married a peer.”

“Ha—true!” said Mauleverer quickly, and as if struck by some sudden thought, “and your charming niece, Brandon, would be worthy of any honour either to her children or herself. You do not know how struck I was with her; there is something so graceful in her simplicity; and in her manner of smoothing down the little rugosities of Warlock House, there was so genuine and so easy a dignity, that I declare I almost thought myself young again and capable of the self-cheat of believing myself in love. But, oh! Brandon, imagine me at your brother’s board!—me, for whom ortolans are too substantial, and who feel, when I tread, the slightest inequality in the carpets of Tournay!—imagine me, dear Brandon, in a black-wainscot room, hung round with your ancestors in brown wigs with posies in their button-holes,—an immense fire on one side and a thorough draught on the other,—a huge circle of beef before me, smoking like Vesuvius, and twice as large,—a plateful (the plate was pewter, is there not a metal so called?) of this mingled flame and lava sent under my very nostril, and upon pain of ill-breeding to be dispatched down my proper mouth,

—an old gentleman in fustian-breeches and worsted stockings, by way of a butler, filling me a can of ale,—and your worthy brother asking me if I would not prefer port,—a lean footman in a livery (such a livery, ye gods!) scarlet, blue, yellow, and green, a rainbow ill made! on the opposite side of the table looking at ‘the Lord’ with eyes and mouth equally open, and large enough to swallow me,—and your excellent brother himself at the head of the table glowing through the mists of the beef, like the rising sun in a sign-post,—and then, Brandon, turning from this image, behold beside me the fair, delicate, aristocratic, yet simple loveliness of your niece, and—but you look angry—I have offended you.”

It was high time for Mauleverer to ask that question; for, during the whole of the Earl’s recital, the dark face of his companion had literally burnt with rage: and here we may observe, how generally selfishness, which *makes* the man of the world, *prevents* its possessor, by a sort of paradox, from being *consummately* so. For Mauleverer, occupied by the pleasure he felt at his own wit, and never having that magic sympathy with

others, which creates the incessantly keen observer, had not, for a moment, thought that he was offending to the quick the hidden pride of the lawyer. Nay, so little did he suspect Brandon's real weaknesses, that he thought him a philosopher, who would have laughed alike at principles and people, however near to him might be the latter, and however important the former. Mastering by a single effort, which restored his cheek to its usual steady hue, the outward signs of his displeasure, Brandon rejoined,

“ Offend me ! by no means, my dear Lord. I do not wonder at your painful situation in an old country gentleman's house, which has not for centuries offered scenes fit for the presence of so distinguished a guest. Never, I may say, since the time when Sir Charles de Brandon entertained Elizabeth at Warlock ; and your ancestor, (you know my old musty studies on those points of obscure antiquity,) John Mauleverer, who was a noted goldsmith of London, supplied the plate for the occasion.”

“ Fairly retorted,” said Mauleverer, smiling ; for though the Earl had a great contempt for

low birth, set on high places, in other men, he was utterly void of pride for his own family. — “Fairly retorted! but I never meant any thing else but a laugh at your brother’s housekeeping; a joke, surely, permitted to a man whose own fastidiousness on these matters is so standing a jest. But, by heavens, Brandon, to turn from these subjects, your niece is the prettiest girl I have seen for twenty years; and if she would forget my being the descendant of John Mauleverer, the noted goldsmith of London, she may be Lady Mauleverer as soon as she pleases.”

“Nay, now, let us be serious, and talk of the judgeship,” said Brandon, affecting to treat the proposal as a joke.

“By the soul of Sir Charles de Brandon, I am serious!” cried the Earl; “and as a proof of it, I hope you will let me pay my respects to your niece to-day — not with my offer in my hand, yet — for it must be a love-match on *both* sides,” and the Earl, glancing towards an opposite glass, which reflected his attenuated but comely features, beneath his velvet night-cap, trimmed with *mechlin*, laughed half-triumphantly as he spoke.

A sneer just passed the lips of Brandon, and as instantly vanished; while Mauleverer continued:—

“And as for the judgeship, dear Brandon, I advise you to accept it, though you know best; and I do think no man will stand a fairer chance of the Chief-Justiceship, or, though it be somewhat unusual for “common” lawyers, why not the Woolsack itself? As you say, the second son of your niece might inherit the dignity of the peerage!”

“Well, I will consider of it favourably,” said Brandon, and soon afterwards he left the nobleman to renew his broken repose.

“I can’t laugh at that man,” said Mauleverer to himself, as he turned round in his bed, “though he has much that I should laugh at in another; and faith, there is one little matter I might well scorn him for, if I were not a philosopher. ’Tis a pretty girl, his niece, and with proper instructions might do one credit; besides, she has 60,000*l.* ready money; and faith, I have not a shilling for my own pleasure, though I have, or, alas! had, fifty thousand a-year for that of my establishment! In

all probability, she will be the lawyer's heiress, and he must have made, at least, as much again as her portion; nor is *he*, poor devil, a very good life. Moreover, if he rise to the peerage? and the second son — Well, well! it will not be such a bad match for the goldsmith's descendant either!"

With that thought, Lord Mauleverer fell asleep. He rose about noon, dressed himself with unusual pains, and was just going forth on a visit to Miss Brandon, when he suddenly remembered that her uncle had not mentioned her address, or his own. He referred to the lawyer's note of the preceding evening; no direction was inscribed on it; and Mauleverer was forced, with much chagrin, to forego for that day the pleasure he had promised himself.

In truth, the wary lawyer, who, as we have said, despised show and outward appearances as much as any man, was yet sensible of their effect even in the eyes of a lover; and moreover, Lord Mauleverer was one, whose habits of life were calculated to arouse a certain degree of vigilance on points of household pomp, even in the most unobservant. Brandon therefore resolved that Lucy

should not be visited by her admirer, till the removal to their new abode was effected; nor was it till the third day from that on which Mauleverer had held with Brandon the interview we have recorded, that the Earl received a note from Brandon, seemingly turning only on political matters, but inscribed with the address and direction in full form.

Mauleverer answered it in person. He found Lucy at home, and more beautiful than ever; and from that day his mind was made up, as the Mammass say, and his visits became constant.

CHAPTER III.

The blessing of an hereditary nobility—the honourable profession of the law.—*Common Phrases.*

There is a festival where knights and dames,
 And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims,
 Appear. * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

'Tis he—how came he thence—what doth he here?

LARA.

THERE are two charming situations in life for a woman: one, the first freshness of heiress-ship and beauty, the other, youthful widowhood with a large jointure. It was at least Lucy's fortune to enjoy the first. No sooner was she fairly launched into the gay world, than she became the object of universal idolatry. Crowds followed her wherever she moved: nothing was talked of, or dreamt of, toasted, or betted on, but Lucy Brandon; even

her simplicity and utter ignorance of the arts of fine life, enhanced the *éclat* of her reputation. Somehow or other, *young* people of the gentler sex are rarely ill-bred, even in their eccentricities; and there is often a great deal of grace in inexperience. Her uncle, who accompanied her every where, himself no slight magnet of attraction, viewed her success with a complacent triumph which he suffered no one but her father or herself to detect. To the smooth coolness of his manner, nothing would have seemed more foreign than pride at the notice gained by a beauty, or exultation at any favour won from the caprices of fashion. As for the good old Squire, one would have imagined him far more the invalid than his brother. He was scarcely ever seen; for though he went everywhere, he was one of those persons who sink into a corner the moment they enter a room. Whoever discovered him in his retreat, held out their hands, and exclaimed, "God bless me!—*you* here! we have not seen you for this age!" Now and then, if in a very dark niche of the room a card-table had been placed, the worthy gentleman

toiled through an obscure rubber, but more frequently he sat with his hands clasped, and his mouth open, counting the number of candles in the room, or calculating "When that d—d music would be over."

Lord Mauleverer, though a polished and courteous man, whose great object was necessarily to ingratiate himself with the father of his intended bride, had a horror of being bored, which surpassed all other feelings in his mind. He could not, therefore, persuade himself to submit to the melancholy duty of listening to the Squire's "linked *speeches* long drawn out." He always glided by the honest man's station, seemingly in an exceeding hurry, with a, "Ah, my *dear* Sir, how do you do? How delighted I am to see you!—and your incomparable daughter?—Oh, there she is!—pardon me, dear Sir—you see my attraction—*au plaisir!*"

Lucy, indeed, who never forgot any one, (except herself occasionally,) sought her father's retreat as often as she was able; but her engagements were so incessant, that she no sooner lost one partner, than she was claimed and carried off by another. However, the Squire bore his solitude

with tolerable cheerfulness, and always declared that “ he was very well amused ; although balls and concerts were necessarily a little dull to one who came from a fine old place like Warlock Manor-house, and it was not the same thing that pleased young ladies (for, to them, that fiddling and giggling till two o’clock in the morning might be *a very pretty way of killing time,*) and their papas !”

What considerably added to Lucy’s celebrity, was the marked notice and admiration of a man so high in rank and ton as Lord Mauleverer. That personage, who still retained much of a youthful mind and temper, and who was in his nature more careless than haughty, preserved little or no state in his intercourse with the social revellers at Bath. He cared not whither he went, so that he was in the train of the young beauty ; and the most fastidious nobleman of the English Court, was seen in every second and third rate set of a great watering-place, the attendant, the flirt, and often the ridicule of the daughter of an obscure and almost insignificant country Squire. Despite the honour of so distinguished a lover, and despite all the novelties of her situation, the pretty head of

Lucy Brandon was as yet, however, perfectly unturned; and as for her heart, the only impression that it had ever received, was made by that wandering guest of the village rector, whom she had never again seen, but who yet clung to her imagination, invested not only with all the graces which in right of a singularly handsome person he possessed,—but with those to which he never could advance a claim,—more dangerous to her peace, from the very circumstance of their origin in her fancy, not his merits.

They had now been some little time at Bath, and Brandon's brief respite was pretty nearly expired, when a public ball of uncommon and manifold attraction was announced. It was to be graced not only by the presence of all the surrounding families, but also by that of Royalty itself; it being an acknowledged fact, that people dance much better, and eat much more supper, when any relation to a King is present.

“I must stay for this ball, Lucy,” said Brandon, who, after spending the day with Lord Mauleverer, returned home in a mood more than usually cheerful. “I must stay for this one ball, Lucy,

and witness your complete triumph, even though it will be necessary to leave you the very next morning."

"So soon!" cried Lucy.

"So soon!" echoed the uncle with a smile; "how good you are to speak thus to an old valetudinarian, whose company must have fatigued you to death; nay, no pretty denials! But the great object of my visit to this place is accomplished: I have seen you, I have witnessed your *debüt* in the great world, with, I may say, more than a father's exultation, and I go back to my dry pursuits with the satisfaction of thinking our old and withered genealogical tree has put forth one blossom worthy of its freshest day."

"Uncle!" said Lucy, reprovingly, and holding up her taper finger with an arch smile, mingling with a blush, in which the woman's vanity spoke unknown to herself.

"And why that look, Lucy?" said Brandon.

"Because — because — well, no matter! you have been bred to that trade in which, as you say yourself, men tell untruths for others, till they lose all truth for themselves. But, let us talk

of you, not me; are you really well enough to leave us?"

Simple, and even cool as the words of Lucy's question, when written, appear; in her mouth, they took so tender, so anxious a tone, that Brandon, who had no friend, nor wife, nor child, nor any one in his household, in whom interest in his health or welfare was as a thing of course; and who was consequently wholly unaccustomed to the accent of kindness, felt himself of a sudden touched and stricken.

"Why, indeed, Lucy," said he, in a less artificial voice than that in which he usually spoke, "I should like still to profit by your cares, and forget my infirmities and pains in your society; but I cannot;—the tide of events, like that of nature, waits not our pleasure!"

"But we may take our own time for setting sail!" said Lucy.

"Ay, this comes of talking in metaphor," rejoined Brandon, smiling; "They who begin it, always get the worst of it. In plain words, dear Lucy, I can give no more time to my own ailments. A lawyer cannot play truant in term-time without—"

“ Losing a few guineas !” said Lucy, interrupting him.

“ Worse than that — his practice and his name !”

“ Better those than health, and peace of mind.”

“ Out on you — No !” said Brandon, quickly, and almost fiercely ;—“ We waste all the greenness and pith of our life in striving to gain a distinguished slavery ; and when it is gained, we must not think that a humble independence would have been better ! If we ever admit that thought, what fools — what lavish fools we have been !— No !” continued Brandon, after a momentary pause, and in a tone milder and gayer, though not less characteristic of the man’s stubbornness of will —“ After losing all youth’s enjoyments and manhood’s leisure, in order that in age, the mind — the all-conquering mind, should break its way at last into the applauding opinions of men, I should be an effeminate idler, indeed, did I suffer, — so long as its jarring parts hold together, or so long as I have the power to command its members, — this weak body to frustrate the labour of its better and nobler portion, and command that which it is ordained to serve.”

Lucy knew not while she listened, half in fear, half in admiration, to her singular relation, that at the very moment he thus spoke his disease was preying upon him in one of its most relentless moods, without the power of wringing from him a single outward token of his torture. But she wanted nothing to encrease her pity and affection for a man who, in consequence, perhaps, of his ordinary surface of worldly, and cool properties of temperament, never failed to leave an indelible impression on all who had ever seen that temperament broken through by deeper, though often by more evil feelings.

“ Shall you go to Lady ——’s rout ?” asked Brandon, easily sliding back into common topics—
“ Lord Mauleverer requested me to ask you.”

“ That depends on you and my father !” said Lucy.

“ If on me, I answer, yes !” said Brandon ;
“ I like hearing Mauleverer, especially among persons who do not understand him ; there is a refined and subtle sarcasm running through the common places of his conversation, which cuts the good fools, like the invisible sword in the fable,

that lopped off heads, without occasioning the owners any other sensation than a pleasing and self-complacent titillation. How immeasurably superior he is in manner and address to all we meet here ; does it not strike you ?”

“ Yes — no — I can’t say that it does exactly,” rejoined Lucy.

“ Is that confusion tender ?” thought Brandon.

“ In a word,” continued Lucy, “ Lord Mauleverer is one whom I think pleasing, without fascination ; and amusing, without brilliancy. He is evidently accomplished in mind, and graceful in manner ; and withal, the most uninteresting person I ever met.”

“ Women have not often thought so !” said Brandon.

“ I cannot believe that they can think otherwise.”

A certain expression, partaking of scorn, played over Brandon’s hard features. It was a noticeable trait in him, that while he was most anxious to impress Lucy with a favourable opinion of Lord Mauleverer, he was never quite able to mask a certain satisfaction at any jest at the

Earl's expense, or any opinion derogatory to his general character for pleasing the opposite sex; and this satisfaction was no sooner conceived, than it was immediately combated by the vexation he felt, that Lucy did not seem to share his own desire that she should become the wife of the courtier. There appeared, as if in that respect there was a contest in his mind between interest on one hand, and private dislike, or contempt, on the other.

“ You judge women wrongly !” said Brandon. “ Ladies never know each other; of all persons, Mauleverer is best calculated to win them, and experience has proved my assertion. The proudest lot I know for a woman, would be the thorough conquest of Lord Mauleverer; but it is impossible. He may be gallant, but he will never be subdued. He defies the whole female world, and with justice and impunity. Enough of him. Sing to me, dear Lucy.”

The time for the ball approached, and Lucy, who was a charming girl, and had nothing of the angel about her, was sufficiently fond of gaiety,

dancing, music, and admiration, to feel her heart beat high at the expectation of the event.

At last, the day itself came. Brandon dined alone with Mauleverer, having made the arrangement, that he, with the Earl, was to join his brother and niece at the ball. Mauleverer, who hated state, except on great occasions, when no man displayed it with a better grace, never suffered his servants to wait at dinner when he was alone, or with one of his peculiar friends. The attendants remained without, and were summoned at will by a bell laid beside the host.

The conversation was unrestrained.

“I am perfectly certain, Brandon,” said Lord Mauleverer, “that if you were to live tolerably well, you would soon get the better of your nervous complaints. It is all poverty of blood, believe me.—Some more of the fins, eh?—No!—oh, hang your abstemiousness, it is d——d unfriendly to eat so little!—Talking of fins and friends—Heaven defend me from ever again forming an intimacy with a pedantic epicure, especially if he puns!”

“Why—what has a pedant to do with fins?”

“I will tell you—(Ah, this Madeira!)—I suggested to Lord Dareville, who affects the gourmand, what a capital thing a dish all fins,—(turbot’s fins)—might be made.” ‘Capital!’ said he, in a rapture, ‘dine on it with me to-morrow.’ ‘*Volontiers!*’ said I:—the next day, after indulging in a pleasing reverie all the morning, as to the manner in which Dareville’s cook, who is not without genius, would accomplish the grand idea, I betook myself punctually to my engagement. Would you believe it? when the cover was removed, the sacrilegious dog of an Amphitryon had put into the dish Cicero de *finibus*. ‘There is a work all fins!’ said he.”

“Atrocious jest!” exclaimed Brandon, solemnly.

“Was it not? Whenever the Gastronomists set up a religious inquisition, I trust they will roast every impious rascal who treats the divine mystery with levity. Pun upon cooking, indeed! Apropos of Dareville, he is to come into the administration.”

“You astonish me!” said Brandon, “I never

heard that; I don't know him. He has very little power; has he any talent?"

"Yes, one very great one, *acquired* though!—"

"What is it?"

"A pretty wife!"

"My Lord!" exclaimed Brandon, abruptly, and half rising from his seat.

Mauleverer looked up hastily, and, on seeing the expression of his companion's face, coloured deeply; there was a silence for some moments.

"Tell me," said Brandon, indifferently, helping himself to vegetables, for he seldom touched meat, and a more amusing contrast can scarcely be conceived, than that between the earnest epicurism of Mauleverer, and the careless contempt of the sublime art manifested by his guest;—"tell me, you who necessarily know every thing, whether the cabinet really is settled,—whether you are to have the garter, and I—(mark the difference!)—the judgeship."

"Why so, I imagine, it will be arranged, viz.; if you will consent to hang up the rogues, instead of living by the fools!"

"One may unite both!" returned Brandon,

“but I believe, in general, it is *vice versâ*; for we live by the rogues, and it is only the fools we are able to hang up. You ask me if I will take the judgeship. I would not—no, I would rather cut my hand off, —(and the lawyer spoke with great bitterness,)—forsake my present career, despite of all the obstacles that now encumber it; did I think that this miserable body would suffer me, for two years longer, to pursue it.”

“You shock me!” said Mauleverer, a little affected, but nevertheless applying the cayenne to his cucumber with his usual unerring nicety of tact; “you shock me, but you are considerably better than you were.”

“It is not!” continued Brandon, who was rather speaking to himself than to *his friend*—“it is not that I am unable to conquer the pain, and to master the recreant nerves; but I feel myself growing weaker and weaker beneath the continual exertion of my remaining powers, and I shall die before I have gained half my objects, if I do not leave the labours which are literally tearing me to pieces.”

“But,” said Lord Mauleverer, who was the

idlest of men, "the judgeship is not an easy sinecure."

"No! but there is less demand on the mind in that station, than in my present one;" and Brandon paused before he continued. "Candidly, Mauleverer, you do not think they will deceive me! you do not think they mean to leave me to this political death without writing 'Resurgam' over the hatchment?"

"They dare not!" said Mauleverer, quaffing his fourth glass of Madeira.

"Well! I have decided on my change of life," said the lawyer, with a slight sigh.

"So have I on my change of opinion," chimed in the Earl. "I will tell you what opinions seem to me like."

"What?" said Brandon abstractedly.

"*Trees!*" answered Mauleverer, quaintly; "if they can be made serviceable by standing, don't part with a stick; but when they are of that growth that sells well, or whenever they shut out a *fine prospect*, cut them down, and pack them off by all manner of means!—And now for the second course."

“ I wonder !” said the Earl, when our political worthies were again alone, “ whether there ever existed a minister who cared three straws for the people—*many* care for *their party*, but as for the country——”

“ It is all fiddlestick !” added the lawyer, with more significance than grace.

“ Right ; it is all fiddlestick, as you tersely express it. King, Constitution, and Church, for ever ! which being interpreted, means first, King, or Crown influence, judgeships, and garters ;—secondly, Constitution, or fees to the lawyer—places to the statesman—laws for the rich, and *Game Laws* for the poor ; — thirdly, Church, or livings for our younger sons, and starvings for their curates !”

“ Ha, ha !” said Brandon, laughing sardonically ; “ *we* know human nature !”

“ And how it may be gulled !” quoth the courtier. “ Here’s a health to your niece ! and may it not be long before you hail her as your friend’s bride !”

“ Bride, *etcetera*,” said Brandon with a sneer, meant only for his own satisfaction. “ But, mark

me, my dear Lord, do not be too sure of her—she is a singular girl, and of more independence than the generality of women. She will not think of your rank and station in estimating you; she will think only of their owner; and pardon me if I suggest to you, who know the sex so well, one plan that it may not be unadvisable for you to pursue.—Don't let her fancy you entirely her's; rouse her jealousy, pique her pride—let her think you unconquerable, and unless she is unlike all women, she will want to conquer you."

The Earl smiled. "I must take my chance!" said he with a confident tone.

"The hoary coxcomb!" muttered Brandon between his teeth: "now will his own folly spoil all."

"And that reminds me," continued Mauleverer, "that time wanes, and dinner is not over; let us not hurry, but let us be silent, to enjoy the more—these truffles in champagne—*do* taste them, they would raise the dead."

The lawyer smiled, and accepted the kindness, though he left the delicacy untouched; and Mauleverer, whose soul was in his plate, saw not the heartless rejection.

Meanwhile, the youthful beauty had already entered the theatre of pleasure, and was now seated with the Squire, at the upper end of the half-filled ball-room.

A gay lady of the fashion of that time, and of that half and half rank to which belonged the aristocracy of Bath,—one of those curious persons we meet with in the admirable novels of Miss Burney, as appertaining to the order of fine ladies,—made the trio with our heiress and her father, and pointed out to them by name the various characters that entered the apartments. She was still in the full tide of scandal, when an unusual sensation was visible in the environs of the door; three strangers of marked mien, gay dress, and an air which, though differing in each, was in all alike remarkable for a sort of “dashing” assurance, made their *entré*. One was of uncommon height, and possessed of an exceedingly fine head of hair; another was of a more quiet and unpretending aspect, but nevertheless, he wore upon his face a supercilious, yet not ill-humoured expression; the third was many years younger than his companions, strikingly handsome in face and

figure, altogether of a better taste in dress, and possessing a manner that, though it had equal ease, was not equally noticeable for impudence and swagger.

“Who can those be?” said Lucy’s female friend in a wondering tone, “I never saw them before—they must be great people—they have all *the airs of persons of quality!*—Dear, how odd that I should not know them!”

While the good lady, who, like all good ladies of that stamp, thought people of quality had airs, was thus lamenting her ignorance of the new comers, a general whisper of a similar import was already circulating round the room;—“Who are they?” and the universal answer was, “Can’t tell—never saw them before!”

Our strangers seemed by no means displeased with the evident and immediate impression they had made. They stood in the most conspicuous part of the room, enjoying, among themselves, a low conversation, frequently broken by fits of laughter; tokens, we need not add, of their supereminently good breeding. The beautiful figure of the youngest stranger, and the simple

and seemingly unconscious grace of his attitudes, were not, however, unworthy of the admiration he excited; and even his laughter, rude as it really was, displayed so dazzling a set of teeth, and was accompanied by such brilliant eyes, that before he had been ten minutes in the room, there was scarcely a young lady under thirty-nine not disposed to fall in love with him.

Apparently heedless of the various remarks which reached their ears, our strangers, after they had from their station sufficiently surveyed the beauties of the ball, strolled arm-in-arm through the rooms. Having sauntered through the ball and card-rooms, they passed the door that led to the entrance passage, and gazed, with other loiterers, upon the new comers ascending the stairs. Here the two younger strangers renewed their whispered conversation, while the tallest one, carelessly leaning against the wall, employed himself for a few moments in thrusting his fingers through his hair. In finishing this occupation, the peculiar state of his ruffles forced itself upon the observation of our gentleman, who, after gazing for some moments on an envious rent in the right

ruffle, muttered some indistinct words, like, “the cock of that confounded pistol,” and then tucked up the mutilated ornament with a peculiarly nimble motion of the fingers of his left hand: the next moment, diverted by a new care, the stranger applied his digital members to the arranging and caressing of a remarkably splendid brooch, set in the bosom of a shirt, the rude texture of which formed a singular contrast with the magnificence of the embellishment, and the fineness of the one ruffle suffered by our modern Hyperion to make its appearance beneath his cinnamon-coloured coat-sleeve. These little personal arrangements completed, and a dazzling snuff-box released from the confinement of a side-pocket, tapped thrice, and lightened of two pinches of its titillating luxury, the stranger now, with the guardian eye of friendship, directed a searching glance to the dress of his friends. *There*, all appeared meet for his strictest scrutiny, save, indeed, that the supercilious-looking stranger having just drawn forth his gloves, the lining of his coat-pocket—which was rather soiled into the bargain—had not returned to its internal station; the tall stranger seeing this

little inelegance, kindly thrust three fingers with a sudden and light *ō*ve into his friend's pocket, and effectually repulsed the forwardness of the intrusive lining. The supercilious stranger no sooner felt the touch, than he started back, and whispered his officious companion,

“What ! among friends, Ned ! fie now ; curb the nature in thee for one night, at least.”

Before he of the flowing locks had time to answer, the master of the ceremonies, who had for the last three minutes been eyeing the strangers through his glass, stepped forward with a sliding bow, and the handsome gentleman, taking upon himself the superiority and precedence over his comrades, was the first to return the courtesy. He did this with so good a grace, and so pleasing an expression of countenance, that the censor of bows was charmed at once, and with a second and more profound salutation, announced himself and his office.

“You would like to dance, probably, gentlemen ?” he asked, glancing at each, but directing his words to the one who had prepossessed him.

“You are very good,” said the comely stran-

ger, "and for my part, I shall be extremely indebted to you for the exercise of your powers in my behalf; allow me to return with you to the ball-room, and I can there point out to you the objects of my especial admiration."

The Master of the ceremonies bowed as before, and he and his new acquaintance strolled into the ball-room, followed by the two comrades of the latter.

"Have you been long in Bath, Sir?" enquired the monarch of the rooms.

"No, indeed! we only arrived this evening!"

"From London?"

"No; we made a little tour across the country."

"Ah! very pleasant this fine weather."

"Yes; especially in the evenings."

"Oho!—romantic!" thought the man of balls, as he rejoined aloud, "Why, the nights *are* agreeable, and the moon is particularly favourable to us."

"Not always!" quoth the stranger.

"True—true—the night before last was dark;

but in general, surely the moon has been very bright."

The stranger was about to answer, but checked himself, and simply bowed his head as in assent.

"I wonder who they are?" thought the Master of the ceremonies. "Pray, Sir," said he, in a low tone, "is that gentleman, that *tall* gentleman, any way related to Lord ———? I cannot but think I see a family likeness."

"Not in the least related to his Lordship," answered the stranger; "but he is of a family that have made a noise in the world; though he (as well as my other friend) is merely a commoner!" laying a stress on the last word.

"Nothing, Sir, can be more respectable than a commoner of family," returned the polite Mr. * * * *, with a bow.

"I agree with you, Sir," answered the stranger, with another. "But, heavens!" and the stranger started, for at that moment his eye caught for the first time, at the far end of the room, the youthful and brilliant countenance of

Lucy Brandon,—“do I see rightly? or is that Miss Brandon?”

“It is, indeed, that lovely young lady,” said Mr. ——. “I congratulate you on knowing one so admired. I suppose that you, being blessed with her acquaintance, do not need the formality of my introduction.”

“Umph!” said the stranger, rather shortly and uncourteously—“No! Perhaps you had better present me!”

“By what name, shall I have that honour, Sir?” discreetly enquired the nomenclator.

“Clifford!” answered the stranger; “Captain Clifford!”

Upon this, the prim Master of the ceremonies, threading his path through the now fast-filling room, approached towards Lucy to obey Mr. Clifford’s request. Meanwhile, that gentleman, before he followed the steps of the tutelary Spirit of the Place, paused, and said to his friends, in a tone careless, yet not without command, “Hark ye, Gentlemen, oblige me by being as

civil and silent as ye are able, and don't thrust yourselves upon me, as you are accustomed to do, whenever you see *no* opportunity of indulging me with that honour with the least show of propriety!" So saying, and waiting no reply, Mr. Clifford hastened after the Master of the ceremonies.

"Our friend grows mighty imperious!" said Long Ned, whom our readers have already recognized in the tall stranger.

"'Tis the way with your rising geniuses," answered the moralizing Augustus Tomlinson; "suppose we go to the card-room, and get up a rubber?"

"Well thought of," said Ned, yawning,—a thing he was very apt to do in society; "and I wish nothing worse to those who try our *rubbers*, than that they may be well cleaned by them. Upon this witticism the Colossus of Roads glancing towards the glass, strutted off, arm in arm with his companion, to the card-room.

During this short conversation the re-introduc-

tion of Mr. Clifford, (the stranger of the Rectory and deliverer of Dr. Slopperton) to Lucy Brandon had been effected, and the hand of the heiress was already engaged (according to the custom of that time) for the *two* ensuing dances.

It was about twenty minutes after the above presentation had taken place, that Lord Mauleverer and William Brandon entered the rooms, and the buzz created by the appearance of the noted Peer, and the distinguished lawyer, had scarcely subsided, before the Royal Personage expected to grace "the festive scene," (as the newspapers say of a great room with plenty of miserable-looking people in it) arrived. The most disagreeable and the most attractive persons in Europe may be found among the Royal Family of England. His present Majesty, for instance, among the one class; and as for the other, what say you to his Royal Highness the Duke of * * * * *; a man who, without flattery, may be said to unite the appearance of the Hun with the soul of the Vandal. The great personage then at Bath

belonged to the more pleasing class of Royalty, and in consequence of certain political intrigues, he wished, at that time especially, to make himself as popular as possible. Having gone the round of the old ladies, and assured them, as the Court Journal assures the old ladies at this day, that they were "morning stars," and "swan-like wonders," the Individual espied Brandon, and immediately beckoned to him with a familiar gesture. The smooth but saturnine lawyer approached the Royal presence with the manner that peculiarly distinguished him, and which blended, in no ungraceful mixture, a species of stiffness, that passed with the crowd for native independence, with a supple insinuation, that was usually deemed the token of latent benevolence of heart. There was something, indeed, in Brandon's address, that always pleased the Great; and they liked him the better, because, though he stood on no idle political points, mere differences in the view taken of a hairbreadth,—such as a corn law, or a Catholic bill; alteration in the church, or a reform

in parliament; yet he invariably talked so like a man of honour—(except when with Mauleverer)—that his urbanity seemed attachment to individuals, and his concessions to power, sacrifices of private opinion for the sake of obliging his friends.

“I am very glad indeed,” said the Royal Personage, “to see Mr. Brandon looking so much better. Never was the Crown in greater want of his services, and, if rumour speak true, they will soon be required in another department of his profession.”

Brandon bowed, and answered:—

“So please your Royal Highness, they will always be at the command of a King from whom I have experienced such kindness—in any capacity for which His Majesty may deem them fitting.”

“It *is* true then!” said His Royal Highness, significantly—“I congratulate you!” The quiet dignity of the bench must seem to you a great change, after a career so busy and restless?”

“I fear I shall feel it so at first, your Royal Highness,” answered Brandon, “for I like even the toil of my profession, and at this moment when I am in full practice—it more than ever—but—(checking himself at once)—His Majesty’s wishes, and my satisfaction in complying with them, are more than sufficient to remove any momentary regret I might otherwise have felt in quitting those toils which have now become to me a second nature.”

“It is possible,” rejoined the Royal Individual, “that His Majesty took into consideration the delicate state of health, which, in common with the whole public, I grieve to see, the papers have attributed to one of the most distinguished ornaments of the bar.”

“So please your Royal Highness,” answered Brandon, coolly—and with a smile which the most piercing eye could not have believed the mask to the agony then gnawing at his nerves,—“It is the interest of my rivals to exaggerate the little ailments of a weak constitution. I thank

Providence that I am now entirely recovered, and at no time of my life have I been less unable to discharge—so far as my *native* and *mental* incapacities will allow—the duties of any occupation, however arduous. Nay, as the brute grows accustomed to the mill, so have I grown wedded to business—and even the brief relaxation I have now allowed myself, seems to me rather irksome than pleasurable.”

“I rejoice to hear you speak thus;” answered His Royal Highness, warmly—“and I trust for many years, and,” added he in a lower tone—“in higher offices more *immediately* connected with the State, that we may profit by your talents. The times are those in which many occasions occur, that oblige all true servants of the Constitution to quit minor employments for that great constitutional one that concerns us all, the highest, and the meanest; and—(the royal voice sunk still lower)—I feel justified in assuring you, that the office of Chief Justice alone is not considered by his Majesty as a sufficient reward for your generous

sacrifice of present ambition to the difficulties of Government.”

Brandon's proud heart swelled, and at that moment the veriest pains of Hell would scarcely have been felt.

While the aspiring schemer was thus agreeably engaged, Mauleverer, sliding through the crowd with that grace which charmed every one, old and young, and addressing to all he knew some lively or affectionate remark, made his way to the dancers, among whom he had just caught a glimpse of Lucy.—“I wonder,” he thought, “whom she is dancing with? I hope it is that ridiculous fellow, Mossop, who tells a good story against himself; or that handsome ass, Belmont, who looks at his own legs, instead of seeming to have eyes for no one but his partner. Ah! if Tarquin had but known women as well as I do, he would have had no reason to be rough with Lucretia. 'Tis a thousand pities, that experience comes to us in women, as in the world, just when it begins to be no longer of use to us!”

As he made these moral reflections, Mauleverer gained the dancers, and beheld Lucy listening with downcast eyes, and cheeks that *evidently* blushed, to a young man, whom Mauleverer acknowledged at once to be one of the best-looking fellows he had ever seen. The stranger's countenance, despite an extreme darkness of complexion, was, to be sure, from the great regularity of the features, rather effeminate ; but on the other hand, his figure, though slender and graceful, betrayed to an experienced eye, an extraordinary proportion of sinew and muscle : and even the dash of effeminacy in the countenance, was accompanied by so manly and frank an air, and was so perfectly free from all coxcombry or self-conceit, that it did not in the least decrease the prepossessing effect of his appearance. An angry and bitter pang shot across that portion of Mauleverer's frame which the Earl thought fit, for want of another name, to call his heart. "How cursedly pleased she looks !" muttered he. "By Heaven ! that stolen glance under the left eyelid, dropped

as suddenly as it is raised!—and *he*—*ha!*—how firmly he holds that little hand. I think I see him paddle with it; and then the dog's earnest, intent look—and she all blushes! though she dare not look up to meet his gaze, feeling it by intuition.—Oh! the demure, modest, shamefaced hypocrite! How silent she is!—She can prate enough to *me*. I would give my promised garter, if she would but talk to him. Talk—talk—laugh—prattle—only simper, in God's name, and I shall be happy! But that bashful, blushing silence—it is insupportable. Thank Heaven, the dance is over! Thank Heaven, again! I have not felt such pains since the last nightmare I had, after dining with her father!”

With a face all smiles, but with a mien in which more dignity than he ordinarily assumed, was worn, Mauleverer now moved towards Lucy, who was leaning on her partner's arm. The Earl, who had ample tact where his consummate selfishness did not warp it, knew well how to act the lover, without running ridiculously into the

folly of seeming to play the hoary dangler. He sought rather to be lively than sentimental; and beneath the wit to conceal the suitor.

Having paid, then, with a careless gallantry his first compliments, he entered into so animated a conversation, interspersed with so many *naïve* yet palpably just observations on the characters present, that perhaps he had never appeared to more brilliant advantage. At length, as the music was about to recommence, Mauleverer, with a careless glance at Lucy's partner, said, "Will Miss Brandon now allow me the agreeable duty of conducting her to her father?"

"I believe," answered Lucy, and her voice suddenly became timid, "that according to the laws of the rooms, I am engaged to this gentleman for another dance."

Clifford, in an assured and easy tone, replied in assent.

As he spoke, Mauleverer honoured him with a more accurate survey than he had hitherto be-

stowed on him ; and whether or not there was any expression of contempt or superciliousness in the survey, it was sufficient to call up the indignant blood to Clifford's cheek. Returning the look with interest, he said to Lucy, " I believe, Miss Brandon, that the dance is about to begin ;" and Lucy obeying the hint, left the aristocratic Mauleverer to his own meditations.

At that moment, the Master of the ceremonies came bowing by, half afraid to address so great a person as Mauleverer, but willing to show his respect by the profoundness of his salutation.

" Aha ! my dear Mr. —— !" said the Earl, holding out both his hands to the Lycurgus of the rooms ; " how are you ? Pray can you inform me, who that young —— *man* is, now dancing with Miss Brandon ?"

" It is,—let me see—Oh ! it is a Captain Clifford, my Lord ! a very fine young man, my Lord ! Has your Lordship never met him ?"

" Never ! who is he ? one under your more especial patronage ?" said the Earl, smiling.

“Nay, indeed!” answered the Master of the ceremonies, with a simper of gratification; “I scarcely know who he is yet; the Captain only made his appearance here to-night for the first time. He came with two other gentlemen: Ah! there they are!” and he pointed to the Earl’s scrutinizing attention, the elegant forms of Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, and Mr. Ned Pepper, just emerging from the card-rooms. The swagger of the latter gentleman was so peculiarly important, that Mauleverer, angry as he was, could scarcely help laughing. The Master of the ceremonies noted the Earl’s countenance, and remarked, that “that fine-looking man seemed disposed to give himself *airs*!”

“Judging from the gentleman’s appearance,” said the Earl drily, (Ned’s face, to say truth, did betoken his affection for the bottle,) “I should imagine that he was much more accustomed to give himself *thorough draughts*.”

“Ah!” renewed the *arbiter elegantiarum*,—who had not heard Mauleverer’s observation,

which was uttered in a very low voice,—“ Ah ! they seem real dashers !”

“ Dashers !” repeated Mauleverer ; “ true, *haber-dashers !*”

Long Ned, now, having in the way of his profession acquitted himself tolerably well at the card-table, thought he had purchased the right to parade himself through the rooms, and show the ladies what stuff a Pepper could be made of.

Leaning with his left hand on Tomlinson’s arm, and employing the right in fanning himself furiously with his huge *chapeau bras*, the lengthy adventurer stalked slowly along—now setting out one leg jauntily—now the other—and ogling “ the ladies” with a kind of Irish look, viz. a look between a wink and a stare.

Released from the presence of Clifford, who kept a certain check on his companions, the apparition of Ned became glaringly conspicuous ; and wherever he passed, a universal whisper succeeded.

“ Who can he be ?” said the widow Matemore ;

“ ’tis a droll creature, but what a head of hair!”

“ For my part,” answered the spinster Sneerall, “ I think he is a linen-draper in disguise; for I heard him talk to his companion of ‘ tape.’”

“ Well, well,” thought Mauleverer, “ it would be but kind to seek out Brandon, and hint to him in what company his niece seems to have fallen!” And so thinking, he glided to the corner where, with a grey-headed old politician, the astute lawyer was conning the affairs of Europe.

In the interim, the second dance had ended, and Clifford was conducting Lucy to her seat, each charmed with the other, when he found himself abruptly tapped on the back, and turning round in alarm—for such taps were not unfamiliar to him—he saw the cool countenance of Long Ned, with one finger sagaciously laid beside the nose.

“ How now ?” said Clifford between his ground teeth, “ did I not tell thee to put that huge bulk of thine as far from me as possible ?”

“Umph!” grunted Ned, “if these are my thanks, I may as well keep my kindness to myself; but know you, my kid, that Lawyer Brandon is here, peering through the crowd, at this very moment, in order to catch a glimpse of that woman’s face of thine.”

“Ha!” answered Clifford in a very quick tone, “begone then! I will meet you without the rooms immediately.”

Clifford now turned to his partner, and bowing very low, in reality to hide his face from those sharp eyes which had once seen it in the Court of Justice Burnflat, said, “I trust, Madam, I shall have the honour to meet you again;—is it, if I may be allowed to ask, with your celebrated uncle that you are staying, or—”

“With my father,” answered Lucy, concluding the sentence Clifford had left unfinished; “but my uncle has been with us, though I fear he leaves us to-morrow.”

Clifford’s eyes sparkled; he made no answer, but, bowing again, receded into the crowd, and

disappeared. Several times that night did the brightest eyes in Somersetshire rove anxiously round the rooms in search of our Hero, but he was seen no more.

It was on the stairs that Clifford encountered his comrades ; taking an arm of each, he gained the door without any adventure worth noting—save that, being kept back by the crowd for a few moments, the moralizing Augustus Tomlinson, who honoured the moderate Whigs by enrolling himself among their number, took up, *pour passer le tems*, a tall gold-headed cane, and weighing it across his finger with a musing air, said, “ Alas ! among our supporters we often meet heads as heavy—but of what a different metal !” The crowd now permitting, Augustus was walking away with his companions, and in that absence of mind characteristic of philosophers, unconsciously bearing with him the gold-headed object of his reflection, when a stately footman stepping up to him, said, “ Sir, my cane !”

“ Cane, fellow !” said Tomlinson. “ Ah, I am so

absent!—here is thy cane—Only think of my carrying off the man's cane, Ned! ha! ha!”

“Absent, indeed!” grunted a knowing chairman, watching the receding figures of the three gentlemen: “Body o’ me! but it was *the cane* that was about to be absent.”

CHAPTER IV.

Whackum.—"My dear rogues, dear boys, Bluster and Ding-boy! you are the bravest fellows that ever scoured yet!"

SHADWELL'S "Scourers."

Cato, the Thessalian, was wont to say, that some things may be done unjustly, that many things may be done justly.

LORD BACON, (being a justification of every rascality.)

ALTHOUGH our three worthies had taken unto themselves a splendid lodging in Milsom-street, which to please Ned was over a hair-dresser's shop; yet, instead of returning thither, or repairing to such taverns as might give them best befitting their fashion and garb, they struck at once from the gay parts of the town, and tarried not till they reached a mean-looking ale-house in a remote suburb.

The door was opened to them by an elderly lady, and Clifford stalking before his companions into an apartment at the back of the house, asked if the other gentlemen were come yet.

“No!” returned the dame. “Old Mr. Bags came in about ten minutes ago; but hearing more work might be done, he went out again.”

“Bring the lush and the pipes, old blone!” cried Ned, throwing himself on a bench; “we are never at a loss for company!”

“You, indeed, never can be, who are always inseparably connected with the object of your admiration,” said Tomlinson drily, and taking up an old newspaper. Ned, who though choleric was a capital fellow, and could bear a joke on himself, smiled, and drawing forth a little pair of scissors, began trimming his nails.

“Curse me,” said he after a momentary silence, “if this is not a devilish deal pleasanter than playing the fine gentleman in that great room with a rose in one’s button-hole! What say you, Master Lovett?”

Clifford, (as henceforth *we* shall, despite his other aliases, denominate our hero,) who had thrown himself at full length on a bench at the far end of the room, and who seemed plunged into a sullen reverie, now looked up for a moment, and then turning round and presenting the dorsal part of his body to Long Ned, muttered, "Pish!"

"Harkye, Master Lovett!" said Long Ned, colouring, "I don't know what has come over you of late; but I would have you to learn that gentlemen are entitled to courtesy and polite behaviour; and so, d'ye see, if you ride your high horse upon me, splice my extremities, if I won't have satisfaction!"

"Hist, man, be quiet," said Tomlinson, philosophically snuffing the candles—

"For companions to quarrel,
Is extremely immoral.

Don't you see that the Captain is in a reverie? what good man ever loves to be interrupted in his meditations?—even Alfred the Great could

not bear it ! Perhaps, at this moment, with the true anxiety of a worthy chief, the Captain is designing something for our welfare !”

“ Captain, indeed,” muttered Long Ned, darting a wrathful look at Clifford, who had not deigned to pay any attention to Mr. Pepper’s threat ; “ for my part I cannot conceive what was the matter with us, when we chose this green slip of the gallows-tree for our captain of the district. To be sure, he did very well at first, and that robbery of the old Lord was not ill-planned—but lately——”

“ Nay, nay,” quoth Augustus, interrupting the gigantic grumbler, “ the nature of man is prone to discontent. Allow that our present design of setting up the gay Lothario, and trying our chances at Bath for an heiress, is owing as much to Lovett’s promptitude, as to our invention.”

“ And what good will come of it ?” returned Ned, as he lighted his pipe : “ answer me that ? Was I not dressed as fine as a lord—and did not I

walk three times up and down that great room without being a jot the better for it?"

"Ah, but you know not how many secret conquests you may have made: you cannot win a prize by looking upon it."

"Humph!" grunted Ned, applying himself discontentedly to the young existence of his pipe.

"As for the Captain's partner," renewed Tomlinson, who maliciously delighted in exciting the jealousy of the handsome "tax-collector," for that was the epithet by which Augustus thought proper to entitle himself and companions—"I will turn Tory if she be not already half in love with him; and did you hear the old gentleman who cut into our rubber say what a fine fortune she had? Faith, Ned, it is lucky for us two, that we all agreed to go shares in our marriage speculations; I fancy the worthy Captain will think it a bad bargain for himself."

"I am not so sure of that, Mr. Tomlinson," said Long Ned, sourly eyeing his comrade.

“Some women may be caught by a smooth skin and a showy manner, but *real* masculine beauty,—eyes, colour, and hair,—Mr. Tomlinson, must ultimately make its way—so hand me the brandy and cease your jaw.”

“Well, well,” said Tomlinson, “I’ll give you a toast — ‘The prettiest girl in England ;’—and that’s Miss Brandon !”

“You shall give no such toast, Sir !” said Clifford, starting from the bench—“What the devil is Miss Brandon to you ?—And now, Ned,”—(seeing that the tall hero looked on him with an unfavourable aspect,)—“here’s my hand, forgive me if I was uncivil. Tomlinson will tell you in a maxim, men are changeable. Here’s to your health, and it shall not be my fault, gentlemen, if we have not a merry evening !”

This speech, short as it was, met with great applause from the two friends, and Clifford, as president, stationed himself in a huge chair at the head of the table. Scarcely had he assumed this dignity, before the door opened, and half-a-dozen

of the gentlemen confederates trooped somewhat noisily into the apartment.

“ Softly, softly, Messieurs,” said the President, recovering all his constitutional gaiety, yet blending it with a certain negligent command—“ respect for the chair, if you please ! ’tis the way with all assemblies where the public purse is a matter of deferential interest !”

“ Hear him !” cried Tomlinson.

“ What, my old friend Bags !” said the President, “ you have not come empty-handed, I will swear ; your honest face is like the table of contents to the good things in your pockets !”

“ Ah, Captain Clifford,” said the veteran, groaning, and shaking his reverend head, “ I have seen the day when there was not a lad in England forked so largely, so comprehensively-like, as I did. But, as King Lear says at Common Garden, ‘ I be’s old now !’ ”

“ But your zeal is as youthful as ever, my fine fellow,” said the Captain soothingly ; “ and if you do not clean out the public as thoroughly

as heretofore, it is not the fault of your inclinations."

"No, that it is not!" cried the "Tax-Collectors" unanimously; "And if ever a pocket is to be picked neatly, quietly, and effectually," added the complimentary Clifford, "I do not know to this day, throughout the three kingdoms, a neater, quieter, and more effective set of fingers than Old Bags's!"

The veteran bowed disclaimingly, and took his seat among the heartfelt good wishes of the whole assemblage.

"And now, gentlemen," said Clifford, as soon as the revellers had provided themselves with their wonted luxuries, potatory and fumous, "let us hear your adventures, and rejoice our eyes with their produce. The gallant Attie shall begin—but first, a toast,—'May those who leap from a hedge never leap from a tree!'"

This toast being drunk with enthusiastic applause, Fighting Attie began the recital of his little history.

“ You sees, Captain,” said he, putting himself in a martial position, and looking Clifford full in the face, “ that I ’m not addicted to much blarney. Little cry and much wool is my motto. At ten o’clock, A.M. saw the enemy — in the shape of a Doctor of Divinity. ‘ Blow me,’ says I, to Old Bags, ‘ but I ’ll do his reverence !’— ‘ Blow me,’ says Old Bags, ‘ but you shan’t — you ’ll have us scragged if you touches the church.’— ‘ My grandmother !’ says I. ‘ Bags tells the pals—all in a fuss about it—what care I ?—I puts on a decent dress, and goes to the Doctor as a decayed soldier, *wot* supplies the shops in the Turning line. His reverence—a fat jolly dog as ever you see—was at dinner over a fine roast-pig. So I tells him I have some bargains at home for him. Splice me, if the Doctor did not think he had got a prize ! so he puts on his boots and he comes with me to my house. But when I gets him into a lane, out come my pops. ‘ Give up, Doctor,’ says I ; ‘ others must share the goods of the Church now.’ You has no idea what a row he made : but I did the thing, and there ’s an end on’t.”

“Bravo, Attie!” cried Clifford, and the word echoed round the board. Attie put a purse on the table, and the next gentleman was called to confession.

“It skills not, boots not,” gentlest of readers, to record each of the narratives that now followed one another. Old Bags, in especial, preserved his well-earned reputation, by emptying six pockets, which had been filled with every possible description of petty valuables. Peasant and prince appeared alike to have come under his hands; and, perhaps, the good old man had done in one town more towards effecting an equality of goods among different ranks, than all the Reformers, from Cornwall to Carlisle. Yet so keen was his appetite for the sport, that the veteran appropriator absolutely burst into tears at not having “forked more.”

“I love a warm-hearted enthusiasm,” cried Clifford, handling the moveables, while he gazed lovingly on the ancient purloiner; —“May new cases never teach us to forget Old Bags!”

As soon as this ‘sentiment’ had been duly

drunk, and Mr. Bagshot had dried his tears and applied himself to his favourite drink—which, by the way, was “blue ruin,”—the work of division took place. The discretion and impartiality of the Captain in this arduous part of his duty attracted universal admiration; and each gentleman having carefully pouched his share, the youthful President hemmed thrice, and the society became aware of a purposed speech.

“Gentlemen!” began Clifford, and his main supporter, the sapient Augustus, shouted out ‘Hear!’—“Gentlemen, you all know that when, some months ago, you were pleased,—partly at the instigation of Gentleman George,—God bless him!—partly from the exaggerated good opinion expressed of me by my friends,—to elect me to the high honour of the command of this district; I myself was by no means ambitious to assume that rank, which I knew well was far beyond my merits, and that responsibility, which I knew with equal certainty was too weighty for my powers. Your voices, however, overruled my own, and as

Mr. Muddlepudd, the great metaphysician, in that excellent paper the *Asinæum* was wont to observe, ‘the susceptibilities, innate, extensible, incomprehensible, and eternal,’ existing in my bosom, were infinitely more powerful than the shallow suggestions of reason—that ridiculous thing which all wise men and judicious *Asinæans* sedulously stifle.”

“Plague take the man, what is he talking about?” said Long Ned, who we have seen was of an envious temper, in a whisper to Old Bags. Old Bags shook his head.

“In a word, gentlemen,” renewed Clifford, “your kindness overpowered me; and despite my cooler inclinations, I accepted your flattering proposal. Since then I have endeavoured, so far as I have been able, to advance your interests; I have kept a vigilant eye upon all my neighbours; I have, from county to county, established numerous correspondents; and our exertions have been carried on with a promptitude that has ensured success.

“Gentlemen, I do not wish to boast, but on these nights of periodical meetings, when every quarter brings us to go halves—when we meet in private to discuss the affairs of the public—show our earnings, as it were, in privy-council, and divide them amicably, as it were, in the cabinet,—(‘Hear! hear! from Mr. Tomlinson,’)—it is customary for your Captain for the time being, to remind you of his services, engage your pardon for his deficiencies, and your good wishes for his future exertions.—Gentlemen! has it ever been said of Paul Lovett that he heard of a prize and forgot to tell you of his news?—(‘Never! never!’ loud cheering.)—Has it ever been said of him that he sent others to seize the booty and stayed at home to think how it should be spent?—(‘No! no!’ repeated cheers.)—Has it ever been said of him that he took less share than his due of your danger and more of your guineas?—(Cries in the negative, accompanied with vehement applause.)—Gentlemen, I thank you for these flattering and audible testimonials in my favour; but the

points on which I have dwelt, however necessary to my honour, would prove but little for my merits; they might be worthy notice in your comrade, you demand more subtle duties in your chief. Gentlemen! has it ever been said of Paul Lovett that he sent out brave men on forlorn hopes? that he hazarded your own heads by *rash* attempts in acquiring pictures of King George's? that zeal, in short, was greater in him than caution? or that his love of a *quid** ever made him neglectful of your just aversion to a *quod*?†— (Unanimous cheering.)

“Gentlemen, since I have had the honour to preside over your welfare, Fortune, which favours the bold, has not been unmerciful to you! But three of our companions have been missed from our peaceful festivities. One, Gentlemen, I myself expelled from our corps for ungentlemanlike practices: he picked pockets of *fogles**—it was a vulgar employment. Some of you, Gentlemen, have done the same for amusement—Jack Little-

* *Quid*,—a guinea. † *Quod*,—a prison. ‡ Handkerchiefs.

fork did it for occupation. I expostulated with him in public and in private; Mr. Pepper cut his society; Mr. Tomlinson read him an essay on Real Greatness of Soul: all was in vain. He was pumped by the mob for the theft of a *bird's-eye wipe*. The fault I had borne with—the detection was unpardonable: I expelled him.—Who's here so base as would be a *fogle-hunter*? if any, speak, for him have I offended! Who's here so rude as would not be a gentleman? if any, speak, for him have I offended! I pause for a reply! What, none! then none have I offended.—(Loud cheers.)—Gentlemen, I may truly add, that I have done no more to Jack Littlefork than you should do to Paul Lovett! The next vacancy in our ranks was occasioned by the loss of Patrick Blunderbull. You know, Gentlemen, the vehement exertions that I made to save that misguided creature, whom I had made exertions no less earnest to instruct. But he chose to swindle under the name of the 'Honourable Captain Smico;' the Peerage gave him the lie at once;

his case was one of aggravation, and he was so remarkably ugly, that he ‘created no interest.’ He left us for a foreign exile; and if, as a man, I lament him, I confess to you, Gentlemen, as a ‘Tax-collector,’ I am easily consoled.

“Our third loss must be fresh in your memory. Peter Popwell, as bold a fellow as ever breathed, is no more!”—(a movement in the assembly)—“Peace be with him! He died on the field of battle; shot dead by a Scotch Colonel, whom poor Popwell thought to rob of nothing with an empty pistol. His memory, Gentlemen—in solemn silence!

“These make the catalogue of our losses,”—(resumed the youthful chief, so soon as the ‘red cup had crowned the memory’ of Peter Popwell,)—“I am proud, even in sorrow, to think that the blame of those losses rests not with me. And now, friends and followers! Gentlemen of the Road, the Street, the Theatre, and the Shop! Prigs, Toby-men, and Squires of the Cross! According to the laws of our Society, I resign into your hands that

power which for two quarterly terms you have confided to mine, ready to sink into your ranks as a comrade, nor unwilling to renounce the painful honour I have borne;—borne with much infirmity, it is true; but at least, with a sincere desire to serve that cause with which you have entrusted me.”

So saying, the Captain descended from his chair, amidst the most uproarious applause; and as soon as the first burst had partially subsided, Augustus Tomlinson rising, with one hand in his breeches' pocket and the other stretched out, said:

“Gentlemen, I move that Paul Lovett be again chosen as our Captain for the ensuing term of three months.—(Deafening cheers.)—Much might I say about his surpassing merits, but why dwell upon that which is obvious? Life is short! Why should speeches be long? Our lives, perhaps, are shorter than the lives of other men: why should not our harangues be of a suitable brevity? Gentlemen, I shall say but one word in favour of my excellent friend; of mine, say I? ay, of mine,

of yours. He is a friend to all of us! A prime minister is not more useful to his followers, and more burthensome to the public, than I am proud to say is—Paul Lovett!—(Loud plaudits.)—What I shall urge in his favour is simply this: The man whom opposite parties unite in praising, must have supereminent merit. Of all your companions, Gentlemen, Paul Lovett is the only man, who to that merit can advance a claim.—(Applause.)—You all know, Gentlemen, that our body has long been divided into two factions; each jealous of the other—each desirous of ascendancy—and each emulous which shall put the greatest number of fingers into the public pie. In the language of the vulgar, the one faction would be called ‘Swindlers,’ and the other ‘Highwaymen.’ I, Gentlemen, who am fond of finding new names for things, and for persons, and am a bit of a politician, call the one *Whigs*, and the other *Tories*.—(Clamorous cheering.)—Of the former body, I am esteemed no uninfluential member; of the latter faction, Mr. Bags is justly consi-

dered the most shining ornament. Mr. Attie and Mr. Edward Pepper can scarcely be said to belong entirely to either: they unite the good qualities of both: 'British compounds' some term them: I term them *Liberal Aristocrats!*—(Cheers.)—I now call upon you all, Whig or Swindler; Tory or Highwayman; 'British compounds' or Liberal Aristocrats; I call upon you all, to name me one man whom you will all agree to elect?"

All — "Lovett for ever!"

"Gentlemen!" continued the sagacious Augustus, "that shout is sufficient; without another word, I propose as your Captain, Mr. Paul Lovett."

"And I seconds the motion!" said old Mr. Bags.

Our hero, being now, by the unanimous applause of his confederates, restored to the chair of office, returned thanks in a neat speech; and Scarlet Jem declared, with great solemnity, that it did equal honour to his head and heart.

The thunders of eloquence being hushed,

flashes of lightning, or, as the vulgar say, ‘glasses of gin,’ gleamed about. Good old Mr. Bags stuck, however, to his blue ruin, and Attie to the bottle of bingo: some, among whom were Clifford, and the wise Augustus, called for wine; and Clifford, who exerted himself to the utmost in supporting the gay duties of his station, took care that the song should vary the pleasures of the bowl. Of the songs chosen we have only been enabled to preserve two. The first is by Long Ned, and though we confess we can see but little in it, yet (perhaps from some familiar allusion or another, with which we are necessarily unacquainted,) it produced a prodigious sensation,—it ran thus:—

The Rogue's Recipe.

Your honest fool a rogue to make,
 As great as can be seen, Sir,—
 Two hacknied rogues you first must take,
 Then place your fool between, Sir.

Virtue's a dunghill cock, ashamed
 Of self when pair'd with game ones,
 And wildest elephants are tamed
 If stuck betwixt two tame ones.

The other effusion with which we have the

honour to favour our readers, is a very amusing duet which took place between Fighting Attie and a tall thin robber, who was a dangerous fellow in a mob, and was therefore called Mobbing Francis—it was commenced by the latter.

Mobbing Francis.

The best of all robbers as ever I know'd,
 Is the bold Fighting Attie, the pride of the road!—
 Fighting Attie, my hero, I saw you to-day
 A purse full of yellow-boys seize,
 And, as just at present *I'm low in the lay,*
 I'll borrow a *quid*, if you please.
 Oh! bold Fighting Attie—the knowing—the natty—
 By us all it must sure be confest,
 Though your shoppers and snobbers are pretty good robbers,
 A Soldier is always the best.

Fighting Attie.

* *Stubble your whids,*
 You wants to trick I!
 Lend you my *quids*?—
 Not one, by Dickey!

Mobbing Francis.

Oh, what a beast is a niggardly ruffler,
 Nabbing—grabbing all for himself;
 Hang it, old fellow, I'll hit you a muffler,
 Since you won't give me a pinch of the pelf.

* Hold your tongue.

You has not a heart for the *general distress*,—
 You cares not a mag if our party should fall,
 And if Scarlet Jem were not good at a press,
 By Goles it would soon be all up with us all !—
 Oh ! Scarlet Jem, he is trusty and trim,
 Like his wig to his poll, sticks his conscience to him !
 But I vows I despises the fellow who prizes
 More his own ends than the popular stock, Sir,
 And the soldier as bones, for himself and his crones,
 Should be bon'd like a traitor himself at the block, Sir.

This severe response of Mobbing Francis's did not in the least ruffle the constitutional calmness of Fighting Attie ; but the wary Clifford seeing that Francis had lost his temper, and watchful over the least sign of disturbance among the company, instantly called for another song, and Mobbing Francis sullenly knocked down Old Bags.

The night was far gone, and so were the wits of the honest Tax-gatherers : when the President commanded silence, and the convivialists knew that their chief was about to issue forth the orders for the ensuing term. Nothing could be better timed than such directions,—during merriment, and before oblivion.

“Gentlemen!” said the Captain, “I will now, with your leave, impart to you all the plans I have formed for each. You, Attie, shall repair to London: be the Windsor road and the purlieus of Pimlico your especial care. Look you, my Hero, to these letters, they will apprise you of much work; I need not caution you to silence. Like the oyster, you never open your mouth but for something.—Honest Old Bags, a rich grazier will be in Smithfield on Thursday, his name is Hodges, and he will have somewhat like a thousand pounds in his pouch. He is green, fresh, and avaricious; offer to assist him in defrauding his neighbours in a bargain, and cease not till thou hast *done* that with him which he wished to do to others. Be—excellent old man!—like the frog-fish which fishes for other fishes with two horns that resemble baits, the prey dart at the horns, and are down the throat in an instant!—For thee, dearest Jem, these letters announce a prize:—fat is Parson Pliant; full is his purse; and he rides from Henley to Oxford on Friday—I

need say no more! As for the rest of you, gentlemen, on this paper you will see your destinations fixed. I warrant you, ye will find enough work till we meet again this day three months. Myself, Augustus Tomlinson, and Ned Pepper, remain at Bath; we have business in hand, gentlemen, of paramount importance; should you, by accident, meet us, never acknowledge us — we are incog; striking at high game, and putting on falcon's plumes to do it in character — you understand — but this accident can scarcely occur, for none of you will remain at Bath; by to-morrow night, may the road receive you. And now, gentlemen, speed the glass, and I'll give you a sentiment by way of a spur to it —

‘Much sweeter than honey
Is other men's money!’”

Our hero's maxim was received with all the enthusiasm which agreeable truisms usually create. And old Mr. Bags rose to address the chair; unhappily for the edification of the audience, the

veteran's foot slipped before he had proceeded farther than "Mr. President," he fell to the earth with a sort of reel—

"Like shooting stars he fell to rise no more!"

His body made a capital footstool for the luxurious Pepper. Now Augustus Tomlinson and Clifford, exchanging looks, took every possible pains to promote the hilarity of the evening, and before the third hour of morning had sounded, they had the satisfaction of witnessing the effects of their benevolent labours in the prostrate forms of all their companions. Long Ned, naturally more capacious than the rest, succumbed the last.

"As leaves of trees," said the chairman, waving his hand—

"As leaves of trees the race of man is found,
Now *fresh with dew*, now withering on the ground."

"Well said, my Hector of Highways!" cried Tomlinson, and then helping himself to the wine, while he employed his legs in removing the supine forms of Scarlet Jem and Long Ned, he

continued the Homeric quotation, with a pompous and self-gratulatory tone.

“ So flourish *these* when *those* have passed away !”

“ We managed to get rid of our friends,” began Clifford——

“ Like Whigs in place,” interrupted the politician.

“ Right, Tomlinson, thanks to the milder properties of our drink, and, perchance, to the stronger qualities of our heads ; and now tell me, my friend, what think you of our chance of success ? Shall we catch an heiress or not ?”

“ Why really,” said Tomlinson, “ women are like those calculations in arithmetic, which one can never bring to an exact account ; for my part, I shall stuff my calves, and look out for a widow. You, my good fellow, seem to stand a fair chance with Miss ——.”

“ Oh, name her not !” cried Clifford, colouring, even through the flush which wine had spread over his countenance. “ Somehow or other, ours are not the lips by which her name should be

breathed ; and faith, when I think of her, I do it anonymously.”

“ What, *have* you ever thought of her before this evening ? ”

“ Yes, for months,” answered Clifford. “ You remember some time ago, when we formed the plan for robbing Lord Mauleverer, how, rather for frolic than profit, you robbed Dr. Slopperton, of Warlock, while I compassionately walked home with the old gentleman. Well, at the parson’s house, I met Miss Brandon ;—mind, if I speak of her by name, *you* must not—and by Heaven !—but I won’t swear.—I accompanied her home. You know, before morning we robbed Mauleverer, the affair made a noise, and I feared to endanger you all if I appeared in the vicinity of the robbery. Since then, business diverted my thoughts ; we formed the plan of trying a matrimonial speculation at Bath. I came hither—guess my surprise at seeing *her*”—

“ And your delight,” added Tomlinson, “ at hearing she is as rich as she is pretty.”

“No!” answered Clifford, quickly; “that thought gives me no pleasure—you stare. I will try and explain. You know, dear Tomlinson, I’m not much of a canter, and yet my heart shrinks when I look on that innocent face, and hear that soft, happy voice, and think that my love to her can be only ruin and disgrace; nay, that my very address is contamination, and my very glance towards her an insult.”

“Hey day!” quoth Tomlinson, “have you been under my instructions, and learned the true value of words? and can you have any scruples left on so easy a point of conscience? True, you may call your representing yourself to her as an unprofessional gentleman, and so winning her affections, deceit; but why call it deceit when a ‘*genius for intrigue*’ is so much neater a phrase: in like manner, by marrying the young lady, if you say *you have ruined her*, you justly deserve to be annihilated; but why not say you have ‘*saved yourself*,’ and then, my dear fellow, you

will have done the most justifiable thing in the world.”

“ Pish, man !” said Clifford, peevishly ; “ none of thy sophisms, and sneers !”

“ By the soul of Sir Edward Coke, I am serious !—but look you, my friend, this is not a matter where it is *convenient* to have a tender-footed conscience. You see these fellows on the ground !—all d—d clever, and so forth ; but you and I are of a different order. I have had a classical education, seen the world, and mixed in decent society ; you, too, had not been long a member of our club, before you distinguished yourself above us all. Fortune smiled on your youthful audacity. You grew particular in horses and dress, frequented public haunts, and being a deuced good-looking fellow, with an inborn air of gentility, and some sort of education, you became sufficiently well received, to acquire, in a short time, the manner and tone of a——what shall I say,—a gentleman, and the taste to like suitable associates. This is

my case too ! Despite our labours for the public weal, the ungrateful dogs see that we are above them ; a single envious breast is sufficient to give us to the hangman ; we have agreed that we are in danger, we have agreed to make an honourable retreat ! we cannot do so without money ; you know the vulgar distich among our set. Nothing can be truer—

‘ Hanging is nation
More nice than starvation !’

You will not carry off some of the common stock, though I think you justly might, considering how much you have put into it ; What, then, shall we do ? Work we cannot ! Beg we will not ! and between you and me we are cursedly extravagant ! What remains but marriage ?”

“ It is true !” said Clifford, with a half sigh.

“ You may well sigh, my good fellow ; marriage is a lackadaisical proceeding at best ; but there is no resource : and now, when you have got a liking to a young lady who is as rich as a she Cræsus, and so gilded the pill as bright as a Lord Mayor’s

coach, what the devil have you to do with scruples?"

Clifford made no answer, and there was a long pause; perhaps he would not have spoken so frankly as he had done, if the wine had not opened his heart.

"How proud," renewed Tomlinson, "the good old matron at Thames Court will be if you marry a lady! you have not seen her lately?"

"Not for years," answered our hero: "Poor old soul! I believe that she is well in health, and I take care that she should not be poor in pocket."

"But why not visit her? Perhaps, like all great men, especially of a liberal turn of mind, you are ashamed of old friends, eh?"

"My good fellow, is that like me? Why you know the beaux of our set look askant on me for not keeping up my dignity, robbing only in company with well-dressed gentlemen, and swindling under the name of a Lord's nephew; no, my reasons are these:—first, you must know, that the old

dame had set her heart on my turning out an honest man."

"And so you have!" interrupted Augustus; "honest to your party: what more would you have from either prig or politician?"

"I believe," continued Clifford, not heeding the interruption, "that my poor mother, before she died, desired that I might be reared honestly; and strange as it may seem to you—Dame Lobkins is a conscientious woman in her own way—it is not her fault if I have turned out as I have done. Now I know well that it would grieve her to the quick to see me what I am. Secondly, my friend, under my new names, various as they are,—Jackson and Howard, Russel and Pigwiggin, Villiers and Gotobed, Cavendish and Solomons,—you may well suppose that the good persons in the neighbourhood of Thames Court have no suspicion that the adventurous and accomplished Ruffler, at present Captain of this district, under the new appellation of Lovett, is in reality no other than the obscure and surnameless Paul of

the Mug. Now you and I, Augustus, have read human nature, though in the *black letter*, and I know well that were I to make my appearance in Thames Court, and were the old lady—(as she certainly would, not from unkindness but inebriety, not that she loves me less but heavy-wet more)—to divulge the secret of that appearance—”

“ You know well,” interrupted the vivacious Tomlinson, “ that the identity of your former meanness with your present greatness would be easily traced; the envy and jealousy of your early friends aroused; a hint of your whereabouts and your aliases given to the police, and yourself grabbed, with a slight possibility of a hempen consummation.”

“ You conceive me exactly !” answered Clifford : “ the fact is, that I have observed in nine cases out of ten our bravest fellows have been taken off by the treachery of some early sweetheart or the envy of some boyish friend. My destiny is not yet fixed; I am worthy of better things than a ride in the cart with a nosegay in my hand; and

though I care not much about death in itself, I am resolved, if possible, not to die a highwayman; hence my caution, and that prudential care for secrecy and safe asylums, which men less wise than you have so often thought an unnatural contrast to my conduct on the road."

"Fools!" said the philosophical Tomlinson; "what has the bravery of a warrior to do with his insuring his house from fire?"

"However," said Clifford, "I send my good nurse a fine gift every now and then to assure her of my safety; and thus, notwithstanding my absence, I shew my affection by my *presents*;—excuse a pun!"

"And have you never been detected by any of your quondam associates?"

"Never!—remember in what a much more elevated sphere of life I have been thrown; and who could recognise the scamp Paul with a fustian-jacket in gentleman Paul with a laced-waistcoat? Besides, I have diligently avoided every place where I was likely to encounter those who

saw me in childhood. You know how little I frequent flash houses, and how scrupulous I am in admitting new confederates into our band; you and Pepper are the only two of my associates—(save my *protegé*, as you express it, who never deserts the cave,)—that possess a knowledge of my identity with the lost Paul; and as ye have both taken that dread oath to silence, which to disobey, until, indeed, I be in the gaol or on the gibbet, is almost to be assassinated, I consider my secret is little likely to be broken, save with my own consent.”

“ True,” said Augustus, nodding; “ one more glass, and to-bed, Mr. Chairman.”

“ I pledge you, my friend; our last glass shall be philanthropically quaffed; — ‘ All fools, and may their money be soon parted!’ ”

“ All fools!” cried Tomlinson, filling a bumper, “ but I quarrel with the wisdom of your toast; — may fools be rich and rogues will never be poor. I would make a better livelihood of a rich fool than a landed estate.”

So saying, the contemplative and ever-sagacious Tomlinson, tossed off his bumper, and the pair, having kindly rolled by pedal applications, the body of Long Ned into a safe and quiet corner of the room, mounted the stairs, arm-in-arm, in search of somnabular accommodations.

CHAPTER V.

That contrast of the harden'd and mature,
The calm brow brooding o'er the project dark,
With the clear, loving heart, and spirit pure
Of youth—I love—yet, hating, love to mark !

H. FLETCHER.

ON the forenoon of the day after the ball, the carriage of William Brandon, packed and prepared, was at the door of his abode at Bath ; meanwhile, the lawyer was closeted with his brother. “ My dear Joseph,” said the Barrister, “ I do not leave you without being fully sensible of your kindness evinced to me, both in coming hither, contrary to your habits, and accompanying me every where, despite of your tastes.”

“ Mention it not, my dear William,” said the kind-hearted Squire, “ for your delightful society

is to me the most agreeable—(and that 's what I can say of very few people like you ; for, for my own part, I generally find the cleverest men *the most unpleasant*)—*in the world!* And I think lawyers in particular — (very different, indeed, from your tribe *you are!*) — *perfectly intolerable!*"

“ I have now,” said Brandon, who with his usual nervous quickness of action was walking with rapid strides to and fro the apartment, and scarcely noted his brother's compliment.—“ I have now another favour to request of you.—Consider this house and these servants yours, for the next month or two, at least. Don't interrupt me — it is no compliment — I speak for our family benefit.” And then seating himself next to his brother's arm-chair, for a fit of the gout made the Squire a close prisoner, Brandon unfolded to his brother his cherished scheme of marrying Lucy to Lord Mauleverer. Notwithstanding the constancy of the Earl's attentions to the heiress, the honest Squire had never dreamt of their palpable object ; and he was overpowered with surprise when he heard the lawyer's expectations.

“ But, my dear brother,” he began, “ so great a match for my Lucy, the Lord-Lieutenant of the Coun——”

“ And what of that ?” cried Brandon proudly, and interrupting his brother ; “ is not the race of Brandon, which has matched its scions with royalty, far nobler than that of the upstart stock of Mauleverer ?—what is there presumptuous in the hope that the descendant of the Earls of Suffolk should regild a faded name with some of the precious dust of the quondam silversmiths of London ?—Besides,” he continued after a pause “ Lucy will be rich—very rich—and before two years my rank may possibly be of the same order as Mauleverer’s !”

The Squire stared ; and Brandon, not giving him time to answer, resumed.—It is needless to detail the conversation ; suffice it to say, that the artful barrister did not leave his brother till he had gained his point—till Joseph Brandon had promised to remain at Bath in possession of the house and establishment of his brother, to throw no impediment on the suit of Mauleverer, to cul-

tivate society as before, and, above all, not to alarm Lucy, who evidently did not yet favour Mauleverer exclusively, by hinting to her the hopes and expectations of her uncle and father. Brandon, now taking leave of his brother, mounted to the drawing-room in search of Lucy. He found her leaning over the gilt cage of one of her feathered favourites, and speaking to the little inmate in that pretty and playful language in which all thoughts, innocent, yet fond, should be clothed. So beautiful did Lucy seem, as she was thus engaged in her girlish and caressing employment, and so utterly unlike one meet to be the instrument of ambitious designs, and the sacrifice of worldly calculations, that Brandon paused, suddenly smitten at heart, as he beheld her; he was not, however, slow in recovering himself; he approached, "Happy he," said the man of the world, "for whom caresses and words like these are reserved!"

Lucy turned. "It is ill!" she said, pointing to the bird, which sat with its feathers stiff and

erect, mute and heedless even of that voice which was as musical as its own.

“ Poor prisoner !” said Brandon, “ even gilt cages and sweet tones cannot compensate to thee for the loss of the air and the wild woods !”

“ But,” said Lucy anxiously, “ it is not confinement which makes it ill ! If you think so, I will release it instantly.”

“ How long have you had it ?” asked Brandon.

“ For three years !” said Lucy.

“ And is it your *chief* favourite ?”

“ Yes ; it does not sing so prettily as the other — but it is far more sensible, and *so* affectionate.”

“ Can you release it then ?” asked Brandon, smiling ; “ would it not be better to see it die in your custody, than to let it live and to see it no more ?”

“ Oh, no, no !” said Lucy eagerly, “ when I love any one — any thing — I wish that to be happy, not me !”

As she said this, she took the bird from the cage, and bearing it to the open window, kissed it,

and held it on her hand, in the air. The poor bird turned a languid and sickly eye around it, as if the sight of the crowded houses and busy streets presented nothing familiar or inviting; and it was not till Lucy, with a tender courage, shook it gently from her, that it availed itself of the proffered liberty. It flew first to an opposite balcony, and then recovering from a short and, as it were, surprised pause, took a brief circuit above the houses, and after disappearing for a few minutes, flew back, circled the window, and re-entering, settled once more on the fair form of its mistress and nestled into her bosom.

Lucy covered it with kisses. "You see it will not leave me!" said she.

"Who can?" said the uncle warmly, charmed for the moment from every thought, but that of kindness for the young and soft creature before him;—"Who can?" he repeated with a sigh, "but an old and withered ascetic like myself. I must leave you indeed; see, my carriage is at the door! Will my beautiful niece, among the

gaieties that surround her, condescend now and then to remember the crabbed lawyer, and assure him by a line of her happiness and health. Though I rarely write any notes, but those upon cases: *you*, at least, may be sure of an answer. And tell me, Lucy, if there be in all this city one so foolish as to think that these idle gems, useful only as a vent for my pride in you, can add a single charm to a beauty above all ornament?"

So saying, Brandon produced a leathern case, and touching a spring, the imperial flash of diamonds which would have made glad many a patrician heart, broke dazzlingly on Lucy's eyes.

"No thanks, Lucy," said Brandon, in answer to his niece's disclaiming and shrinking gratitude; "I do honour to myself, not you; and now bless you, my dear girl. Farewell! Should any occasion present itself in which you require an immediate adviser, at once kind and wise, I beseech you, my dearest Lucy, as a parting request, to have no scruples in consulting Lord Maulverer. Besides his friendship for me, he is much

interested in you, and you may consult him with the more safety and assurance; because" (and the lawyer smiled) "he is perhaps the only man in the world whom my Lucy could not make in love with her. His gallantry may appear adulation, but it is never akin to love. Promise me, that you will not hesitate in this?"

Lucy gave the promise readily, and Brandon continued in a careless tone: "I hear that you danced last night with a young gentleman whom no one knew, and whose companions bore a very strange appearance. In a place like Bath, society is too mixed, not to render the greatest caution in forming acquaintances absolutely necessary. You must pardon me, my dearest niece, if I remark that a young lady owes it not only to herself, but to her relations, to observe the most rigid circumspection of conduct. This is a wicked world, and the peach-like bloom of character is easily rubbed away. In these points, Mauleverer can be of great use to you. His knowledge of character — his penetration into men — and his

tact in manners—are unerring. Pray be guided by him: whomsoever he warns you against, you may be sure is unworthy of your acquaintance. God bless you! you *will* write to me often and frankly, dear Lucy; tell me all that happens to you — all that interests, nay, all that displeases.”

Brandon then, who had seemingly disregarded the blushes with which, during his speech, Lucy's cheeks had been spread, folded his niece in his arms, and hurried, as if to hide his feelings, into his carriage. When the horses had turned the street, he directed the postilions to stop at Lord Mauleverer's. “Now,” said he to himself, “if I can get this clever coxcomb to second my schemes, and play according to my game, and not according to his own vanity, I shall have a Knight of the Garter for my nephew-in-law!”

Meanwhile Lucy, all in tears, for she loved her uncle greatly, ran down to the Squire to show him Brandon's magnificent present.

“Ah!” said the Squire with a sigh, “few

men were born with more good, generous, and great qualities—(pity only that his chief desire was to get on in the world; for my part, I think *no motive makes greater and more cold-hearted rogues!*)—*than my brother William!*”

CHAPTER VI.

Why did she love him ?—curious fool, be still !
Is human love the growth of human will ?
To her he might be gentleness !—LORD BYRON.

IN three weeks from the time of his arrival, Captain Clifford was the most admired man in Bath. It is true, that gentlemen who have a quicker tact as to the respectability of their own sex than women, might have looked a little shy upon him, had he not himself especially shunned appearing intrusive, and indeed rather avoided the society of men than courted it ; so that after he had fought a duel with a Baronet, (the son of a shoe-maker,) who called him *one* Clifford, and had exhibited a flea-bitten horse, allowed to be the finest in Bath, he rose insensibly

into a certain degree of respect with the one sex as well as popularity with the other. But what always attracted and kept alive suspicion, was his intimacy with so peculiar and *dashing a looking* gentleman as Mr. Edward Pepper. People could get over a certain frankness in Clifford's address, but the most lenient were astounded by the swagger of Long Ned. Clifford, however, not insensible to the ridicule attached to his acquaintances, soon managed to pursue his occupations alone; nay, he took a lodging to himself, and left Long Ned and Augustus Tomlinson (the latter to operate as a check on the former) to the quiet enjoyment of the hairdresser's apartments. He himself attended all public gaieties, and his mien, and the appearance of wealth which he maintained, procured him access into several private circles, which pretended to be exclusive. As if English people who had daughters ever could be exclusive! Many were the kind looks, nor few the inviting letters which he received. And if his sole object had been to marry an

heiress, he would have found no difficulty in attaining it. But he devoted himself entirely to Lucy Brandon ; and to win one glance from her, he would have renounced all the heiresses in the kingdom. Most fortunately for him, Mauleverer, whose health was easily *deranged*, had fallen ill the very day William Brandon left Bath ; and his Lordship was thus rendered unable to watch the movements of Lucy, and undermine, or totally prevent the success of her lover. Miss Brandon, indeed, had at first, melted by the kindness of her uncle, and struck with the sense of his admonition, (for she was no self-willed young lady, who was determined to be in love,) received Captain Clifford's advances with a coldness which, from her manner the first evening they had met at Bath, occasioned him no less surprise than mortification. He retreated, and recoiled on the Squire, who, patient, and bored as usual, was sequestered in his favourite corner. By accident, Clifford trod on the Squire's gouty digital, and in apologizing for the offence, was so struck by the old gentleman's

good-nature and peculiarity of expressing himself, that without knowing who he was, he entered into conversation with him. There was an off-hand sort of liveliness and candour, not to say wit, about Clifford, which always had a charm for the elderly; who generally like frankness above all the cardinal virtues; the Squire was exceedingly pleased with him. The acquaintance once begun, was naturally continued without difficulty when Clifford ascertained who was his new friend; and next morning, meeting in the Pump-room, the Squire asked Clifford to dinner. The *entré* to the house thus gained, the rest was easy. Long before Mauleverer recovered his health, the mischief effected by his rival was almost beyond redress; and the heart of the pure, the simple, the affectionate Lucy Brandon, was more than half lost to the lawless and vagrant Cavalier who officiates as the Hero of this tale.

One morning, Clifford and Augustus strolled out together. "Let us," said the latter, who was in a melancholy mood, "leave the busy streets, and indulge in a philosophical conversation on the

nature of man, while we are enjoying a little fresh air in the country." Clifford assented to the proposal, and the pair slowly sauntered up one of the hills that surround the city of Bladud.

"There are certain moments," said Tomlinson, looking pensively down at his kerseymere gaiters, "when we are like the fox in the nursery rhyme, 'The fox had a wound he could not tell where'—we feel extremely unhappy and we cannot tell *why!* a dark, and sad melancholy grows over us—we shun the face of man—we wrap ourselves in our thoughts like silkworms—we mutter fag-ends of dismal songs—tears come in our eyes—we recall all the misfortunes that have ever happened to us—we stoop in our gait, and bury our hands in our breeches pockets—we say 'what is life?—a stone to be shied into a horse-pond!'—We pine for some congenial heart—and have an itching desire to talk prodigiously about ourselves: all *other* subjects seem weary, stale, and unprofitable—we feel as if a fly could knock us down, and are in a humour to fall in love and make a very sad piece of business of it. Yet with all this weakness we

have, at these moments, a finer opinion of ourselves than we ever had before. We call our megrims, the melancholy of a sublime soul—the yearnings of an indigestion we denominate yearnings after immortality—nay, sometimes ‘a proof of the nature of the soul!’ May I find some biographer who understands such sensations well, and may he style those melting emotions the offspring of the poetical character,* which, in reality, are the offspring of—a mutton chop!”

“You jest pleasantly enough on your low spirits,” said Clifford; “but I have a cause for mine.”

“What then?” cried Tomlinson. “So much

* Vide “Moore’s Life of Byron.”—In which it is satisfactorily shown that, if a man fast forty-eight hours, then eat three lobsters, and drink God knows how many bottles of claret—if, when he wake the next morning, he sees himself abused as a demon by half the periodicals of the country—if the afternoon be passed in interviews with his duns, or *mis-understandings* with his wife—if, in a word, he be bröken in his health, irregular in his habits, unfortunate in his affairs, unhappy in his home—and if, then, he should be so extremely eccentric as to be low-spirited and misanthropical, the low spirits and the misanthropy are by no means to be attributed to the above agreeable circumstances—but God wot—to the “poetical character!”

the easier is it to cure them. The mind can cure the evils that spring *from* the mind; it is only a fool, and a quack, and a driveller, when it professes to heal the evils that spring from the body: — *my* blue devils spring from the body — consequently, my mind, which, as you know, is a particularly wise mind, wrestles not against them. Tell me frankly,” renewed Augustus, after a pause, “do you ever repent? Do you ever think, if you had been a shop-boy with a white apron about your middle, that you would have been a happier and better member of society than you now are?”

“Repent!” said Clifford fiercely, and his answer opened more of his secret heart, its motives, its reasonings, and its peculiarities than were often discernible. “Repent! — that is the idlest word in our language. No,—the moment I repent—that moment I reform! Never can it seem to me an atonement for crime, merely to regret it—my mind would lead me not to regret, but to repair!—Repent!—No,—not yet! The older I

grow, the more I see of men, and of the callings of social life—the more I, an open knave, sicken at the glossed and covert dishonesties around. I acknowledge no allegiance to society. From my birth to this hour, I have received no single favour from its customs or its laws;—openly I war against it — and patiently will I meet its revenge. This may be crime; but it looks light in my eyes, when I gaze around, and survey on all sides the masked traitors who acknowledge large debts to society,—who profess to obey its laws —adore its institutions— and, above all—oh, how righteously!—attack all those who attack it, and who yet lie, and cheat, and defraud, and peculate — publicly reaping all the comforts — privately filching all the profits.—Repent!—of what? I come into the world friendless and poor — I find a body of laws hostile to the friendless and the poor! To those laws hostile to me, then—I acknowledge hostility in my turn. Between us are the conditions of war. Let them expose a weakness—I insist on my right to seize the advantage

—let them defeat me, and I allow their right to destroy.”*

“Passion,” said Augustus coolly, “is the usual enemy of reason — in your case it is the friend !”

The pair had now gained the summit of a hill which commanded a view of the city below. Here Augustus, who was a little short-winded, paused to recover breath. As soon as he had done so, he pointed with his fore-finger to the scene beneath, and said enthusiastically—“*What a subject for contemplation !*”

Clifford was about to reply, when suddenly the sound of laughter and voices was heard behind—“Let us fly !” cried Augustus ; “on this day of spleen man delights me not — nor woman either.”

“Stay !” said Clifford, in a trembling accent, for among those voices he recognised one which had already acquired over him an irresistible and bewitching power. Augustus sighed, and reluctantly remained motionless. Presently a winding in the

* The Author need not, he hopes, observe, that these sentiments are Mr. Paul Clifford’s—not his. ✧✧

** This Reader duly honours the Author's disclaimer, and avows his signal preference for the maxims of our gallant hero.

road brought into view a party of pleasure, some on foot, some on horseback, others in the little vehicles which even at that day haunted watering-places, and called themselves "Flies" or "Swallows."

But among the gay procession Clifford had only eyes for one! Walking with that elastic step which so rarely survives the first epoch of youth, by the side of the heavy chair in which her father was drawn, the fair beauty of Lucy Brandon threw, at least in the eyes of her lover, a magic and a lustre over the whole group. He stood for a moment, stilling the heart that leapt at her bright looks and the gladness of her innocent laugh; and then recovering himself, he walked slowly and with a certain consciousness of the effect of his own singularly-handsome person, towards the party. The good Squire received him with his usual kindness, and informed him, according to that *lucidus ordo*, which he so especially favoured, of the whole particulars of their excursion. There was something worthy of an artist's

sketch in the scene at that moment ;—the old Squire in his chair, with his benevolent face turned towards Clifford, and his hands resting on his cane—Clifford himself bowing down his stately head to hear the details of the father ;—the beautiful daughter on the other side of the chair, her laugh suddenly stilled, her gait insensibly more composed, and blush chasing blush over the smooth and peach-like loveliness of her cheek ;—the party, of all sizes, ages, and attire, affording ample scope for the caricaturist ; and the pensive figure of Augustus Tomlinson (who, by the by, was exceedingly like Liston,) standing apart from the rest, on the brow of the hill where Clifford had left him, and moralizing on the motley procession, with one hand hid in his waistcoat, and the other caressing his chin, which slowly and pendulously with the rest of his head, moved up and down.

As the party approached the brow of the hill, the view of the city below was so striking, that there was a general pause for the purpose of survey.

One young lady, in particular, drew forth her pencil, and began sketching, while her mamma looked complacently on, and abstractedly devoured a sandwich. It was at this time, in the general pause, that Clifford and Lucy found themselves—Heaven knows how!—next to each other, and at a sufficient distance from the Squire and the rest of the party, to feel, in some measure, alone. There was a silence in both which neither dared to break; when Lucy, after looking at, and toying with a flower that she had brought from the place which the party had been to see, accidentally dropped it; and Clifford and herself stooping at the same moment to recover it, their hands met. Involuntarily, Clifford detained the soft fingers in his own; his eyes that encountered hers, so spell-bound and arrested them, that for once they did not sink beneath his gaze; his lips moved, but many and vehement emotions so suffocated his voice that no sound escaped them. But all the heart was in the eyes of each; that moment fixed their destinies. Henceforth there was an era from which they dated a new existence; a

nucleus around which their thoughts, their remembrances, and their passions clung. The great gulf was passed; they stood on the same shore; and felt, that though still apart and disunited, on that shore was no living creature but themselves! Meanwhile, Augustus Tomlinson, on finding himself surrounded by persons eager to gaze and to listen, broke from his moodiness and reserve. Looking full at his next neighbour, and flourishing his right hand in the air, till he suffered it to rest in the direction of the houses and chimneys below; he repeated that moral exclamation, which had been wasted on Clifford, with a more solemn and a less passionate gravity than before.

“What a subject, Ma’am, for contemplation!”

“Very sensibly said, indeed, Sir,” said the lady addressed, who was rather of a serious turn.

“I never,” resumed Augustus in a louder key, and looking round for auditors,—“I never see a great town from the top of a hill, without thinking of an Apothecary’s Shop!”

“Lord, Sir!” said the lady. Tomlinson’s end

was gained ;—struck with the quaintness of the notion, a little crowd gathered instantly around him, to hear it farther developed.

“ Of an Apothecary’s Shop, Ma’am !” repeated Tomlinson. “ There lie your simples, and your purges, and your cordials, and your poisons ; all things to heal, and to strengthen, and to destroy. There are drugs enough in that collection to save you, to cure you all ; but none of you know how to use them, nor what medicines to ask for, nor what portions to take ; so that the greater part of you swallow a wrong dose, and die of the remedy !”

“ But if the town be the apothecary’s shop, what, in the plan of your idea, stands for the apothecary ?” asked an old gentleman, who perceived at what Tomlinson was driving.

“ The Apothecary, Sir,” answered Augustus, stealing his notion from Clifford, and sinking his voice, lest the true proprietor should overhear him,—Clifford was otherwise employed—“ The Apothecary, Sir, is the LAW ! It is the Law that stands behind the counter and dispenses to each

man the dose he should take. To the poor, it gives bad drugs gratuitously; to the rich, pills to stimulate the appetite: to the latter, premiums for luxury; to the former only speedy refuges from life! Alas! either your Apothecary is but an ignorant quack, or his science itself is but in its cradle. He blunders as much as you would do if left to your own selection. Those who have recourse to him, seldom speak gratefully of his skill. He relieves you, it is true—but of your money, not your malady; and the only branch of his profession in which he is an adept, is that which enables him to *bleed* you!—Oh, Mankind!” continued Augustus, “what noble creatures you ought to be! You have keys to all sciences, all arts, all mysteries, but one! You have not a notion how you ought to be governed! you cannot frame a tolerable law for the life and soul of you! You make yourselves as uncomfortable as you can by all sorts of galling and vexatious institutions, and you throw the blame upon ‘Fate.’ You lay down rules it is impossible to compre-

hend, much less to obey ; and you call each other monsters, because you cannot conquer the impossibility ! You invent all sorts of vices, under pretence of making laws for preserving virtue ; and the anomalous artificialities of conduct yourselves produce, you say you are born with ;—you make a machine by the perversest art you can think of, and you call it, with a sigh, ‘ Human Nature.’ With a host of good dispositions struggling at your breasts, you insist upon libelling God Almighty, and declaring that he meant you to be wicked. Nay, you even call the man mischievous and seditious who begs and implores you to be one jot better than you are.—Oh, Mankind ! you are like a nosegay bought at Covent Garden. The flowers are lovely, the scent delicious ;—mark that glorious hue ; contemplate that bursting petal ;—how beautiful, how redolent of health—of nature—of the dew and breath and blessing of Heaven, are you all ! But as for the dirty piece of string that ties you together, one would think you had picked it out of the kennel !”

So saying, Tomlinson turned on his heel, broke away from the crowd, and solemnly descended the hill. The party of pleasure slowly followed; and Clifford, receiving an invitation from the Squire to partake of his family dinner, walked by the side of Lucy, and felt as if his spirit were drunk with the airs of Eden.

A brother Squire, who, among the gaieties of Bath, was almost as forlorn as Joseph Brandon himself, partook of the Lord of Warlock's hospitality. When the three gentlemen adjourned to the drawing-room, the two elder sat down to a game at backgammon, and Clifford was left to the undisturbed enjoyment of Lucy's conversation. She was sitting by the window when Clifford joined her. On the table by her side were scattered books, the charm of which (they were chiefly poetry) she had only of late learned to discover; *there* also were strewn various little masterpieces of female ingenuity, in which the fairy fingers of Lucy Brandon were especially formed to excel. The shades of evening were rapidly dark-

ening over the empty streets; and in the sky, which was cloudless and transparently clear, the stars came gradually out one by one, until,

“ As water does a sponge, so *their soft light*
Fill'd the void, hollow, universal air.”

Beautiful evening! (if we, as well as Augustus Tomlinson, may indulge in an apostrophe,)—Beautiful evening! for thee all poets have had a song, and surrounded thee with rills and waterfalls, and dews, and flowers, and sheep, and bats, and melancholy, and owls; yet we must confess that to us, who in this very sentimental age are a bustling, worldly, hard-minded person, jostling our neighbours, and thinking of the main chance;—to us, thou art never so charming, as when we meet thee walking in thy gray hood, through the emptying streets, and among the dying sounds of a city. We love to feel the stillness, where all, two hours back, was clamour. We love to see the dingy abodes of Trade and Luxury, those restless patients of earth's constant fever, contrasted and

canopied by a heaven full of purity, and quietness, and peace. We love to fill our thought with speculations on man, — even though the man be the muffin-man, — rather than with inanimate objects — hills and streams — things to dream about, not to meditate on. Man is the subject of far nobler contemplation, of far more glowing hope, of a far purer and loftier vein of sentiment, than all the ‘floods and fells’ in the universe; — and that, sweet evening, is one reason why we like that the earnest and tender thoughts thou excitest within us, should be rather surrounded by the labours and tokens of our species, than by sheep, and bats, and melancholy, and owls. But whether, most blessed evening, thou delightest us in the country or in the town, thou equally disposest us to make and to feel love! — thou art the cause of more marriages and more divorces, than any other time in the twenty-four hours. Eyes, that were common eyes to us before, touched by thy enchanting and magic shadows, become inspired, and preach to us of Heaven. A softness

settles on features, that were harsh to us while the sun shone; a mellow "light of love" reposes on the complexion, which by day we would have steeped "full fathom five" in a sea of Mrs. Gowland's lotion;—and as for the lip!—Ah!

* * * *
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What then, thou modest hypocrite, to those who *already* and deeply love — what then of danger — and of paradise dost thou bring?

Silent, and stilling the breath which heaved in both quick and fitfully, Lucy and Clifford sat together. The streets were utterly deserted, and the loneliness, as they looked below, made them feel the more intensely not only the emotions which swelled within them, but the undefined and electric sympathy which, in uniting them, divided them from the world. The quiet around was broken by a distant strain of rude music; and as it came nearer, two forms, of no poetical order, grew visible: the one was a poor blind man, who was draw-

ing from his flute tones in which the melancholy beauty of the air compensated for any deficiency (the deficiency was but slight) in the execution. A woman, much younger than the musician, and with something of beauty in her countenance, accompanied him, holding a tattered hat, and looking wistfully up at the windows of the silent street. We said two forms — we did the injustice of forgetfulness to another — a rugged and simple friend it is true, but one that both minstrel and wife had many and moving reasons to love. This was a little wirey terrier, with dark, piercing eyes, that glanced quickly and sagaciously in all quarters from beneath the shaggy covert that surrounded them; slowly the animal moved onward, pulling gently against the string by which he was held, and by which he guided his master. Once, his fidelity was tempted, another dog invited him to play, the poor terrier looked anxiously and doubtingly round, and then uttering a low growl of denial, pursued

“ The noiseless tenour of his way.”

The little procession stopped beneath the window where Lucy and Clifford sat ; for the quick eye of the woman had perceived them, and she laid her hand on the blind man's arm, and whispered him. He took the hint, and changed his air into one of love. Clifford glanced at Lucy, her cheek was dyed in blushes. The air was over, — another succeeded — it was of the same kind ; a third — the burthen was still unaltered — and then Clifford threw into the street a piece of money, and the dog wagged his abridged and dwarfed tail, and darting forward, picked it up in his mouth, and the woman (she had a kind face !) patted the officious friend, even before she thanked the donor, and then she dropped the money with a cheering word or two into the blind man's pocket, and the three wanderers moved slowly on. Presently they came to a place where the street had been mended, and the stones lay scattered about. Here the woman no longer trusted to the dog's guidance, but anxiously hastened to the musician, and led him with evident tenderness

and minute watchfulness over the rugged way. When they had passed the danger, the man stopped, and before he released the hand which had guided him, he pressed it gratefully, and then both the husband and the wife stooped down and caressed the dog. This little scene, one of those rough copies of the loveliness of human affections, of which so many are scattered about the highways of the world—both the lovers had involuntarily watched; and now as they withdrew their eyes—those eyes settled on each other—Lucy's swam in tears.

“To be loved and tended by the one I love,” said Clifford in a low voice, “I would walk blind and barefoot over the whole earth!”

Lucy sighed very gently, and placing her pretty hands (the one clasped over the other) upon her knee, looked down wistfully on them, but made no answer. Clifford drew his chair nearer, and gazed on her as she sat; the long dark eyelash drooping over her eyes, and contrasting the ivory lids; her delicate profile half turned from him,

and borrowing a more touching beauty from the soft light that dwelt upon it, and her full yet still scarcely developed bosom heaving at thoughts which she did not analyse, but was content to feel at once vague and delicious; he gazed, and his lips trembled—he longed to speak—he longed to say but those words which convey what volumes have endeavoured to express, and have only weakened by detail—“*I love.*” How he resisted the yearnings of his heart, we know not—but he did resist—and Lucy, after a confused and embarrassed pause, took up one of the poems on the table, and asked him some questions about a particular passage in an old ballad which he had once pointed to her notice. The passage related to a border chief, one of the Armstrongs of old, who having been seized by the English and condemned to death, vented his last feelings in a passionate address to his own home—his rude tower—and his newly-wedded bride. “Do you believe,” said Lucy, as their conversation began to flow, “that one so lawless and eager for bloodshed and strife,

as this robber is described to be, could be so capable of soft affections?"

"I do," said Clifford, "because he was not sensible that he was as criminal as you esteem him. If a man cherish the idea that his actions are not evil, he will retain at his heart all its better and gentler sensations as much as if he had never sinned. The savage murders his enemy, and when he returns home, is not the less devoted to his friend, or the less anxious for his children. To harden and embrate the kindly dispositions, we must not only indulge in guilt, but feel that we are guilty. Oh! many that the world load with their opprobrium are capable of acts—nay, have committed acts, which in others, the world would reverence and adore. Would you know whether a man's heart be shut to the power of love; ask, what he is—not to his foes, but to his friends! Crime, too," continued Clifford, speaking fast and vehemently, while his eyes flashed and the dark blood rushed to his cheek—"Crime—what is crime? men embody their worst prejudices, their most evil pas-

sions in a heterogeneous and contradictory code, and whatever breaks this code, they term a crime. When they make no distinction in the penalty—that is to say, in the estimation—awarded both to murder and to a petty theft imposed on the weak will by famine, we ask nothing else to convince us that they are ignorant of the very nature of guilt, and that they make up in ferocity for the want of wisdom.”

Lucy looked in alarm at the animated and fiery countenance of the speaker; Clifford recovered himself, after a moment's pause, and rose from his seat, with the gay and frank laugh which made one of his peculiar characteristics. “There is a singularity in politics, Miss Brandon,” said he, “which I dare say you have often observed; viz. that those who are least important, are always most noisy; and that the chief people who lose their temper, are those who have nothing to gain in return.”

As Clifford spoke, the doors were thrown open, and some visitors to Miss Brandon were announced.

The good Squire was still immersed in the vicissitudes of his game, and the sole task of receiving and entertaining "the company," as the chamber-maids have it, fell, as usual, upon Lucy. Fortunately for her, Clifford was one of those rare persons who possess eminently the talents of society. There was much in his gay and gallant temperament, accompanied as it was with sentiment and ardour, that resembled our *beau idéal* of those chevaliers, ordinarily peculiar to the Continent—heroes equally in the drawing-room and the field. Observant, courteous, witty, and versed in the various accomplishments that combine (that most unfrequent of all unions!) vivacity with grace, he was especially formed for that brilliant world from which his circumstances tended to exclude him. Under different auspices, he might have been — Pooh! We are running into a most pointless common-place;—what might any man be under auspices different from those by which his life has been guided?—Music soon succeeded to conversation, and Clifford's voice was of necessity

put into requisition. Miss Brandon had just risen from the harpsichord, as he sat down to perform his part; and she stood by him with the rest of the group while he sung. Only twice his eye stole to that spot which her breath and form made sacred to him; once when he began, and once when he concluded his song. Perhaps the recollection of their conversation inspired him; certainly it dwelt upon his mind at the moment—threw a richer flush over his brow, and infused a more meaning and heartfelt softness into his tone.

Stanzas.

When I leave thee, oh! ask not the world what that heart
Which adores thee, to others may be!
I know that I sin when from thee I depart,
But my guilt shall *not* light upon thee!

My life is a river which glasses a ray
That hath deign'd to descend from above;
Whatever the banks that o'ershadow its way,
It mirrors the light of thy love.

Though the waves may run high when the nightwind awakes,
And hurries the stream to its fall;
Though broken and wild be the billows it makes,
Thine image still trembles on all!

While this ominous love between Clifford and Lucy was thus finding fresh food in every interview and every opportunity, the unfortunate Mauleverer, firmly persuaded that his complaint was a relapse of what he termed the "Warlock Dyspepsia," was waging dire war with the remains of the beef and pudding, which he tearfully assured his physicians "were lurking in his constitution." As Mauleverer, though complaisant—like most men of unmistakeable rank—to all his acquaintances, whatever might be their grade,—possessed but very few friends intimate enough to enter his sick-chamber, and none of that few were at Bath; it will readily be perceived that he was in blissful ignorance of the growing fortunes of his rival; and to say the exact truth, illness, which makes a man's thoughts turn very much upon himself, banished many of the most tender ideas usually floating in his mind around the image of Lucy Brandon. His pill superseded his passion; and he felt that there are draughts in the world more powerful in their

effects than those in the phials of Alcidonis.* He very often thought, it is true, how pleasant it would be for Lucy to smooth this pillow, and Lucy to prepare that mixture; but then, Mauleverer had an excellent valet, who hoped to play the part enacted by Gil Blas towards the honest Licentiate; and to nurse a legacy while he was nursing his master. And the Earl, who was tolerably good-tempered, was forced to confess, that it would be scarcely possible for any one "to know his ways better than Smoothson." Thus, during his illness, the fair form of his intended bride little troubled the peace of the noble adorer. And it was not till he found himself able to eat three good dinners consecutively, with a tolerable appetite, that Mauleverer recollected that he was violently in love. As soon as this idea was fully reinstated in his memory, and he had been permitted by his doctor to allow himself "a little cheerful society," Mauleverer resolved to go to the rooms for an hour or two.

* See Marmontel's pretty tale of "Les Quatres Flacons."

It may be observed that most *Grands Seigneurs* have some favourite place, some cherished Baiaë, at which they love to throw off their state and to play the amiable instead of the splendid; and Bath at that time, from its gaiety, its ease, the variety of character to be found in its haunts, and the obliging manner in which such characters exposed themselves to ridicule, was exactly the place calculated to please a man like Mauleverer, who loved at once to be admired and to satirize. He was therefore an idolized person at the city of Bladud, and as he entered the rooms he was surrounded by a whole band of imitators and sycophants, delighted to find his Lordship looking so much better and declaring himself so convalescent. As soon as the Earl had bowed and smiled, and shaken hands sufficiently to sustain his reputation, he sauntered towards the dancers in search of Lucy. He found her not only exactly in the same spot in which he had last beheld her, but dancing with exactly the same partner who had before provoked all the gallant nobleman's

jealousy and wrath. Mauleverer, though not by any means addicted to preparing his compliments beforehand, had just been conning a delicate speech for Lucy; but no sooner did the person of her partner flash on him than the whole flattery vanished at once from his recollection. He felt himself grow pale; and when Lucy turned, and, seeing him near, addressed him in the anxious and soft tone which she thought due to her uncle's friend on his recovery, Mauleverer bowed, confused and silent; and that green-eyed passion, which would have convulsed the *mind* of a true lover, altering a little the course of its fury, effectually disturbed the *manner* of the courtier.

Retreating to an obscure part of the room, where he could see all without being conspicuous, Mauleverer now employed himself in watching the motions and looks of the young pair. He was naturally a penetrating and quick observer, and in this instance jealousy sharpened his talents; he saw enough to convince him that Lucy

was already attached to Clifford; and being, by that conviction, fully persuaded that Lucy was necessary to his own happiness, he resolved to lose not a moment in banishing Captain Clifford from her presence, or, at least, in instituting such inquiries into that gentleman's relatives, rank, and respectability, as would, he hoped, render such banishment a necessary consequence of the research.

Fraught with this determination, Mauleverer repaired at once to the retreat of the Squire, and engaging him in conversation, bluntly asked him, "Who the deuce Miss Brandon was dancing with?"

The Squire, a little piqued at this *brusquerie*, replied by a long eulogium on Paul, and Mauleverer, after hearing it throughout with the blandest smile imaginable, told the Squire, very politely, that he was sure Mr. Brandon's good-nature had misled him. "Clifford!" said he, repeating the name, "Clifford! it is one of those names which are particularly selected by persons nobody knows;

first, because the name is good, and, secondly, because it is common. My long and dear friendship with your brother makes me feel peculiarly anxious on any point relative to his niece; and, indeed, my dear William, over-rating perhaps my knowledge of the world, and my influence in society,—but not my affection for him,—besought me to assume the liberty of esteeming myself a friend, nay, even a relation of yours and Miss Brandon's, so that I trust you do not consider my caution impertinent."

The flattered Squire assured him that he was particularly honoured, so far from deeming his Lordship—(which never could be the case with people so distinguished as *his Lordship was, especially!*)—*impertinent*.

Lord Mauleverer, encouraged by this speech, artfully renewed, and succeeded, if not in convincing the Squire that the handsome Captain was a suspicious character, at least in persuading him that common prudence required that he

should find out exactly who the handsome Captain was, especially as he was in the habit of dining with the Squire thrice a week, and dancing with Lucy every night.

“See,” said Mauleverer, “he approaches you now; I will retreat to the chair by the fireplace, and you shall cross-examine him—I have no doubt you will do it with the utmost delicacy.”

So saying, Mauleverer took possession of a seat where he was not absolutely beyond hearing (slightly deaf as he was) of the ensuing colloquy, though the position of his seat skreened him from sight. Mauleverer was esteemed a man of the most punctilious honour in private life, and he would not have been seen in the act of listening to other people’s conversation for the world.

Hemming with an air and resettling himself as Clifford approached, the Squire thus skilfully commenced the attack; “Ah, ha! my good Captain Clifford, and how do you do? I saw you

—(and I am *very glad, my friend, as every one else is to see you.*)—*at a distance.* And where have you left my daughter?”

“Miss Brandon is dancing with Mr. Muskwell, Sir,” answered Clifford.

“Oh! she is!—Mr. Muskwell—humph!—good family the Muskwells—came from Primrose Hall.—Pray, Captain,—not that I want to know for my own sake, for I am a strange, odd person, I believe, and I am thoroughly convinced—(some people are censorious, and others, thank God, are not!)—of your respectability,—what family do you come from? you won’t think my—my caution impertinent?” added the shrewd old gentleman, borrowing that phrase which he thought so friendly in the mouth of Lord Mauleverer.

Clifford coloured for a moment, but replied with a quiet archness of look, “Family—oh, my dear Sir, I come from an old family, a very old family indeed.”

“So I always thought; and in what part of the world?”

“Scotland, Sir—all our family come from Scotland; viz. all who live long do, the rest die young.”

“Ay, particular air does agree with particular constitutions. I, for instance, could not live in all counties; not—you take me—in the North!”

“Few honest men *can* live there;” said Clifford drily.

“And,” resumed the Squire, a little embarrassed by the nature of his task, and the cool assurance of his young friend;

“And pray, Captain Clifford, what regiment do you belong to?”

“Regiment?—oh, the Rifles!” answered Clifford, (‘Deuce is in me,’ muttered he—‘if I can resist a jest, though I break my neck over it.’)

“A very gallant body of men!” said the Squire.

“No doubt of that, Sir!” rejoined Clifford.

“And do you think, Captain Clifford,” renewed the Squire, “that it is a good corps for getting on?”

“ It is rather a bad one for getting off,” muttered the Captain, and then aloud: “ Why, we have not much interest at Court, Sir.

“ Oh! but then there is a wider scope, as my brother the lawyer says, and no man knows better—for merit. I dare say, you have seen many a man elevated from the ranks?”

“ Nothing more common, Sir, than such elevation; and so great is the virtue of our corps, that, I have also known not a few willing to transfer the honour to their comrades.”

“ You don’t say so!” exclaimed the Squire, opening his eyes at such disinterested magnanimity.

“ But,” said Clifford, who began to believe he might carry the equivoque too far, and who thought, despite of his jesting, that it was possible to strike out a more agreeable vein of conversation; “ But, Sir, if you remember, you have not yet finished that youthful hunting adventure of yours, when the hounds lost at Burnham Copse.”

“ Oh, very true,” cried the Squire, quite for-

getting his late suspicions ; and forthwith he began a story that promised to be as long as the chase it recorded. So charmed was he when he had finished it, with the character of the gentleman who had listened to it so delightedly, that on rejoining Mauleverer, he told the Earl with an important air, that he had strictly examined the young Captain, and that he had fully convinced himself of the excellence of his family, as well as the rectitude of his morals. Mauleverer listened with a countenance of polite incredulity ; he had heard but little of the conversation that had taken place between the pair, but on questioning the Squire upon the sundry particulars of Clifford's birth, parentage, and property, he found him exactly as ignorant as before. The courtier however seeing farther expostulation was in vain, contented himself with patting the Squire's shoulder, and saying with a mysterious urbanity, " Ah, Sir, you are too good !"

With these words he turned on his heel, and, not yet despairing, sought the daughter. He

found Miss Brandon just released from dancing, and with a kind of paternal gallantry, he offered her his arm to parade the apartments. After some preliminary flourish, and reference, for the thousandth time, to his friendship for William Brandon, the Earl spoke to her about that "fine-looking young man, who called himself Captain Clifford."

Unfortunately for Mauleverer, he grew a little too unguarded, as his resentment against the interference of Clifford warmed with his language, and he dropped in his anger one or two words of caution which especially offended the delicacy of Miss Brandon.

"Take care how I encourage, my Lord!" said Lucy, with glowing cheeks, repeating the words which had so affronted her, "I really must beg you——"

"You mean, dear Miss Brandon," interrupted Mauleverer, squeezing her hand with respectful tenderness, "that you must beg me to apologize for my inadvertent expression. I do most sin-

cerely. If I had felt less interest in your happiness, believe me, I should have been more guarded in my language."

Miss Brandon bowed stiffly, and the courtier saw with secret rage, that the country beauty was not easily appeased even by an apology from Lord Mauleverer. "I have seen the time," thought he, "when young unmarried ladies would have deemed *an affront* from *me* an honour! They would have gone into hysterics at an *apology!*" Before he had time to make his peace, the Squire joined them, and Lucy, taking her father's arm, expressed her wish to return home. The Squire was delighted at the proposition. It would have been but civil in Mauleverer to offer his assistance in those little attentions preparatory to female departure from balls. He hesitated for a moment—"It keeps one so long in those cursed thorough draughts," thought he, shivering. "Besides, it is just possible that I may not marry her, and it is no good risking a cold (above all, at the beginning of winter) for nothing!" Fraught with

this prudential policy, Mauleverer then resigned Lucy to her father, and murmuring in her ear, that "her displeasure made him the most wretched of men," concluded his adieu, by a bow penitentially graceful.

About five minutes afterwards, he himself withdrew. As he was wrapping his corporeal treasure in his *roquelaire* of sables, previous to immersing himself in his chair, he had the mortification of seeing Lucy, who with her father, from some cause or other, had been delayed in the hall, handed to the carriage by Captain Clifford. Had the Earl watched more narrowly, than in the anxious cares due to himself he was enabled to do, he would, to his consolation, have noted that Lucy gave her hand with an averted and cool air, and that Clifford's expressive and beautiful features bore rather the aspect of mortification than triumph.

He did not, however, see more than the action, and as he was borne homeward with his flambeaux and footmen preceding him, and the watch-

ful Smoothson by the side of the little vehicle, he muttered his determination of writing by the very next post to Brandon, all his anger for Lucy, and all his jealousy of her evident lover.

While this doughty resolve was animating the great soul of Mauleverer, Lucy reached her own room, bolted the door, and throwing herself on her bed, burst into a long and bitter paroxysm of tears. So unusual were such visitors to her happy and buoyant temper, that there was something almost alarming in the earnestness and obstinacy with which she now wept.

“What!” said she bitterly, “have I placed my affections upon a man of uncertain character? and is my infatuation so clear, that an acquaintance dare hint at its imprudence? And yet his manner, his tone! No, no, there can be no reason for shame in loving him!” and as she said this, her heart smote her for the coldness of her manner towards Clifford, on his taking leave of her for the evening. “Am I,” she thought, weeping yet more vehemently than before: “Am I so

worldly, so base, as to feel altered towards him the moment I hear a syllable breathed against his name? Should I not, on the contrary, have clung to his image with a greater love, if he were attacked by others? But my father, my dear father, and my kind, prudent uncle, something is due to them; and they would break their hearts, if I loved one whom they deemed unworthy. Why should I not summon courage, and tell him of the suspicions respecting him? one candid word would dispel them. Surely it would be but kind in me towards him, to give him an opportunity of disproving all false and dishonouring conjectures. And why this reserve? when so often by look and hint, if not by open avowal, he has declared that he loves me, and knows, he *must* know, that he is not indifferent to me? Why does he never speak of his parents, his relations, his home?"

And Lucy, as she asked this question, drew from a bosom, whose hue and shape might have rivalled her's who won Cymon to be wise,* a draw-

* See Dryden's poem of Cymon and Iphigenia.

ing which she herself had secretly made of her lover, and which, though inartificially and even rudely done, yet had caught the inspiration of memory and breathed the very features and air that were stamped already ineffaceably upon a heart unworthy of so sullied an idol. She gazed upon the portrait as if it could answer her question of the original, and as she looked, and looked, her tears slowly ceased, and her innocent countenance relapsed gradually into its usual and eloquent serenity. Never, perhaps, could Lucy's own portrait have been taken at a more favourable moment! The unconscious grace of her attitude, her dress loosened, the modest and youthful voluptuousness of her beauty, the tender cheek to which the virgin bloom, banished for awhile, was now all glowingly returning; the little white soft hand on which that cheek leaned, while the other contained the picture upon which her eyes fed; the half smile just conjured to her full, red, dewy lips, and gone the moment after, yet again restored; all made a picture of such enchanting

loveliness, that we question whether Shakspeare himself could have fancied an earthly shape more meet to embody the vision of a Miranda or a Viola. The quiet and maiden neatness of the apartment gave effect to the charm; and there was a poetry even in the snowy furniture of the bed, the shutters partly unclosed and admitting a glimpse of the silver moon, and the solitary lamp just contending with the purer ray of the skies, and so throwing a mixed and softened light around the chamber.

She was yet gazing on the drawing, when a faint strain of music stole through the air beneath her window, and it gradually rose till the sound of a guitar became distinct and clear, suiting with, not disturbing, the moonlit stillness of the night. The gallantry and romance of a former day, though at the time of our story subsiding, were not quite dispelled; and nightly serenades under the casements of a distinguished beauty were by no means of unfrequent occurrence. But Lucy, as the music floated upon her ear, blushed deeper

and deeper, as if it had a dearer source to her heart than ordinary gallantry, and raising herself on one arm from her incumbent position, she leant forward to catch the sound with a greater and more unerring certainty.

After a prelude of some moments, a clear and sweet voice accompanied the instrument, and the words of the song were as follows :—

Clifford's Serenade.

“ There is a world where every night
My spirit meets and walks with thine ;
And hopes—I dare not tell thee—light
Like stars of Love—that world of mine !

Sleep !—to the waking world my heart
Hath now, methinks, a stranger grown—
Ah, sleep ! that I may feel thou art
Within *one* world that is my own !

As the music died away, Lucy sank back once more, and the drawing which she held was pressed (with cheeks glowing, though unseen, at the act) to her lips. And though the character of her lover was uncleared, though she herself had come to no distinct resolution, even to inform

him of the rumours against his name, yet so easily restored was her trust in him, and so soothing the very thought of his vigilance and his love, that before an hour had passed, her eyes were closed in sleep; the drawing was laid, as a spell against grief, under her pillow, and in her dreams she murmured *his* name, and unconscious of reality and the future, smiled tenderly as she did so!

CHAPTER VII.

Come, the plot thickens ! and another fold
Of the warm cloak of mystery wraps us around

* * * *
* * * *

And for their loves ?

Behold the seal is on them !

Banner of Tyburn.

WE must not suppose that Clifford's manner and tone were towards Lucy Brandon such as they seemed to others. Love refines every roughness ; and that truth which nurtures tenderness, is never barren of grace. Whatever the habits and comrades of Clifford's life, he had at heart many good and generous qualities. They were not often perceptible, it is true, first, because he was of a gay and reckless turn ; secondly, because

he was not easily affected by any external circumstance ; and thirdly, because he had the policy to affect among his comrades only such qualities as were likely to give him influence with them. Still, however, his better genius broke out whenever an opportunity presented itself. Though no "Corsair," romantic and unreal, an Ossianic shadow becoming more vast in proportion as it recedes from substance ; though no grandly-imagined lie to the fair proportions of Human Nature, but an erring man in a very prosaic and homely world ; Clifford still mingled a certain generosity and chivalric *emprize*, even with the practices of his profession. Although the name of Lovett, by which he was chiefly known, was one peculiarly distinguished in the annals of the adventurous, it had never been coupled with rumours of cruelty or outrage, and it was often associated with anecdotes of courage, courtesy, good-humour, or forbearance. He was one whom a real love was peculiarly calculated to soften and to redeem. The boldness, the candour, the unselfishness of his

temper, were components of nature upon which affection invariably takes a strong and deep hold. Besides, Clifford was of an eager and aspiring turn ; and the same temper and abilities which had in a very few years raised him in influence and popularity far above all the Chivalric band with whom he was connected, when once inflamed and elevated by a higher passion, were likely to arouse his ambition from the level of his present pursuits, and reform him, ere too late, into a useful, nay, even an honourable member of society. We trust that the reader has already perceived that, despite his early circumstances, his manner and address were not such as to unfit him for a lady's love. The comparative refinement of his exterior is easy of explanation, for he possessed a natural and inborn gentility, a quick turn for observation, a ready sense both of the ridiculous and the graceful ; and these are materials which are soon and lightly wrought from coarseness into polish. He had been thrown too among the leaders and heroes of his band ; many not absolutely low in

birth, nor debased in habit. He had associated with the Barringtons of the day: gentlemen who were admired at Ranelagh, and made speeches worthy of Cicero, when they were summoned to trial. He had played his part in public places; and, as Tomlinson was wont to say after his Ciceronian fashion, "the triumphs accomplished in the field, had been planned in the ball-room." In short, he was one of those accomplished and elegant highwaymen of whom we yet read wonders, and by whom it would have been delightful to have been robbed: and the aptness of intellect, which grew into wit with his friends, softened into sentiment with his mistress. There is something too, in beauty, (and Clifford's person, as we have before said, was possessed of even uncommon attractions) which lifts a beggar into nobility; and there was a distinction in his gait and look which supplied the air of rank, and the tone of courts. Men, indeed, skilled like Mauleverer in the subtleties of manner, might perhaps have easily detected in him the want of that indescribable essence pos-

sessed only by persons reared in good society ; but that want being shared by so many persons of indisputable birth and fortune, conveyed no particular reproach. To Lucy, indeed, brought up in seclusion, and seeing at Warlock none calculated to refine her taste in the fashion of an air or phrase to a very fastidious standard of perfection, this want was perfectly imperceptible : she remarked in her lover only a figure every where unequalled — an eye always eloquent with admiration — a step from which grace could never be divorced — a voice that spoke in a silver key, and uttered flatteries delicate in thought and poetical in word : — even a certain originality of mind, remark, and character, occasionally approaching to the *bizarre*, yet sometimes also to the elevated, possessed a charm for the imagination of a young and not unenthusiastic female, and contrasted favourably, rather than the reverse, with the dull insipidity of those she ordinarily saw. Nor are we sure that the mystery thrown about him, irksome as it was to her, and discreditable as it

appeared to others, was altogether ineffectual in increasing her love for the adventurer; and thus Fate, which transmutes in her magic crucible all opposing metals into that one which she is desirous to produce, swelled the wealth of an ill-placed and ominous passion, by the very circumstances which should have counteracted and destroyed it.

We are willing, by what we have said, not to defend Clifford, but to redeem Lucy in the opinion of our readers, for loving so unwisely; and when they remember her youth, her education, her privation of a mother, of all female friendship, even of the vigilant and unrelaxing care of some protector of the opposite sex, we do not think that what was so natural will be considered by any inexcusable.

Mauleverer woke the morning after the ball in better health than usual, and consequently more in love than ever. According to his resolution the night before, he sat down to write a long letter to William Brandon; it was amusing and

witty as usual ; but the wily nobleman succeeded, under the cover of wit, in conveying to Brandon's mind a serious apprehension lest his cherished matrimonial project should altogether fail. The account of Lucy and of Captain Clifford contained in the epistle, instilled, indeed, a double portion of sourness into the professionally acrid mind of the lawyer ; and as it so happened that he read the letter just before attending the Court upon a case in which he was Counsel to the Crown, the witnesses on the opposite side of the question felt the full effects of the Barrister's ill-humour.

The case was one in which the defendant had been engaged in swindling transactions to a very large amount—and, amid his agents and assistants, was a person ranking among the very lowest orders — but who, seemingly enjoying large connexions, and possessing natural acuteness and address, appeared to have been of great use in receiving and disposing of such goods as were fraudulently obtained. As a witness against the latter person appeared a pawnbroker, who pro-

duced certain articles that had been pledged to him at different times by this humble agent. Now, Brandon, in examining the guilty go-between, became the more terribly severe, in proportion as the man evinced that semblance of unconscious stolidity, which the lower orders so ingeniously assume, and which is so peculiarly adapted to enrage and to baffle the gentlemen of the bar. At length Brandon, entirely subduing and quelling the stubborn hypocrisy of the culprit, the man turned towards him a look between wrath and beseechingness, muttering—

“Aha!—*If* so be, Counsellor Prandon, you knew vat I knows, you would not go for to bully *I* so!”

“And pray, my good fellow, what is it that you know that should make me treat you as if I thought you an honest man?”

The witness had now relapsed into sullenness, and only answered by a sort of grunt. Brandon, who knew well how to sting a witness into communicativeness, continued his questioning, till the

witness, re-aroused into anger, and, it may be, into indiscretion, said, in a low voice —

“ Hax Mr. Swoppem (the pawnbroker) what I sold ’im on the 15th hof February, exactly twenty-three year’n ago ?”

Brandon started back, his lips grew white, he clenched his hands with a convulsive spasm ; and while all his features seemed distorted with an earnest, yet fearful intensity of expectation, he poured forth a volley of questions, so incoherent, and so irrelevant, that he was immediately called to order by his learned brother on the opposite side. Nothing farther could be extracted from the witness. The pawnbroker was re-summoned ; he appeared somewhat disconcerted by an appeal to his memory so far back as twenty-three years, but after taking some time to consider, during which the agitation of the usually cold and possessed Brandon was remarkable to all the Court, he declared that he recollected no transaction whatsoever with the witness at that time. In vain were all Brandon’s efforts to pro-

cure a more elucidatory answer. The pawnbroker was impenetrable, and the lawyer was compelled reluctantly to dismiss him. The moment the witness left the box, Brandon sunk into a gloomy abstraction—he seemed quite to forget the business and the duties of the Court; and so negligently did he continue to conclude the case, so purposeless was the rest of his examination and cross-examination, that the cause was entirely marred, and a verdict “Not Guilty” returned by the jury.

The moment he left the Court, Brandon repaired to the pawnbroker’s; and after a conversation with Mr. Swoppem, in which he satisfied that honest tradesman that his object was rather to reward than intimidate, Swoppem confessed that twenty-three years ago the witness had met him at a public house in Devereux-court, in company with two other men, and sold him several articles in plate, ornaments, &c. The great bulk of these articles had, of course, long left the pawnbroker’s abode, but he still thought a stray trinket or two—not of sufficient worth to be re-set

or re-modelled—nor of sufficient fashion to find a ready sale, lingered in his drawers. Eagerly and with trembling hands did Brandon toss over the motley contents of the mahogany reservoirs which the pawnbroker now submitted to his scrutiny. —Nothing on earth is so melancholy a prospect as a pawnbroker's drawer!—those little, quaint, valueless ornaments, those true-lovers'-knots, those oval locketts, those battered rings, girdled by initials, or some brief inscription of regard or of grief—what tales of past affections, hopes, and sorrows do they not tell! But no sentiment of so general a sort ever saddened the hard mind of William Brandon, and now less than at any time could such reflections have occurred to him. Impatiently he threw on the table, one after another, the baubles once hoarded, perchance, with the tenderest respect, till at length his eyes sparkled, and with a nervous gripe, he seized upon an old ring, which was inscribed with letters, and circled a heart containing hair. The inscription was simply, “W. B. to Julia.” Strange and dark was the expression

that settled on Brandon's face as he regarded this seemingly worthless trinket. After a moment's gaze, he uttered an inarticulate exclamation, and thrusting it into his pocket, renewed his search. He found one or two trifles of a similar nature; one was an ill-done miniature set in silver, and bearing at the back sundry half effaced letters, which Brandon construed at once (though no other eye could) into "Sir John de Brandon, 1635, Ætat. 28;" the other was a seal stamped with the noble crest of the house of Brandon, 'A bull's head ducally crowned and armed Or.' As soon as Brandon had possessed himself of these treasures, and arrived at the conviction that the place held no more, he assured the conscientious Swoppem of his regard for that person's safety, rewarded him munificently, and went his way to Bow-street for a warrant against the witness who had commended him to the pawnbroker. On his road thither, a new resolution occurred to him, "Why make all public," he muttered to himself, "if it *can* be avoided? and it *may* be avoided!" He paused a

moment, — then retraced his way to the pawnbroker's, and after a brief mandate to Mr. Swoppem, returned home. In the course of the same evening, the witness we refer to was brought to the lawyer's house by Mr. Swoppem, and there held a long and private conversation with Brandon; the result of this seemed a compact to their mutual satisfaction, for the man went away safe, with a heavy purse and a light heart, although sundry shades and misgivings did certainly ever and anon cross the latter; while Brandon flung himself back in his seat, with the triumphant air of one who has accomplished some great measure, and his dark face betrayed in every feature a joyousness and hope, which were unfrequent guests, it must be owned, either to his countenance or his heart.

So good a man of business, however, was William Brandon, that he allowed not the event of that day to defer beyond the night his attention to his designs for the aggrandizement of his niece and house. By daybreak the next morning, he had written to Lord Mauleverer, to his brother, and

to Lucy. To the last, his letter, couched in all the anxiety of fondness, and the caution of affectionate experience, was well calculated to occasion that mingled shame and soreness which the wary lawyer rightly judged would be the most effectual enemy to an incipient passion. "I have accidentally heard," he wrote, "from a friend of mine, just arrived from Bath, of the glaring attentions paid to you by a Captain Clifford; I will not, my dearest niece, wound you by repeating what also I heard of your manner in receiving them. I know the ill-nature and the envy of the world, and I do not for a moment imagine, that my Lucy, of whom I am so justly proud, would countenance, from a petty coquetry, the advances of one whom she could never marry, or evince to any suitor partiality unknown to her relations, and certainly placed in a quarter which could never receive their approbation. I do not credit the reports of the idle, my dear niece, but if I discredit, you must not slight them. I call upon your prudence, your delicacy, your discretion, your sense of right,

at once, and effectually, to put a stop to all impertinent rumours: dance with this young man no more; do not let him be of your party in any place of amusement, public or private; avoid even seeing him if you are able, and throw in your manner towards him that decided coldness which the world cannot mistake!" Much more did the skilful uncle write, but all to the same purpose; and for the furtherance of the same design. His letter to his brother was no less artful. He told him at once that Lucy's preference of the suit of a handsome fortune-hunter was the public talk, and besought him to lose not a moment in quelling the rumour. "You may do so easily," he wrote, "by avoiding the young man; and should he be very importunate, return at once to Warlock — your daughter's welfare must be dearer to you than any thing."

To Mauleverer, Brandon replied by a letter which turned first on public matters, and then slid carelessly into the subject of the Earl's information.

Among the admonitions which he ventured to give Mauleverer, he dwelt, not without reason, on the want of tact displayed by the Earl, in not manifesting that pomp and show which his station in life enabled him to do. "Remember," he urged, "you are not among your equals, by whom unnecessary parade begins to be considered an ostentatious vulgarity. The surest method of dazzling our inferiors is by splendour—not taste. All young persons, all women in particular, are caught by show, and enamoured of magnificence. Assume a greater state, and you will be more talked of; and notoriety wins a woman's heart more than beauty or youth. You have, forgive me, played the boy too long; a certain dignity becomes your manhood: women will not respect you if you suffer yourself to become 'stale and cheap to vulgar company.' You are like a man who has fifty advantages and uses only one of them to gain his point, when you rely on your conversation and your manner, and throw away the resources of your wealth and your station. Any private gentleman may be amiable and

witty ; but any private gentleman cannot call to his aid the Aladdin's lamp possessed in England by a wealthy Peer. Look to this, my dear Lord. Lucy at heart is vain, or she is not a woman. Dazzle her then — dazzle ! Love may be blind, but it must be made so by excess of light. You have a country house within a few miles of Bath—why not take up your abode there instead of in a paltry lodging in the town ? Give sumptuous entertainments—make it necessary for all the world to attend them—exclude, of course, this Captain Clifford—you will then meet Lucy without a rival. At present, excepting only your title, you fight on a level ground with this adventurer, instead of an eminence from which you could in an instant sweep him away. Nay,—he is stronger than you ; he has the opportunities afforded by a partnership in balls where you cannot appear to advantage ; he is, you say, in the first bloom of youth—he is handsome. Reflect ! — your destiny, so far as Lucy is concerned, is in your hands. I turn to other subjects, &c.”

As Brandon re-read ere he signed this last

letter, a bitter smile sat on his harsh, yet handsome features. "If," said he mentally, "I can effect this object; if Mauleverer does marry this girl, why so much the better that she has another, a fairer, and a more welcome lover. By the great principle of scorn within me, which has enabled me to sneer at what weaker minds adore, and make a footstool of that worldly honour which fools set up as a throne, it would be to me more sweet than fame—ay, or even than power—to see this fine-spun Lord a gibe in the mouths of men—a cuckold—a cuckold!" and as he said the last word Brandon laughed outright. "And he thinks, too," added he, "that he is sure of my fortune; otherwise, perhaps, he, the silversmith's descendant, would not dignify our house with his proposals; but he may err there—he may err there;"—and finishing his soliloquy, Brandon finished also his letter by—"Adieu, my dear Lord, your most affectionate friend!"

It is not difficult to conjecture the effect produced upon Lucy by Brandon's letter: it made

her wretched; she refused for days to go out; she shut herself up in her apartment, and consumed the time in tears and struggles with her own heart. Sometimes, what she conceived to be her duty, conquered, and she resolved to forswear her lover; but the night undid the labour of the day: for at night, every night, the sound of her lover's voice, accompanied by music, melted away her resolution, and made her once more all tenderness and trust. The words, too, sung under her window, were especially suited to affect her; they breathed a melancholy which touched her the more from its harmony with her own thoughts. One while they complained of absence; at another they hinted at neglect; but there was always in them a tone of humiliation, not reproach: they bespoke a sense of unworthiness in the lover, and confessed that even the love was a crime; and in proportion as they owned the want of desert, did Lucy more firmly cling to the belief that her lover was deserving.

The old Squire was greatly disconcerted by his brother's letter. Though impressed with the idea of self-consequence, and the love of tolerably pure blood, common to most country squires, he was by no means ambitious for his daughter. On the contrary, the same feeling which at Warlock had made him choose his companions among the inferior gentry, made him averse to the thought of a son-in-law from the Peerage. Despite of Mauleverer's good nature, the very ease of the Earl annoyed him, and he never felt at home in his society. To Clifford he had a great liking, and having convinced himself that there was nothing to suspect in the young gentleman, he saw no earthly reason why so agreeable a companion should not be an agreeable son-in-law. "If he be poor," thought the Squire, "though he does not seem so, Lucy is rich!" And this truism appeared to him to answer every objection. Nevertheless, William Brandon possessed a remarkable influence over the weaker mind of his brother; and the Squire, though with great

reluctance, resolved to adopt his advice. He shut his doors against Clifford, and when he met him in the streets, instead of greeting him with his wonted cordiality, he passed him with a hasty "Good day, Captain!" which after the first day or two merged into a distant bow. Whenever very good-hearted people are rude, and unjustly so, the rudeness is in the extreme. The Squire felt it so irksome to be less familiar than heretofore with Clifford, that his only remaining desire was now to drop him altogether; and to this consummation of acquaintance the gradually cooling salute appeared rapidly approaching. Meanwhile, Clifford, unable to see Lucy, shunned by her father, and obtaining in answer to all enquiry rude looks from the footman, whom nothing but the most resolute command over his muscles prevented him from knocking down, began to feel, perhaps, for the first time in his life, that an equivocal character is at least no equivocal misfortune. To add to his distress, "the earnings of his previous industry"—we use the expression

cherished by the wise Tomlinson—waxed gradually less and less, beneath the expenses of Bath; and the murmuring voices of his two comrades began already to reproach their chief for his inglorious idleness, and to hint at the necessity of a speedy exertion.

CHAPTER X: VIII

Whackum.—Look you there, now! Well, all Europe cannot show a knot of finer wits and braver gentlemen.

Dingboy.—Faith, they are pretty smart men.

SHADWELL'S *Scourers.*

THE world of Bath was of a sudden delighted by the intelligence that Lord Mauleverer had gone to Beauville, (the beautiful seat possessed by that nobleman in the neighbourhood of Bath,) with the intention of there holding a series of sumptuous entertainments.

The first persons to whom the gay Earl announced his "hospitable purpose" were Mr. and Miss Brandon; he called at their house, and declared his resolution of not leaving it till Lucy (who was in her own room) consented to gratify

him with an interview, and a promise to be the Queen of his purposed festival. Lucy, teased by her father, descended to the drawing-room spiritless and pale; and the Earl, struck by the alteration of her appearance, took her hand, and made his inquiries with so interested and feeling a semblance of kindness, as prepossessed the father, for the first time, in his favour, and touched even the daughter. So earnest, too, was his request that she would honour his festivities with her presence, and with so skilful a flattery was it conveyed, that the Squire undertook to promise the favour in her name; and when the Earl, declaring he was not contented with that promise from another, appealed to Lucy herself, her denial was soon melted into a positive though a reluctant assent.

Delighted with his success, and more struck with Lucy's loveliness, refined as it was by her paleness, than he had ever been before, Maulverer left the house, and calculated, with greater accuracy than he had hitherto done, the probable fortune Lucy would derive from her uncle.

No sooner were the cards issued for Lord Mauleverer's *fête*, than nothing else was talked of among the circles, which at Bath people were pleased to term "the World."—Sometime or other we intend more poetically than these pages will suffer us, to take notice of the amusements and pursuits of that said "World," in whatever corner of England it may be found. Grant us patience, Heaven,—power and patience to tell the people of what stuff "Fashion" is made;—while other Novelists praise, imitate, exalt the vicious inanities of a hoary aristocracy, grown to that age when even the respectable crimes of its earlier youth sink into drivelling,—grant us the ability to expose and to deride them, and we will not ask the blessing to bequeath any other moral to our sons!

But, in the interim, caps are making, and talk flowing, at Bath; and when it was found that Lord Mauleverer—the good-natured Lord Mauleverer!—the obliging Lord Mauleverer!—was really going to be exclusive, and out of a thou-

sand acquaintances to select only eight hundred, it is amazing how his popularity deepened into respect. Now, then, came anxiety and triumph,—she who was asked turned her back upon her who was not,—old friendships dissolved,—Independence wrote letters for a ticket,—and as England is the freest country in the world, all the Mistresses Hodges and Snodges begged to take the liberty of bringing their youngest daughters.

Leaving the enviable Mauleverer, the godlike occasion of so much happiness and woe, triumph and dejection, ascend with us, O Reader, into those elegant apartments over the hair-dresser's shop, tenanted by Mr. Edward Pepper and Mr. Augustus Tomlinson:—the time was that of evening, Captain Clifford had been dining with his two friends, the cloth was removed, and conversation was flowing over a table graced by two bottles of port, a bowl of punch for Mr. Pepper's especial discussion, two dishes of filberts, another of devilled biscuits, and a fourth of three Pomarian crudities, which nobody touched.

The hearth was swept clean, the fire burnt high and clear, the curtains were let down, and the light excluded. Our three adventurers and their room, seemed the picture of comfort. So thought Mr. Pepper, for, glancing round the chamber, and putting his feet upon the fender, he said,

“Were my portrait to be taken, Gentlemen; it is just as I am now that I would be drawn!”

“And,” said Tomlinson, cracking his filberts—Tomlinson was fond of filberts—“were I to choose a home, it is in such a home as this that I would be always quartered.”

“Ah! Gentlemen,” said Clifford, who had been for some time silent, “it is more than probable that both your wishes may be heard, and that ye may be drawn, quartered, and something else, too, in the very place of your *desert!*”

“Well!” said Tomlinson, smiling gently, “I am happy to hear you jest again, Captain, though it be at our expense.”

“Expense!” echoed Ned, “Ay! there’s the rub! Who the deuce is to pay the expense of our dinner?”

“And our dinners for the last week?” added Tomlinson;—“this empty nut looks ominous; it certainly has one grand feature, strikingly resembling my pockets.”

“Heigho!” sighed Long Ned—turning his waistcoat commodities inside-out with a significant gesture, while the accomplished Tomlinson, who was fond of plaintive poetry, pointed to the disconsolate vacua, and exclaimed—

—“E'en while Fashion's brightest arts decoy
The heart desponding asks if *this* be joy!”

“In truth, gentlemen,” added he, solemnly depositing his nut-crackers on the table, and laying, as was his wont, when about to be luminous, his right finger on his sinister palm—“In truth, gentlemen, affairs are growing serious with us, and it becomes necessary forthwith to devise some safe means of procuring a decent competence.”

“I am dunned confoundedly,” cried Ned.

“And,” continued Tomlinson, “no person of delicacy likes to be subjected to the importunity of vulgar creditors; we must therefore raise mo-

ney for the liquidation of our debts. Captain Lovett, or Clifford, whichever you be styled, we call upon you to assist us in so praiseworthy a purpose !”

Clifford turned his eyes first on one, and then on the other, but made no answer.

“ *Imprimis,*” said Tomlinson ; “ let us each produce our stock in hand ; for my part, I am free to confess—for what shame is there in that poverty which our exertions are about to relieve ?—that I have only two guineas, four shillings, and three-pence halfpenny !”

“ And I,” said Long Ned, taking a china ornament from the chimney-piece, and emptying its contents in his hand, “ am in a still more pitiful condition. See, I have only three shillings and a bad guinea. I gave the guinea to the waiter at the White Hart, yesterday ; the dog brought it back to me to-day, and I was forced to change it with my last shiner. Plague take the thing ! I bought it of a Jew for four shillings, and have lost one pound five by the bargain !”

“ Fortune frustrates our wisest schemes !” rejoined the moralizing Augustus. “ Captain, will *you* produce the scanty wrecks of your wealth ?”

Clifford, still silent, threw a purse on the table ; Augustus carefully emptied it, and counted out five guineas ; an expression of grave surprise settled on Tomlinson’s contemplative brow, and extending the coins towards Clifford, he said in a melancholy tone—

—“ ‘ All your pretty ones ?
Did you say all ? ’ ”

A look from Clifford answered the interesting interrogatory.

“ These, then,” said Tomlinson, collecting in his hand the common-wealth—“ These, then, are all our remaining treasures !”—as he spoke, he jingled the coins mournfully in his palm, and gazing upon them with a parental air, exclaimed,

“ Alas ! regardless of their doom, the little victims play !”

“ Oh, damn it !” said Ned, “ no sentiment !

Let us come to business at once. To tell you the truth, I, for one, am tired of this heiress-hunting, and a man may spend a fortune in the chace before he can win one."

"You despair then, positively, of the widow you have courted so long?" asked Tomlinson.

"Utterly!" rejoined Ned, whose addresses had been limited solely to the dames of the middling class, and who had imagined himself at one time, as he punningly expressed it, sure of a *dear rib* from *Cheapside*. "Utterly; she was very civil to me at first, but when I proposed, asked me, with a blush, for my "references." "References?" said I; "why, I want the place of your husband, my charmer, not your footman!"—The dame was inexorable, said she could not take me without a character, but hinted that I might be the lover instead of the bridegroom; and when I scorned the suggestion, and pressed for the parson, she told me point blank, with her unlucky city pronunciation, "That she would never accompany me to the *Halter!*"

“Ha, ha, ha!” cried Tomlinson, laughing, “One can scarcely blame the good lady for that. Love rarely brooks such permanent *ties*. But have you no other lady in your eye?”

“Not for matrimony :—all roads but those to the church !”

While this dissolute pair were thus conversing, Clifford, leaning against the wainscot, listened to them with a sick and bitter feeling of degradation, which, till of late days, had been a stranger to his breast. He was at length aroused from his silence by Ned, who bending forward, and placing his hand upon Clifford’s knee, said abruptly,

“In short, Captain, you must lead us once more to glory. We have still our horses, and I keep my mask in my pocket-book, together with my comb. Let us take the road to-morrow night, dash across the country towards Salisbury, and after a short visit in that neighbourhood to a band of old friends of mine—bold fellows, who would have stopped, the devil himself, when he was at

work upon Stonehenge,—make a tour by Reading and Henley, and end by a plunge into London.”

“ You have spoken well, Ned !” said Tomlinson, approvingly. “ Now, noble Captain, your opinion ?”

“ Messieurs,” answered Clifford, “ I highly approve of your intended excursion, and I only regret that I cannot be your companion.”

“ Not ! and why ?” cried Mr. Pepper, amazed.

“ Because I have business here that renders it impossible ; perhaps, before long, I may join you in London.”

“ Nay,” said Tomlinson, “ there is no necessity for our going to London, if you wish to remain here ; nor need we at present recur to so desperate an expedient as the road — a little quiet business at Bath will answer our purpose ; and for my part, as you well know, I love exerting my wits in some scheme more worthy of them than the highway — a profession meet for a bully than a man of genius. Let us then, Captain, plan a project of enrichment on the property of

some credulous tradesman ! why have recourse to rough measures, so long as we can find easy fools ?”

Clifford shook his head. “ I will own to you fairly,” said he, “ that I cannot at present take a share in your exploits : nay, as your chief, I must lay my positive commands on you to refrain from all exercise of your talents at Bath. Rob, if you please ; the world is before you ; but this city is sacred.”

“ Body o’ me !” cried Ned, colouring, “ but this is too good. I will not be dictated to in this manner.”

“ But, Sir,” answered Clifford, who had learnt in his oligarchical profession the way to command. “ But, Sir, you shall, or if you mutiny, you leave our body, and then will the hangman have no petty chance of your own. Come ! come ! ingrate as you are, what would you be without me ? How many times have I already saved that long carcase of thine from the rope, and now would you have the baseness to rebel ? Out on you !”

Though Mr. Pepper was still wroth, he bit his lip in moody silence, and suffered not his passion to have its way; while Clifford rising, after a short pause, continued: "Look you, Mr. Pepper, you know my commands, consider them peremptory. I wish you success, and plenty! Farewell, gentlemen!"

"Do you leave us already?" cried Tomlinson; "you are offended."

"Surely not!" answered Clifford, retreating to the door: "But an engagement elsewhere, you know!"

"Ay, I take you!" said Tomlinson, following Clifford out of the room, and shutting the door after him.

"Ay, I take you!" added he, in a whisper, as he arrested Clifford at the head of the stairs. "But tell me, how do you get on with the heiress?"

Smothering that sensation at his heart which made Clifford, reckless as he was, enraged and ashamed, whenever, through the lips of his com-

rades, there issued any allusion to Lucy Brandon, the Chief replied, "I fear, Tomlinson, that I am already suspected by the old Squire! all of a sudden, he avoids me, shuts his door against me, Miss Brandon goes no where; and even if she did, what could I expect from her after this sudden change in the father?"

Tomlinson looked blank and disconcerted: "But," said he, after a moment's silence, "why not put a good face on the matter? walk up to the Squire, and ask him the reason of his unkindness?"

"Why, look you, my friend; I am bold enough with all others, but this girl has made me as bashful as a maid, in all that relates to herself. Nay, there are moments when I think I can conquer all selfish feeling, and rejoice for her sake that she has escaped me. Could I but see her once more — I could — yes! I feel — I feel I could -- resign her for ever!"

"Humph!" said Tomlinson; "and what is to become of *us*? Really, my Captain, your sense

of duty should lead you to exert yourself; your friends starve before your eyes, while you are shilly-shallying about your mistress. Have you no bowels for friendship?"

"A truce with this nonsense!" said Clifford, angrily.

"It is sense,—sober sense,—and sadness too;" rejoined Tomlinson. "Ned is discontented, our debts are imperious. Suppose now,—just suppose,—that we take a moonlight flitting from Bath, will that tell well for you whom we leave behind? yet this we must do, if you do not devise some method of refilling our purses. Either, then, consent to join us in a scheme meet for our wants, or pay our debts in this city, or fly with us to London, and dismiss all thoughts of that love which is so seldom friendly to the projects of ambition."

Notwithstanding the manner in which Tomlinson made this threefold proposition, Clifford could not but acknowledge the sense and justice contained in it; and a glance at the matter suf-

ficed to show how ruinous to his character, and therefore to his hopes, would be the flight of his comrades and the clamour of their creditors.

“You speak well, Tomlinson,” said he, hesitating, “and yet for the life of me I cannot aid you in any scheme which may disgrace us by detection. Nothing can reconcile me to the apprehension of Miss Brandon’s discovering who and what was her suitor.”

“I feel for you,” said Tomlinson, “but give me and Pepper at least permission to shift for ourselves; trust to my known prudence for finding some method to raise the wind without creating a dust; in other words—(this d—d Pepper makes one so vulgar!)—of preying on the public without being discovered.”

“I see no alternative,” answered Clifford, reluctantly; “but, if possible, be quiet for the present; bear with me for a few days longer, give me only sufficient time once more to see Miss Brandon, and I will engage to extricate you from your difficulties!”

“Spoken like yourself, frankly and nobly!” replied Tomlinson: “no one has a greater confidence in your genius, once exerted, than I have!”

So saying, the pair shook hands and parted. Tomlinson rejoined Mr. Pepper.

“Well, have you settled any thing?” quoth the latter.

“Not exactly; and though Lovett has promised to exert himself in a few days, yet as the poor man is in love, and his genius under a cloud, I have little faith in his promises.”

“And I have none!” said Pepper; “besides, time presses! A few days!—a few devils! We are certainly scented here, and I walk about like a barrel of beer at Christmas, under hourly apprehension of being *tapped!*”

“It is very strange,” said the philosophic Augustus; “but I think there is an instinct in tradesmen by which they can tell a rogue at first sight; and I can get (dress I ever so well) no more credit with my laundress than my friends the Whigs can with the people.”

“In short, then,” said Ned, “we must recur at once to the road! and on the day after to-morrow there will be an excellent opportunity: the old Earl, with the hard name, gives a breakfast, or feast, or some such mummerly; I understand people will stay till after night-fall; let us watch our opportunity, we are famously mounted, and some carriage later than the general string may furnish us with all our hearts can desire!”

“Bravo!” cried Tomlinson, shaking Mr. Pepper heartily by the hand, “I give you joy of your ingenuity, and you may trust to me to make our peace afterwards with Lovett; any enterprise that seems to him gallant he is always willing enough to forgive; and as he never practises any other branch of the profession than that of the road,—(for which I confess that I think him foolish,)—he will be more ready to look over our exploits in that line than in any other more subtle but less heroic.”

“Well, I leave it to you to propitiate the cove or not, as you please; and now that we

have settled the main point, let us finish the lish !”

“ And,” added Augustus, taking a pack of cards from the chimney-piece, “ we can in the mean while have a quiet game at cribbage for shillings.”

“ Done !” cried Ned, clearing away the dessert.

If the redoubted hearts of Mr. Edward Pepper, and that Ulysses of robbers, Augustus Tomlinson, beat high as the hours brought on Lord Mauleverer’s *fête*, their leader was not without anxiety and expectation for the same event. He was uninvited, it is true, to the gay scene ; but he had heard in public that Miss Brandon, recovered from her late illness, was certainly to be there ; and Clifford, torn with suspense, and eager once more, even if for the last time, to see the only person who had ever pierced his soul with a keen sense of his errors, or crimes, resolved to risk all obstacles, and meet her at Mauleverer’s.

“ My life,” said he, as he sat alone in his apartment, eyeing the falling embers of his still and lethargic fire, “ may soon approach its termination ;

it is, indeed, out of the chances of things that I can long escape the doom of my condition; and when, as a last hope to raise myself from my desperate state into respectability and reform, I came hither, and meditated purchasing independence by marriage, I was blind to the cursed rascality of the action! Happy, after all, that my intentions were directed against one whom I so soon and so adoringly learned to love! Had I wooed one whom I loved less, I might not have scrupled to deceive her into marriage. As it is!—well!—it is idle in me to think thus of my resolution, when I have not even the option to choose; when her father, perhaps, has already lifted the veil from my assumed dignities, and the daughter already shrinks in horror from my name. Yet I will see her! I will look once more upon that angel face—I will hear from her own lips, the confession of her scorn—I will see that bright eye flash hatred upon me, and I can then turn once more to my fatal career, and forget that I have ever repented that it was begun. Yet, what else could

have been my alternative? Friendless, homeless, nameless—an orphan, worse than an orphan—the son of a harlot, my father even unknown! yet cursed with early aspirings and restlessness, and a half glimmering of knowledge, and an entire lust of whatever seemed enterprise — what wonder that I chose any thing rather than daily labour and perpetual contumely? After all, the fault is in fortune, and the world, not me! Oh! Lucy, had I but been born in your sphere; had I but possessed the claim to merit you, what would I not have done, and dared, and conquered for your sake!”

Such, or similar to these, were the thoughts of Clifford during the interval between his resolution of seeing Lucy, and the time of effecting it. The thoughts were of no pleasing, though of an exciting, nature; nor were they greatly soothed by the ingenious occupation of cheating himself into the belief, that if he was a highwayman, it was altogether the fault of the highways.

CHAPTER IX.

Dream.—Let me but see her, dear Leontius.

Humorous Lieutenant.

Hempskirke—It was the fellow, sure,

Wolfort—What are you, Sirrah ?

Beggar's Bush.

O THOU divine Spirit, that through England burnest in every breast, inciting each with the sublime desire to be *fine!* that stirrest up the great to become little in order to seem greater, and that makest a Duchess woo insult for a voucher ! Thou that delightest in so many shapes, multivarious, yet the same ; Spirit that makest the high despicable, and the Lord meaner than his valet ! equally great whether thou cheatest a friend, or cuttest a father ! lackering all thou touchest with a bright vulgarity, that thy votaries imagine to be gold !—thou that sendest the few

to fashionable balls and the many to fashionable novels;—that smitest even Genius as well as Folly, making the favourites of the former boast an acquaintance they have not with the Graces of a mushroom Peerage, rather than the knowledge they have of the Muses of an eternal Helicon!—thou that leavest in the great ocean of our manners no dry spot for the foot of Independence;—that palest on the jaded eye with a moving and girdling panorama of daubed vilenesses, and fritterest away the souls of free-born Britons into a powder smaller than the angels which dance in myriads on a pin's point. Spirit! divine Spirit! carriest thou not beneath the mantle of frivolity a mighty and sharp sword, and by turning into contempt, while thou affectest to display, 'the solemn plausibilities of the world,' * hastenest thou not to the great family of man the epoch of redemption? Whether, O Spirit! thou callest thyself Fashion, or Ton, or Ambition, or Vanity, or Cringing, or Cant, or any title equally lofty and sublime—would, that from thy

* Burke.

wings we could gain but a single plume! Fain would we, in fitting strain, describe the festivities of that memorable day, when the benevolent Lord Mauleverer received and blessed the admiring universe of Bath!

But to be less poetical, as certain writers say, when they have been writing nonsense—But to be less poetical, and more exact, the morning, though in the depth of winter, was bright and clear, and Lord Mauleverer found himself in particularly good health. Nothing could be better planned than the whole of his arrangements: unlike those which are ordinarily chosen for the express reason of being as foreign as possible to the nature of our climate, all at Lord Mauleverer's were made suitable to a Greenland atmosphere. The temples and summer-houses, interspersed through the grounds, were fitted up, some as Esquimaux huts, others as Russian pavilions; fires were carefully kept up; the musicians, Mauleverer took care, should have as much wine as they pleased; they were set skilfully in places where they were un-

seen, but where they could be heard. One or two temporary buildings were erected for those who loved dancing; and as Mauleverer, miscalculating on the principles of human nature, thought *gentlemen* might be averse from ostentatious exhibition, he had hired persons to skate minuets and figures of eight upon his lakes, for the amusement of those who were fond of skating. All people who would be kind enough to dress in strange costumes, and make odd noises, which they called singing, the Earl had carefully engaged, and planted in the best places for making them look still stranger than they were.

There was also plenty to eat, and more than plenty to drink. Mauleverer knew well that our countrymen and countrywomen, whatever be their rank, like to have their spirits exalted. In short, the whole *dejeunè* was so admirably contrived, that it was probable the guests would not look much more melancholy during the amusements, than they would have done had they been otherwise engaged at a funeral.

Lucy and the Squire were among the first arrivals.

Mauleverer, approaching the father and daughter *with his most Devonshire-house manner*, insisted on taking the latter under his own escort, and being her Cicerone through the round of preparations.

As the crowd thickened, and it was observed how gallant were the attentions testified towards Lucy by the host, many and envious were the whispers of the guests! Those good people, naturally angry at the thought that two individuals should be married, divided themselves into two parties; one abused Lucy, and the other Lord Mauleverer; the former vituperated *her* art, the latter *his* folly. “I thought she would play her cards well — deceitful creature!” said the one. “January and May,” muttered the other; “the man’s sixty!” It was noticeable, that the party against Lucy was chiefly composed of ladies, that against Mauleverer of men; that conduct must indeed be heinous, which draws down the indignation of one’s own sex!

Unconscious of her crimes, Lucy moved along, leaning on the arm of the gallant Earl, and languidly smiling, with her heart far away, at his endeavours to amuse her. There was something interesting in the mere contrast of the pair; so touching seemed the beauty of the young girl, with her delicate cheek, maiden form, drooping eyelid, and quiet simplicity of air, in comparison to the worldly countenance and artificial grace of her companion.

After some time, when they were in a sequestered part of the grounds, Mauleverer, observing that none were near, entered a rude hut, and so fascinated was he at that moment by the beauty of his guest, and so meet to him seemed the opportunity of his confession, that he with difficulty suppressed the avowal rising to his lips, and took the more prudent plan of first sounding and preparing, as it were, the way.

“I cannot tell you, my dear Miss Brandon,” said he, slightly pressing the beautiful hand leaning on his arm, “how happy I am to see you the

guest, the queen, rather, of my house! Ah! could the bloom of youth return with its feelings! Time is never so cruel as when, while stealing from us the power to please, he leaves us in full vigour the unhappy privilege to be charmed!"

Mauleverer expected at least a blushing contradiction to the implied application of a sentiment so affectingly expressed; he was disappointed. Lucy, less alive than usual to the sentimental, or its reverse, scarcely perceived his meaning, and answered simply, "That it was very true." "This comes of being, like my friend Burke, too refined for one's audience," thought Mauleverer, wincing a little from the unexpected reply. "And yet!" he resumed, "I would not forego my power to admire, futile — nay, painful as it is. Even now while I gaze on you, my heart tells me that the pleasure I enjoy, it is at your command, at once, and for ever, to blight into misery; but while it tells me, I gaze on!"

Lucy raised her eyes, and something of her natural archness played in their expression.

“ I believe, my Lord,” said she, moving from the hut, “ that it would be better to join your guests: walls have ears; and what would be the gay Lord Mauleverer’s self-reproach, if he heard again of his fine compliments to——”

“ The most charming person in Europe !” cried Mauleverer vehemently, and the hand which he before touched, he now clasped; at that instant Lucy saw opposite to her, half hid by a copse of evergreens, the figure of Clifford. His face, which seemed pale and wan, was not directed towards the place where she stood; and he evidently did not perceive Mauleverer or herself, yet so great was the effect that this glimpse of him produced on Lucy, that she trembled violently, and unconsciously uttering a faint cry, snatched her hand from Mauleverer.

The Earl started, and catching the expression of her eyes, turned instantly towards the spot to which her gaze seemed riveted. He had not heard the rustling of the boughs, but he saw with his habitual quickness of remark, that they still trembled,

as if lately displaced, and he caught through their interstices the glimpse of a receding figure. He sprang forward with an agility very uncommon to his usual movements; but before he gained the copse, every vestige of the intruder had vanished.

What slaves we are to the moment! As Mauleverer turned back to rejoin Lucy, who, agitated almost to fainting, leaned against the rude wall of the hut, he would as soon have thought of flying as of making that generous offer of self, &c. which the instant before he had been burning to render Lucy. The vain are always confoundedly jealous, and Mauleverer remembering Clifford, and Lucy's blushes in dancing with him, instantly accounted for her agitation and its cause. With a very grave air he approached the object of his late adoration, and requested to know if it were not some abrupt intruder that had occasioned her alarm. Lucy scarcely knowing what she said, answered in a low voice, "That it was, indeed!" and begged instantly to rejoin her father. Mauleverer offered his arm with great dignity, and the pair passed

into the frequented part of the grounds, where Mauleverer once more brightened into smiles and courtesy to all around him.

“ He is certainly accepted !” said Mr. Shrewd to Lady Simper.

“ What an immense match for the girl !” was Lady Simper’s reply.

Amidst the music, the dancing, the throng, the noise, Lucy found it easy to recover herself ; and disengaging her arm from Lord Mauleverer, as she perceived her father, she rejoined the Squire, and remained a patient listener to his remarks till, late in the noon, it became an understood matter that people were expected to go into a long room in order to eat and drink. Mauleverer, now alive to the duties of his situation, and feeling exceedingly angry with Lucy, was more reconciled than he otherwise might have been to the *etiquette* which obliged him to select for the object of his hospitable cares an old dowager duchess, instead of the beauty of the *fête* ; but he took care to point out to the Squire the places appointed

for himself and daughter, which were, though at some distance from the Earl, under the providence of his vigilant survey.

While Mauleverer was deifying the Dowager Duchess, and refreshing his spirits with a chicken, and a medicinal glass of Madeira, the conversation near Lucy turned, to her infinite dismay, upon Clifford. Some one had seen him in the grounds, booted, and in a riding undress,—(in *that* day people seldom rode and danced in the same conformation of coat,)—and as Mauleverer was a precise person about those little matters of *etiquette*, this negligence of Clifford's made quite a subject of discussion. By degrees the conversation changed into the old inquiry as to who this Captain Clifford was; and just as it had reached that point, it reached also the gently deafened ears of Lord Mauleverer.

“Pray, my Lord,” said the old Duchess, “since he is one of your guests, you, who know who, and what every one is, can possibly inform us of the real family of this beautiful Mr. Clifford?”

“ One of my guests, did you say ?” answered Mauleverer, irritated greatly beyond his usual quietness of manner : “ Really, your Grace does me wrong. He may be a guest of my valet, but he is assuredly not mine; and should I encounter him, I shall leave it to my valet to give him his *congé* as well as his invitation !”

Mauleverer, heightening his voice as he observed athwart the table an alternate paleness and flush upon Lucy’s face, which stung all the angrier passions, generally torpid in him, into venom, looked round, on concluding, with a haughty and sarcastic air : so loud had been his tone, so pointed the insult, and so dead the silence at the table while he spoke, that every one felt the affront must be carried at once to Clifford’s hearing, should he be in the room. And after Mauleverer had ceased there was an universal nervous and indistinct expectation of an answer and a scene ; all was still, and it soon became certain that Clifford was not in the apartment. When Mr. Shrewd had fully convinced

himself of this fact—(for there was a daring spirit about Clifford which few wished to draw upon themselves,)—that personage broke the pause by observing that no man, who pretended to be a gentleman, would intrude himself unasked and unwelcome, into any society; and Mauleverer, catching up the observation, said,—(drinking wine at the same time with Mr. Shrewd,)—that undoubtedly such conduct fully justified the rumours respecting Mr. Clifford, and utterly excluded him from that rank to which it was before more than suspected he had no claim.

So luminous and satisfactory an opinion from such an authority once broached was immediately and universally echoed, and long before the repast was over, it seemed to be tacitly agreed that Captain Clifford should be sent to Coventry, and *if* he murmured at the exile, he would have *no* right to insist upon being sent from thence to the devil!

The good old Squire, mindful of his former friendship for Clifford, and not apt to veer, was

about to begin a speech on the occasion, when Lucy, touching his arm, implored him to be silent ; and so ghastly was the paleness of her cheek while she spoke, that the Squire's eyes, obtuse as he generally was, opened at once to the real secret of her heart. As soon as the truth flashed upon him, he wondered, recalling Clifford's great personal beauty and attentions, that it had not flashed upon him sooner, and leaning back on his chair, he sunk into one of the most unpleasant reveries he had ever conceived.

At a given signal the music for the dancers re-commenced, and, at a hint to that effect from the host, persons rose without ceremony to repair to other amusements, and suffer such guests as had hitherto been excluded from eating to occupy the place of the relinquishers. Lucy, glad to escape, was one of the first to resign her situation, and with the Squire she returned to the grounds. During the banquet evening had closed in, and the scene now really became fairy-like and picturesque ; — lamps hung from many a tree, reflecting

the light through the richest and softest hues,— the music itself sounded more musically than during the day,— gipsy-tents were pitched at wild corners and copses, and the bright wood-fires burning in them blazed merrily upon the cold yet cheerful air of the increasing night. The view was really novel and inviting; and as it had been an understood matter that ladies were to bring furs, cloaks, and boots, all those, who thought they looked well in such array, made little groups, and scattered themselves about the grounds and in the tents. They, on the contrary, in whom “the purple light of love” was apt by the frost to be propelled from the cheeks to the central ornament of the face, or who thought a fire in a room quite as agreeable as a fire in a tent, remained within, and contemplated the scene through the open windows.

Lucy longed to return home, nor was the Squire reluctant, but, unhappily, it wanted an hour to the time at which the carriage had been ordered, and she mechanically joined a group of

guests, who had persuaded the good-natured Squire to forget his gout, and venture forth to look at the illuminations. Her party was soon joined by others, and the group gradually thickened into a crowd; the throng was stationary for a few minutes before a little temple, in which fireworks had just commenced an additional attraction to the scene. Opposite to this temple, as well as in its rear, the walks and trees had been purposely left in comparative darkness, in order to heighten the effect of the fireworks.

“I declare,” said Lady Simper, glancing down one of the alleys which seemed to stretch away into blackness—“I declare that seems quite a lover’s walk! how kind in Lord Mauleverer!—such a delicate attention—”

“To your Ladyship!” added Mr. Shrewd, with a bow.

While, one of this crowd, Lucy was vacantly eyeing the long trains of light which ever and anon shot against the sky, she felt her hand suddenly seized, and at the same instant a voice whispered

“ For God’s sake read this now and grant my request !”

The voice, which seemed to rise from the very heart of the speaker, Lucy knew at once; she trembled violently, and remained for some minutes with eyes which did not dare to look from the ground. A note, she felt, had been left in her hand, and the agonized and earnest tone of that voice, which was dearer to her ear than the fulness of all music, made her impatient yet afraid to read it. As she recovered courage she looked around, and seeing that the attention of all was bent upon the fireworks, and that her father, in particular, leaning on his cane, seemed to enjoy the spectacle with a child’s engrossed delight, she glided softly away, and entering unperceived one of the alleys, she read, by a solitary lamp that burnt at its entrance, the following lines written in pencil and in a hurried hand, apparently upon a leaf torn from a pocket-book.

“ I implore, I entreat you, Miss Brandon, to see me, if but for a moment. I purpose to tear myself away from the place in which you reside — to go abroad — to leave even the spot hallowed by your footstep. After this night, my presence, my presumption, will degrade you no more. But this night, for mercy’s sake, see me, or I shall go mad ! I will but speak to you one instant, this is all I ask. If you grant me this prayer, the walk to the left where you stand, at the entrance to which there is one purple lamp, will afford an opportunity to your mercy. A few yards down that walk I will meet you — none can see or hear us. Will you grant this ? I know not — I dare not think — but under any case, your name shall be the last upon my lips.”

“ P. C.”

As Lucy read this hurried scrawl, she glanced towards the lamp above her, and saw that she had accidentally entered the very walk indicated in the note. She paused — she hesitated ; — the impropriety — the singularity of the request darted

upon her at once ; on the other hand, the anxious voice still ringing in her ear, the incoherent vehemence of the note, the risk, the opprobrium Clifford had incurred, solely — her heart whispered — to see her, all aided her simple temper, her kind feelings, and her love for the petitioner, in inducing her to consent. She cast one glance behind, all seemed occupied with far other thoughts than that of notice towards her ; she looked anxiously before, all was gloomy and indistinct ; but suddenly, at some little distance, she descried a dark figure in motion. She felt her knees shake under her, her heart beat violently ; she moved onward a few paces, again paused, and looked back ; the figure before her moved as in approach, she resumed courage, and advanced — the figure was by her side.

“ How generous, how condescending, is this goodness in Miss Brandon ! ” said the voice, which so struggled with secret and strong emotion, that Lucy scarcely recognized it as Clifford’s. “ I did not dare to expect it ; and now — now that I meet you —— ” Clifford paused, as if seeking

words ; and Lucy, even through the dark, perceived that her strange companion was powerfully excited ; she waited for him to continue, but observing that he walked on in silence, she said, though with a trembling voice, “ Indeed, Mr. Clifford, I fear that it is very, very improper in me to meet you thus ; nothing but the strong expressions in your letter — and — and — in short, my fear that you meditated some desperate design, at which I could not guess, caused me to yield to your wish for an interview.” She paused, and Clifford still preserving silence, she added, with some little coldness in her tone, “ If you have really aught to say to me, you must allow me to request that you speak it quickly. This interview, you must be sensible, ought to end almost as soon as it begins.”

“ Hear me then !” said Clifford, mastering his embarrassment, and speaking in a firm and clear voice — “ Is that true, which I have but just heard, — is it true, that I have been spoken of in your presence in terms of insult and affront ?”

It was now for Lucy to feel embarrassed ; fear-

ful to give pain, and yet anxious that Clifford should know, in order that he might disprove, the slight and the suspicion which the mystery around him drew upon his name, she faltered between the two feelings, and without satisfying the latter, succeeded in realizing the fear of the former.

“Enough!” said Clifford, in a tone of deep mortification, as his quick ear caught and interpreted, yet more humiliatingly than the truth, the meaning of her stammered and confused reply. “Enough! I see that it is true, and that the only human being in the world to whose good opinion I am not indifferent, has been a witness of the insulting manner in which others have dared to speak of me!”

“But,” said Lucy, eagerly, “why give the envious or the idle any excuse? Why not suffer your parentage and family to be publicly known? Why are you here”—(and her voice sunk into a lower key)—“this very day, unasked, and therefore subject to the cavils of all who think the poor distinction of an invitation an honour? Forgive me,

Mr. Clifford, perhaps I offend, I hurt you by speaking thus frankly ; but your good name rests with yourself, and your friends cannot but feel angry that you should trifle with it."

" Madam !" said Clifford, and Lucy's eyes now growing accustomed to the darkness, perceived a bitter smile upon his lips, " My name, good or ill, is an object of little care to me. I have read of philosophers who pride themselves in placing no value in the opinions of the world. Rank me among that sect — but I am, I own I am, anxious that you alone, of all the world, should not despise me ; — and now that I feel you do — that you must — every thing worth living or hoping for is past !"

" Despise you !" said Lucy, and her eyes filled with tears — " Indeed, you wrong me and yourself. But listen to me, Mr. Clifford, I have seen, it is true, but little of the world, yet I have seen enough to make me wish I could have lived in retirement for ever ; the rarest quality among either sex, though it is the simplest, seems to me, good-

nature; and the only occupation of what are termed fashionable people appears to be speaking ill of one another: nothing gives such a scope to scandal, as mystery; nothing disarms it like openness. I know — your friends know, Mr. Clifford, that your character can bear inspection, and I believe for my own part, the same of your family. Why not then declare who, and what you are?"

"That candour would indeed be my best defender," said Clifford, in a tone which ran displeasingly through Lucy's ear; "but, in truth, Madam, I repeat, I care not one drop of this worthless blood what men say of me; that time has passed, and for ever; perhaps it never keenly existed for me — no matter. I come hither, Miss Brandon, not wasting a thought on these sickening fooleries or on the hoary idler, by whom they are given! I came hither, only once more to see you — to hear you speak — to watch you move — to tell you — (and the speaker's voice trembled, so as to be scarcely audible) — to tell you, if any season for the disclosure offered itself, that I have had

the boldness — the crime, to love — to love— O God! to adore you! and then to leave you for ever!”

Pale, trembling, scarcely preserved from falling by the tree against which she leaned, Lucy listened to this abrupt avowal.

“Dare I touch this hand,” continued Clifford, as he knelt and took it, timidly and reverently; “You know not, you cannot dream, how unworthy is he who thus presumes — yet, not all unworthy, while he is sensible of so deep, so holy a feeling as that which he bears to you. God bless you, Miss Brandon!—Lucy, God bless you!— and if hereafter you hear me subjected to still blacker suspicion, or severer scrutiny than that which I now sustain — if even your charity and goodness can find no defence for me, — if the suspicion become certainty, and the scrutiny end in condemnation, believe, at least, that circumstances have carried me beyond my nature; and that under fairer auspices, I might have been other than I am!”

Lucy’s tear dropped upon Clifford’s hand, as he

spoke; and while his heart melted within him as he felt it, and knew his own desperate and unredeemed condition, he added,

“ Every one courts you — the proud, the rich, the young, the high-born, all are at your feet! you will select one of that number for your husband, may he watch over you as I would have done! — love you as I do, he *cannot*! Yes, I repeat it!” continued Clifford, vehemently, “ he *cannot*! None amidst the gay, happy, silken crowd of your equals and followers, *can* feel for you that single and overruling passion, which makes you to me, what all combined — country, power, wealth, reputation, an honest name, peace, common safety, the quiet of the common air, alike the least blessing and the greatest, are to all others! Once more, may God in heaven watch over you, and preserve you! I tear myself on leaving you from all that cheers, or blesses, or raises, or might have saved me! — Farewell!”

The hand which Lucy had relinquished to her strange suitor was pressed ardently to his lips,

dropped in the same instant, and she knew that she was once more alone!

But Clifford, hurrying rapidly through the trees, made his way towards the nearest gate which led from Lord Mauleverer's domain; when he reached it, a crowd of the more elderly guests occupied the entrance, and one of these was a lady of such distinction, that Mauleverer, despite of his aversion from any superfluous exposure to the night air, had obliged himself to conduct her to her carriage. He was in a very ill-humour with this constrained politeness, especially as the carriage was very slow in relieving him of his charge, when he saw, by the lamplight, Clifford passing near him, and winning his way to the gate. Quite forgetting his worldly prudence which should have made him averse to scenes with any one, especially with a flying enemy, and a man with whom, if he believed aright, little glory was to be gained in conquest, much less in contest; and only remembering Clifford's rivalship and his own hatred towards him for the presumption, Mauleverer, uttering a hur-

ried apology to the lady on his arm, stepped forward, and opposing Clifford's progress, said, with a bow of tranquil insult, "Pardon me, Sir, but is it at *my* invitation, or that of one of my servants, that you have honoured me with your company this day?"

Clifford's thoughts at the time of this interruption were of that nature before which all petty misfortunes shrink into nothing; if, therefore, he started for a moment at the Earl's address, he betrayed no embarrassment in reply, but bowing with an air of respect, and taking no notice of the affront implied in Mauleverer's speech, he answered—

"Your Lordship has only to deign a glance at my dress, to see that I have not intruded myself on your grounds with the intention of claiming your hospitality. The fact is, and I trust to your Lordship's courtesy to admit the excuse, that I leave this neighbourhood to-morrow, and for some length of time. A person whom I was very anxious to see before I left, was one of your Lord-

ship's guests; I heard this, and knew that I should have no other opportunity of meeting the person in question before my departure; and I must now throw myself on the well-known politeness of Lord Mauleverer, to pardon a freedom originating in a business very much approaching to a necessity!"

Lord Mauleverer's address to Clifford had congregated an immediate crowd of eager and expectant listeners, but so quietly-respectful and really gentlemanlike were Clifford's air and tone in excusing himself, that the whole throng were smitten with a sudden disappointment.

Lord Mauleverer himself, surprised by the temper and deportment of the unbidden guest, was at a loss for one moment, and Clifford was about to take advantage of that moment and glide away, when Mauleverer, with a second bow, more civil than the former one, said—

"I cannot but be happy, Sir, that my poor place has afforded you any convenience; but, if I am not very impertinent, will you allow me to

inquire the name of my guest with whom you required a meeting ?”

“ My Lord,” said Clifford, drawing himself up, and speaking gravely and sternly, though still with a certain deference—“ I need not surely point out to your Lordship’s good sense and good feeling, that your very question implies a doubt, and, consequently, an affront, and that the tone of it is not such as to justify that concession on my part which the farther explanation you require would imply !”

Few spoken sarcasms could be so bitter as that silent one which Mauleverer could command by a smile, and with this complimentary expression on his thin lips and raised brow, the Earl answered—“ Sir, I honour the skill testified by your reply ; it must be the result of a profound experience in these affairs. I wish you, Sir, a very good night, and the next time you favour me with a visit, I am quite sure that your motives for so indulging me will be no less creditable to you than at present.”

With these words Mauleverer turned to rejoin

his fair charge. But Clifford was a man who had seen in a short time a great deal of the world, and knew tolerably well the theories of society, if not the practice of its minutiae; moreover, he was of an acute and resolute temper, and these properties of mind, natural and acquired, told him that he was now in a situation in which it had become more necessary to defy than to conciliate. Instead, therefore, of retiring, he walked deliberately up to Mauleverer and said—

“My Lord, I shall leave it to the judgment of your guests to decide whether you have acted the part of a nobleman and a gentleman in thus, in your domains, insulting one who has given you such explanation of his trespass as would fully excuse him in the eyes of all considerate or courteous persons. I shall also leave it to them to decide whether the tone of your enquiry allowed me to give you any farther apology. But I shall take it upon *myself*, my Lord, to demand from *you* an immediate explanation of your last speech.”

“Insolent!” cried Mauleverer, colouring with indignation, and almost for the first time in his life losing absolute command over his temper; “Do you bandy words with me — begone, or I shall order my servants to thrust you forth.”

“Begone, Sir,—begone!” cried several voices in echo to Mauleverer, from those persons who deemed it now high time to take part with the powerful.

Clifford stood his ground, gazing around with a look of angry and defying contempt, which joined to his athletic frame, his dark and fierce eye, and a heavy riding whip, which, as if mechanically, he half raised, effectually kept the murmurers from proceeding to violence.

“Poor pretender to breeding and to sense!” said he, disdainfully turning to Mauleverer, “with one touch of this whip I could shame you for ever, or compel you to descend from the level of your rank to that of mine, and the action would be but a mild return to your language. But I love rather to teach you, than to correct. Ac-

ording to my creed, my Lord, he conquers most in good breeding, who forbears the most — *scorn* enables *me* to forbear!—Adieu!”

With this, Clifford turned on his heel and strode away. A murmur, approaching to a groan, from the younger, or sillier part of the parasites, (the mature and the sensible have no extra emotion to throw away,) followed him as he disappeared.

CHAPTER X.

Outlaw.—Stand, Sir, and throw us that you have about you ?

Val.—Ruffians, forego that rude uncivil touch !

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

ON leaving the scene in which he had been so unwelcome a guest, Clifford hastened to the little inn where he had left his horse. He mounted and returned to Bath. His thoughts were absent, and he unconsciously suffered the horse to direct its course whither it pleased. This was naturally towards the nearest halting-place which the animal remembered ; and this halting-place was at that illustrious tavern in the suburbs of the town, in which we have before commemorated Clifford's re-election to the dignity of chief. It was a house of long established reputation ; and here news of

any of the absent confederates was always to be obtained. This circumstance, added to the excellence of its drink, its ease, and the electric chain of early habits, rendered it a favourite haunt, even despite their present gay and modish pursuits, with Tomlinson and Pepper, and here, when Clifford sought the pair at unseasonable hours, was he for the most part sure to find them. As his meditations were interrupted by the sudden stopping of his horse beneath the well-known sign, Clifford, muttering an angry malediction on the animal, spurred it onward in the direction of his own home. He had already reached the end of the street, when his resolution seemed to change, and muttering to himself, "Ay, I might as well arrange this very night for our departure!" he turned his horse's head backward, and was once more at the tavern door. He threw the bridle over an iron railing, and knocking with a peculiar sound at the door, was soon admitted.

"Are —— and —— here?" asked he of the old woman, as he entered, mentioning the cant words

by which, among friends, Tomlinson and Fepper were usually known. "They are both gone on the sharps to-night," replied the old lady, lifting her unsnuffed candle to the face of the speaker with an intelligent look; "Oliver* is sleepy, and the lads will take advantage of his nap."

"Do you mean," answered Clifford, replying in the same key, which we take the liberty to paraphrase, "that they are out on any actual expedition?"

"To be sure," rejoined the dame. "They who lag late on the road, may want money for supper!"

"Ha! which road?"

"You are a pretty fellow for Captain!" rejoined the dame, with a good-natured sarcasm in her tone. "Why, Captain Gloak, poor fellow! knew every turn of his men to a hair, and never needed to ask what they were about. Ah, he *was* a fellow! none of your girl-faced mudgers, who make love to ladies, forsooth—a pretty woman need not look

* The moon.

far for a kiss when he was in the room, I warrant, however coarse her duds might be ; and lauk ! but the Captain was a sensible man, and liked a cow as well as a calf."

"So, so ! on the road are they ?" cried Clifford musingly, and without heeding the insinuated attack on his decorum. "But answer me, what is the plan ?—Be quick."

"Why," replied the dame, "there's some swell cove of a lord gives a blow-out to-day, and the lads, dear souls ! think to play the queer on some straggler."

Without uttering a word, Clifford darted from the house and was remounted before the old lady had time to recover her surprise.

"If you want to see them," cried she, as he put spurs to his horse, "they ordered me to have supper ready at——" The horse's hoofs drowned the last words of the dame, and carefully rebolting the door, and muttering an invidious comparison between Captain Clifford and Captain Gloak, the good landlady returned to those culinary opera-

tions destined to rejoice the hearts of Tomlinson and Pepper.

Return we ourselves to Lucy. It so happened that the Squire's carriage was the last to arrive ; for the coachman, long uninitiated among the shades of Warlock into the dissipation of fashionable life, entered on his *début* at Bath with all the vigorous heat of matured passions for the first time released into the festivities of the ale-house, and having a milder master than most of his comrades, the fear of displeasure was less strong in his aurigal bosom than the love of companionship ; so that during the time this gentleman was amusing himself, Lucy had ample leisure for enjoying all the thousand and one reports of the scene between Mauleverer and Clifford, which regaled her ears. Nevertheless, whatever might have been her feelings at these pleasing recitals, a certain vague joy predominated over all. A man feels but slight comparative happiness in being loved, if he know that it is in vain. But to a woman that simple knowledge is sufficient to de-

stroy the memory of a thousand distresses, and it is not till she has told her heart again and again that she is loved, that she will even begin to ask if it be in vain.

It was a partially starlit, yet a dim and obscure night, for the moon had for the last hour or two been surrounded by mist and cloud, when at length the carriage arrived, and Mauleverer, for the second time that evening, playing the escort, conducted Lucy to the vehicle. Anxious to learn if she had seen, or been addressed by, Clifford, the subtle Earl, as he led her to the gate, dwelt particularly on the intrusion of that person, and by the trembling of the hand which rested on his arm, he drew no delicious omen for his own hopes. "However," thought he, "the man goes to-morrow, and then the field will be clear; the girl's a child yet, and I forgive her folly." And with an air of chivalric veneration, Mauleverer bowed the object of his pardon into her carriage.

As soon as Lucy felt herself alone with her father, the emotions so long pent within her

forced themselves into vent, and leaning back against the carriage, she wept, though in silence, tears, burning tears, of sorrow, comfort, agitation, anxiety.

The good old Squire was slow in perceiving his daughter's emotion; it would have escaped him altogether, if actuated by a kindly warming of the heart towards her, originating in his new suspicion of her love for Clifford, he had not put his arm round her neck, and this unexpected caress so entirely unstrung her nerves, that Lucy at once threw herself upon her father's breast, and her weeping, hitherto so quiet, became distinct and audible.

“Be comforted, my dear, dear child!” said the Squire, almost affected to tears himself, and his emotion, arousing him from his usual mental confusion, rendered his words less involved and equivocal than they were wont to be. “And now I do hope that you won't vex yourself; the young man is indeed—and, I do assure you, I always thought so—a very charming gentleman,

there's no denying it. But what can we do? you see what they all say of him, and it really was—we must allow that—very improper in him to come without being asked. Moreover, my dearest child, it is very wrong, very wrong, indeed, to love any one, and not know who he is; and—and—but don't cry, my dear love, don't cry so; all will be very well, I am sure,—quite sure!”

As he said this, the kind old man drew his daughter nearer to him, and feeling his hand hurt by something she wore unseen which pressed against it, he inquired, with some suspicion that the love might have proceeded to love-gifts, what it was.

“It is my mother's picture,” said Lucy, simply, and putting it aside.

The old Squire had loved his wife tenderly, and when Lucy made this reply, all the fond and warm recollections of his youth rushed upon him: he thought, too, how earnestly on her death-bed that wife had recommended to his vigilant care their only child now weeping on his bosom; he remem-

bered how, dwelling on that which to all women seems the grand epoch of life, she had said, "Never let her affections be trifled with,—never be persuaded by your ambitious brother to make her marry where she loves not, or to oppose her, without strong reason, where she does; though she be but a child now, I know enough of her to feel convinced that if ever she love, she will love too well for her own happiness even with all things in her favour." These words, these recollections, joined to the remembrance of the cold-hearted scheme of William Brandon, which he had allowed himself to favour, and of his own supineness towards Lucy's growing love for Clifford, till resistance became at once necessary and too late, all smote him with a remorseful sorrow, and, fairly sobbing himself, he said, "Thy mother, child! ah, would that she were living, she would never have neglected thee as I have done!"

The Squire's self-reproach made Lucy's tears cease on the instant, and, as she covered her father's hand with kisses, she replied only by

vehement accusations against herself, and praises of his too great fatherly fondness and affection. This little burst, on both sides, of honest and simple-hearted love, ended in a silence full of tender and mingled thoughts; and as Lucy still clung to the breast of the old man, uncouth as he was in temper, below even mediocrity in intellect, and altogether the last person in age, or mind, or habit, that seemed fit for a confidant in the love of a young and enthusiastic girl, she felt the old homely truth, that under all disadvantages there are, in this hollow world, few in whom trust can be so safely reposed, few who so delicately and subtly respect the confidence, as those from whom we spring.

The father and daughter had been silent for some minutes, and the former was about to speak, when the carriage suddenly stopped. The Squire heard a rough voice at the horses' heads; he looked forth from the window to see, through the mist of the night, what could possibly be the matter, and he encountered in this action, just one inch from his forehead, the protruded and shining

barrel of a horse-pistol. We may believe, without a reflection on his courage, that Mr. Brandon threw himself back into his carriage with all possible dispatch, and at the same moment the door was opened, and a voice said, not in a threatening, but a smooth accent, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry to disturb you, but want is imperious! oblige me with your money, your watches, your rings, and any other little commodities of a similar nature!"

So delicate a request the Squire had not the heart to resist, the more especially as he knew himself without any weapons of defence; accordingly he drew out a purse, not very full it must be owned, together with an immense silver hunting-watch, with a piece of black-ribbon attached to it: "There, Sir," said he, with a groan, "don't frighten the young lady."

The gentle applicant, who indeed was no other than the specious Augustus Tomlinson, slid the purse into his waistcoat-pocket, after feeling its contents with a rapid and scientific finger. "Your

watch, Sir," quoth he, and as he spoke he thrust it carelessly into his coat-pocket, as a school-boy would thrust a peg-top, "is heavy; but trusting to experience, since an accurate survey is denied me, I fear it is more valuable from its weight than its workmanship: however, I will not wound your vanity by affecting to be fastidious. But surely the young lady, as you call her,—(for I pay you the compliment of believing your word as to her age, inasmuch as the night is too dark to allow me the happiness of a personal inspection,)—the young lady has surely some little trinket she can dispense with; 'Beauty when unadorned,' you know, &c."

Lucy, who, though greatly frightened, lost neither her senses nor her presence of mind, only answered by drawing forth a little silk purse, that contained still less than the leathern convenience of the Squire; to this she added a gold chain: and Tomlinson, taking them with an affectionate squeeze of the hand, and a polite apology, was about to withdraw, when his sagacious eyes were

suddenly stricken by the gleam of jewels. The fact was, that in altering the position of her mother's picture, which had been set in the few hereditary diamonds possessed by the Lord of Warlock, Lucy had allowed it to hang on the outside of her dress, and bending forward to give the robber her other possessions, the diamonds at once came in full sight, and gleamed the more invitingly from the darkness of the night.

“ Ah, Madam !” said Tomlinson, stretching forth his hand, “ you would play me false, would you ? Treachery should never go unpunished. Favour me instantly with the little ornament round your neck !”

“ I cannot — I cannot,” said Lucy, grasping her treasure with both her hands,—“ it is my mother's picture, and my mother is dead !”

“ The wants of others, Madam,” returned Tomlinson, who could not for the life of him *rob immorally*, “ are ever more worthy your attention than family prejudices. Seriously, give it, and that instantly ; we are in a hurry, and your

horses are plunging like devils, they will break your carriage in an instaat—dispatch !”

The Squire was a brave man on the whole, though no hero, and the nerves of an old Fox-hunter soon recover from a little alarm. The picture of his buried wife was yet more inestimable to him than it was to Lucy, and at this new demand, his spirit was roused within him.

He clenched his fists, and advancing himself, as it were, on his seat, he cried in a loud voice :

“ Begone, fellow !—I have given you—for my own part I think so—too much already ; and by G—d you shall not have the picture !”

“ Don’t force me to use violence !” said Augustus, and putting one foot on the carriage-step, he brought his pistol within a few inches of Lucy’s breast, rightly judging, perhaps, that the show of danger to her would be the best method to intimidate the Squire. At that instant the valorous moralist found himself suddenly seized with a powerful gripe on the shoulder, and a low voice, trembling with passion, hissed in his ear.

Whatever might be the words that startled his organs, they operated as an instantaneous charm ; and to their astonishment, the Squire and Lucy beheld their assailant abruptly withdraw. The door of the carriage was clapped to, and scarcely two minutes had elapsed before the robber having remounted, his comrade—(hitherto stationed at the horses' heads)—set spurs to his own steed, and the welcome sound of receding hoofs smote upon the bewildered ears of the father and daughter.

The door of the carriage was again opened, and a voice, which made Lucy paler than the preceding terror, said,

“ I fear, Mr. Brandon, the robbers have frightened your daughter. There is now, however, nothing to fear—the ruffians are gone.”

“ God bless me !” said the Squire, “ why, is that Captain Clifford ?”

“ It is ! and he conceives himself too fortunate to have been of the smallest service to Mr. and Miss Brandon.”

On having convinced himself that it was indeed to Mr. Clifford that he owed his safety, as well as that of his daughter, whom he believed to have been in a far more imminent peril than she really was,—(for to tell thee the truth, reader, the pistol of Tomlinson was rather calculated for show than use, having a peculiarly long bright barrel with nothing in it,)—the Squire was utterly at a loss how to express his gratitude; and when he turned to Lucy to beg she would herself thank their gallant deliverer, he found that, overpowered with various emotions, she had, for the first time in her life, fainted away.

“Good Heavens!” cried the alarmed father, “she is dead,—my Lucy—my Lucy—they have killed her.”

To open the door nearest to Lucy, to bear her from the carriage in his arms, was to Clifford the work of an instant; utterly unconscious of the presence of any one else—unconscious even of what he said, he poured forth a thousand wild, passionate, yet half audible expressions; and as he bore her to

a bank by the roadside, and, seating himself, supported her against his bosom, it would be difficult, perhaps, to say, whether something of delight—of burning and thrilling delight—was not mingled with his anxiety and terror. He chafed her small hands in his own—his breath, all trembling and warm, glowed upon her cheek, and once, and but once, his lips drew nearer, and breathing aside the dishevelled richness of her tresses, clung in a long and silent kiss to her own.

Meanwhile, by the help of his footman, who had now somewhat recovered his astonished senses, the Squire descended from his carriage, and approached with faltering steps the place where his daughter reclined. At the instant that he took her hand, Lucy began to revive, and the first action in the bewildered unconsciousness of awaking, was to throw her arm around the neck of her supporter.

Could all the hours and realities of hope, joy, pleasure, in Clifford's previous life have been melted down and concentrated into a single emotion, that emotion would have been but tame to

the rapture of Lucy's momentary and innocent caress ! And at a later, yet no distant, period, when in the felon's cell the grim visage of Death scowled upon him, it may be questioned whether his thoughts dwelt not far more often on the remembrance of that delightful moment, than on the bitterness and ignominy of an approaching doom !

“She breathes—she moves—she wakes !” cried the father, and Lucy, attempting to rise, and recognizing the Squire's voice, said faintly, “Thank God, my dear father, you are not hurt ! And are they really gone ? — and where — where are *we* ?”

The Squire relieving Clifford of his charge, folded his child in his arms, while in his own elucidatory manner he informed her where she was and with whom. The lovers stood face to face to each other, but what delicious blushes did the night, which concealed all but the outline of their forms, hide from the eyes of Clifford !

The honest and kind heart of Mr. Brandon was glad of a release to the indulgent sentiments it had always cherished towards the suspected and

maligned Clifford; and turning now from Lucy, it fairly poured itself forth upon her deliverer. He grasped him warmly by the hand, and insisted upon his accompanying them to Bath in the carriage, and allowing the footman to ride his horse. This offer was still pending, when the footman, who had been to see after the health and comfort of his fellow-servant, came to inform the party in a dolorous accent, of something which, in the confusion and darkness of the night, they had not yet learned, — namely, that the horses and coachman were — gone !”

“Gone !” said the Squire — “Gone ! — why the villains can’t — (for my part, I never believe, though I have heard such wonders of, those slights of hand) — have bagged them !”

Here a low groan was audible, and the footman sympathetically guided to the spot whence it emanated, found the huge body of the coachman safely deposited, with its face downward, in the middle of the kennel. After this worthy had been lifted to his legs, and had shaken himself

into intelligence, it was found, that when the robber had detained the horses, the coachman, who required very little to conquer his turbulent faculties, had—(he himself said, by a violent blow from the ruffian, though, perhaps, the cause lay nearer home)—quitted the coach-box for the kennel, the horses grew frightened, and after plunging and rearing till he cared no longer to occupy himself with their arrest, the highwayman had very quietly cut the traces, and by the time present, it was not impossible that the horses were almost at the door of their stables at Bath.

The footman who had apprised the Squire of this misfortune was, unlike most news-tellers, the first to offer consolation.

“There be an excellent public,” quoth he, “about a half a mile on, where your honour could get horses; or mayhap, if Miss Lucy, poor heart, be faint, you may like to stop for the night.”

Though a walk of half a mile in a dark night, and under other circumstances, would not have seemed a grateful proposition, yet at present,

when the Squire's imagination had only pictured to him the alternatives of passing the night in the carriage, or of crawling on foot to Bath, it seemed but a very insignificant hardship. And tucking his daughter's arm under his own, while in a kind voice he told Clifford "to support her on the other side," the Squire ordered the footman to lead the way with Clifford's horse, and the coachman to follow, or be d—d, which ever he pleased.

In silence Clifford offered his arm to Lucy, and silently she accepted the courtesy. The Squire was the only talker, and the theme he chose was not ungrateful to Lucy, for it was the praise of her lover. But Clifford scarcely listened, for a thousand thoughts and feelings contested within him; and the light touch of Lucy's hand upon his arm would alone have been sufficient to distract and confuse his attention. The darkness of the night, the late excitement, the stolen kiss that still glowed upon his lips, the remembrance of Lucy's flattering agitation in the scene with her at Lord Mauleverer's, the yet warmer one of that uncon-

scious embrace, which still tingled through every nerve of his frame, all conspired with the delicious emotion which he now experienced at her presence and her contact, to intoxicate and inflame him. Oh, those burning moments in love, when romance has just mellowed into passion, and without losing anything of its luxurious vagueness, mingles the enthusiasm of its dreams with the ardent desires of reality and earth! *That* is the exact time, when love has reached its highest point—when all feelings, all thoughts, the whole soul, and the whole mind are seized and engrossed—when every difficulty weighed in the opposite scale seems lighter than dust—when to renounce the object beloved, is the most deadly and lasting sacrifice—and when in so many breasts, where honour, conscience, virtue, are far stronger than we can believe them ever to have been in a criminal like Clifford, honour, conscience, virtue, have perished at once and suddenly into ashes before that mighty and irresistible fire.

The servant, who had had previous opportuni-

ties of ascertaining the topography of the "public" of which he spake, and who was perhaps tolerably reconciled to his late terror in the anticipation of renewing his intimacy with "the spirits of the past," now directed the attention of our travellers to a small inn just before them. Mine host had not yet retired to repose, and it was not necessary to knock twice before the door was opened.

A bright fire, an officious landlady, a comiserate landlord, a warm potation, and the promise of excellent beds, all appeared to our Squire to make ample amends for the intelligence that the inn was not licensed to let post-horses; and mine host having promised forthwith to send two stout fellows, a rope, and a cart-horse, to bring the carriage under shelter,—(for the Squire valued the vehicle *because* it was twenty years old)—and moreover to have the harness repaired, and the horses ready by an early hour the next day, the good-humour of Mr. Brandon rose into positive hilarity. Lucy retired under the auspices of the landlady to-bed, and the Squire hav-

ing drank a bowl of bishop, and discovered a thousand new virtues in Clifford, especially that of never interrupting a good story, clapped the Captain on the shoulder, and making him promise not to leave the inn till he had seen him again, withdrew also to the repose of his pillow. Clifford remained below, gazing abstractedly on the fire for some time afterwards; nor was it till the drowsy chambermaid had thrice informed him of the prepared comforts of his bed, that he adjourned to his chamber. Even then it seems that sleep did not visit his eyelids, for a wealthy grazier, who lay in the room below, complained bitterly the next morning of some person walking over-head "in all manner of strides, just for all the world like a happarition in boots."

CHAPTER XI.

Viola.—And dost thou love me ?

Lysander. Love thee, *Viola* ?

Do I not fly thee when my being drinks

Light from thine eyes ?—that flight is all my answer !

The Bride.—Act 2, Scene i.

THE curtain meditations of the Squire had not been without the produce of a resolve. His warm heart once re-opened to the liking he had formerly conceived for Clifford ; he longed for an opportunity to atone for his past unkindness, and to testify his present gratitude ; moreover, he felt at once indignant at, and ashamed of, his late conduct in joining the popular, and, as he now fully believed, the causeless prepossession against his young friend, and before a more present and a

stronger sentiment, his habitual deference for his brother's counsels faded easily away. Coupled with these favourable feelings towards Clifford, were his sagacious suspicions, or rather certainty, of Lucy's attachment to her handsome deliverer; and he had at least sufficient penetration to perceive that she was not likely to love him the less for the night's adventure. To all this was added the tender recollection of his wife's parting words; and the tears and tell-tale agitation of Lucy in the carriage were sufficient to his simple mind, which knew not how lightly maiden's tears are shed and dried, to confirm the prediction of the dear deceased. Nor were the Squire's more generous and kindly feelings utterly unmixed with selfish considerations. *Proud*, but not the least *ambitious*, he was always more ready to confer an honour than receive one, and at heart he was secretly glad at the notion of exchanging, as a son-in-law, the polished and *unfamiliar* Mauleverer for the agreeable and social Clifford. Such in "admired disorder" were

the thoughts which rolled through the teeming brain of Joseph Brandon, and before he had turned on his left side—which he always did preparatory to surrendering himself to slumber—the Squire had fully come to a determination most fatal to the schemes of the Lawyer and the hopes of the Earl.

The next morning, as Lucy was knitting

“The loose train of her amber-dropping hair”

before the little mirror of her chamber, which even through its dimmed and darkened glass gave back a face which might have shamed a Grecian vision of Aurora, a gentle tap at her door announced her father. There was in his rosy and comely countenance, that expression generally characteristic of a man pleased with himself, and persuaded that he is about to give pleasure.

“My dear child,” said the Squire, fondly stroking down the luxuriance of his Lucy’s hair, and kissing her damask cheek, “I am come to have some little conversation with you, sit down now, and—(for my part, I love to talk at my ease,

and, by the by, shut the window, my love, it is an easterly wind)—I wish that we may come to a clear and distinct understanding. Hem!—give me your hand, my child,—I think on these matters one can scarcely speak too precisely, and to the purpose; although I am well aware—for, for my own part, I always wish to act to every one, to you especially, my dearest child, with the greatest consideration—that we must go to work with as much delicacy as conciseness. You know this Captain Clifford—’tis a brave youth, is it not?—well—nay, never blush so deeply, there is nothing—(for in these matters one can’t have all one’s wishes,—one can’t have *every thing*)—*to be ashamed of!* Tell me now, child, dost think he is in love with thee?”

If Lucy did not immediately answer by words, her pretty lips moved as if she could readily reply, and finally they settled into so sweet and so assured a smile, that the Squire, fond as he was of “precise” conversation, was in want of no fuller answer to his question.

“Ay, ay, young lady,” said he, looking at her with all a father’s affection, “I see how it is. And, come now—what do you turn away for? dost think, if, as I believe, though there are envious persons in the world, as there always are when a man’s handsome, or clever, or brave; though by the way, which is a very droll thing in my eyes, they don’t envy, at least not ill-naturedly, a man for being a Lord, or rich; but quite on the contrary, rank and money seem to make them think one has all the cardinal virtues,—Humph!—If, I say, this Mr. Clifford should turn out to be a gentleman of family,—for you know that is essential, since the Brandons have, as my brother has probably told you, been a great race many centuries ago;—dost think, my child, that thou couldst give up—(the cat is out of the bag)—this old Lord, and marry a simple gentleman?”

The hand which the Squire had held was now with an arch tenderness applied to his mouth, and when he again seized it, Lucy hid her glowing face in his bosom; and it was only by a whisper,

as if the very air was garrulous, that he could draw forth—(for now he insisted on a verbal reply)—her happy answer.

We are not afraid that our reader will blame us for not detailing the rest of the interview between the father and daughter, it did not last above an hour longer; for the Squire declared, that for his own part, he hated more words than were necessary. Mr. Brandon was the first to descend to the breakfast, muttering as he descended the stairs, “Well now, hang me if I am not glad that ’s off—(for I do not like to think much of so silly a matter)—my mind. And as for my brother, I shan’t tell him till it’s all over, and settled. And if he is angry, he and the old Lord may—though I don’t mean to be unbrotherly—go to the devil together!”

When the three were assembled at the breakfast-table, there could not perhaps have been found any where a stronger contrast than that which the radiant face of Lucy bore to the haggard and worn expression that disfigured the

handsome features of her lover. So marked was the change that one night seemed to have wrought upon Clifford, that even the Squire was startled and alarmed at it. But Lucy, whose innocent vanity pleased itself with accounting for the alteration, consoled herself with the hope of soon witnessing a very different expression on the countenance of her lover; and though she was silent, and her happiness lay quiet and deep within her, yet in her eyes and lip there was that which seemed to Clifford an insult to his own misery, and stung him to the heart. However, he exerted himself to meet the conversation of the Squire, and to mask as well as he was able the evidence of the conflict which still raged within him.

The morning was wet and gloomy; it was that drizzling and misty rain which is so especially nutritious to the growth of blue devils, and the jolly Squire failed not to rally his young friend upon his feminine susceptibility to the influences of the weather. Clifford replied jestingly, and the jest, if bad, was good enough to content the railer.

In this facetious manner passed the time, till Lucy, at the request of her father, left the room to prepare for their return home.

Drawing his chair near to Clifford's, the Squire then commenced in real and affectionate earnest his operations — these he had already planned,—in the following order: they were first to inquire into, and to learn, Clifford's rank, family, and prospects;—secondly, having ascertained the proprieties of the outer man, they were to examine the state of the inner one;—and thirdly, should our skilful inquirer find his guesses at Clifford's affection for Lucy confirmed, they were to expel the modest fear of a repulse, which the Squire allowed was natural enough, and to lead the object of the inquiry to a knowledge of the happiness that, Lucy consenting, might be in store for him. While, with his wonted ingenuity, the Squire was pursuing his benevolent designs, Lucy remained in her own room, in such meditation and such dreams as were natural to a heart so sanguine and enthusiastic.

She had been more than half an hour alone,

when the chambermaid of the hostelry knocked at her door, and delivered a message from the Squire, begging her to come down to him in the parlour. With a heart that beat so violently it almost seemed to wear away its very life, Lucy slowly, and with tremulous steps, descended to the parlour. On opening the door, she saw Clifford standing in the recess of the window his face was partly turned from her, and his eyes downcast. The good old Squire sat in an elbow-chair, and a sort of puzzled and half-satisfied complacency gave expression to his features.

“Come hither, child,” said he, clearing his throat; “Captain Clifford — a-hem! — has done you the honour—to—and I dare say you will be very much surprised—not that, for my own part, I think there is much to wonder at in it—but such may be my partial opinion—(and *it is certainly very natural in me*)—to make you a declaration of love. He declares, moreover, that he is the most miserable of men, and that he would die sooner than have the presumption to hope. Therefore

you see, my love, I have sent for you, to give him permission to destroy himself, in any way he pleases; and I leave him to show cause why—(it is a fate that sooner or later happens to all his fellow men)—sentence of death should not be passed against him.” Having delivered this speech with more propriety of word than usually fell to his share, the Squire rose hastily, and hobbled out of the room.

Lucy sank into the chair her father had quitted, and Clifford approaching towards her, said, in a hoarse and low voice,

“ Your father, Miss Brandon, says rightly, that I would die rather than lift my eyes in hope to you. I thought yesterday that I had seen you for the last time;— chance — not my own folly or presumption, has brought me again before you, and even the few hours I have passed under the same roof with you, have made me feel as if my love — my madness — had never reached its height till now. Oh, Lucy !” continued Clifford, in a more impassioned tone, and as if by a sudden and

irresistible impulse, throwing himself at her feet ;
“ if I *could* hope to merit you — if I could hope
to raise myself — if I could — but no — no — no !
I am cut off from all hope, and for ever ! ”

There was so deep, so bitter, so heartfelt an anguish and remorse in the voice with which these last words were spoken, that Lucy, hurried off her guard, and forgetting every thing in wondering sympathy and compassion, answered, extending her hand towards Clifford, who still kneeling, seized and covered it with kisses of fire,

“ Do not speak thus, Mr. Clifford ; do not accuse yourself of what I am sure, quite sure, you cannot deserve. Perhaps, forgive me, your birth, your fortune, are beneath your merits ; and you have penetrated into my father’s weakness on the former point ; or, perhaps, you yourself have not avoided all the errors into which men are hurried ; perhaps, you have been imprudent, or thoughtless ; perhaps you have — (fashion is contagious) — played beyond your means, or incurred debts ; — these are faults, it is true, and to be regretted, yet not surely irreparable.”

For that instant can it be wondered that all Clifford's resolution and self-denial deserted him, and lifting his eyes, radiant with joy and gratitude, to the face which bent in benevolent innocence towards him, he exclaimed, "No, Miss Brandon!—no, Lucy!—dear, angel Lucy! my faults are less venial than these, but perhaps they are no less the consequence of circumstances and contagion; perhaps it may not be too late to repair them. Would you—you indeed deign to be my guardian, I might not despair of being saved!"

"If," said Lucy, blushing deeply, and looking down, while she spoke quick and eagerly, as if to avoid humbling him by her offer, "if, Mr. Clifford, the want of wealth has in any way occasioned you uneasiness, or—or error, do believe me—I mean *us*—so much your friends as not for an instant to scruple in relieving us of some little portion of our last night's debt to you."

"Dear, noble girl!" said Clifford, while there writhed upon his lips one of those smiles of

powerful sarcasm that sometimes distorted his features, and thrillingly impressed upon Lucy a resemblance to one very different in reputation and character to her lover—"Do not attribute my misfortunes to so petty a source; it is not money that I shall want while I live, though I shall to my last breath remember this delicacy in you, and compare it with certain base remembrances in my own mind. Yes! all past thoughts and recollections will make me hereafter worship you even more than I do now; while in your heart they will—unless Heaven grant me one prayer—make you scorn and detest me!"

"For mercy's sake do not speak thus!" said Lucy, gazing in indistinct alarm upon the dark and working features of her lover; "scorn, detest you! impossible! how could I, after the remembrance of last night!"

"Ay! of last night," said Clifford, speaking through his ground teeth: "there is much in that remembrance to live long in both of us: but you—*you*—fair angel!"—(and all harshness and

irony, vanishing at once from his voice and countenance, yielded to a tender and deep sadness, mingled with a respect that bordered on reverence,)—"you never could have dreamt of more than pity for one like me,—you never could have stooped from your high and dazzling purity to know for me one such thought as that which burns at my heart for you,—you—yes, withdraw your hand, I am not worthy to touch it!" And clasping his own hands before his face, he became abruptly silent; but his emotions were but ill-concealed, and Lucy saw the muscular frame before her heaved and convulsed by passions which were more intense and rending because it was only for a few moments that they conquered his self-will and struggled into vent.

If afterwards,—but *long* afterwards, Lucy, recalling the mystery of his words, confessed to herself that they betrayed guilt, she was then too much affected to think of any thing but her love and his emotion. She bent down, and with a girlish and fond self-abandonment, which none

could have resisted, placed both her hands on his: Clifford started, looked up, and in the next moment he had clasped her to his heart; and while the only tears he had shed since his career of crime, fell fast and hot upon her countenance, he kissed her forehead, her cheek, her lips in a passionate and wild transport. His voice died within him, he could not trust himself to speak; only one thought, even in that seeming forgetfulness of her and of himself, stirred and spoke at his breast—*flight*. The more he felt he loved—the more tender and the more confiding the object of his love, the more urgent became the necessity to leave her. All other duties had been neglected, but he loved with a real love, and love which *taught* him *one* duty, bore him triumphantly through its bitter ordeal.

“You will hear from me to-night,” he muttered; “believe that I am mad, accursed, criminal, but not utterly a monster! I ask no more merciful opinion!” He drew himself from his perilous position, and abruptly departed.

When Clifford reached his home, he found his worthy coadjutors waiting for him with alarm and terror on their countenances. An old feat in which they had signalized themselves, had long attracted the rigid attention of the police, and certain officers had now been seen at Bath, and certain inquiries had been set on foot, which portended no good to the safety of the sagacious Tomlinson and the valorous Pepper. They came, humbly and penitentially demanding pardon for their unconscious aggression of the Squire's carriage, and entreating their Captain's instant advice. If Clifford had before wavered in his disinterested determination; if visions of Lucy, of happiness and reform had floated in his solitary ride, too frequently and too glowingly before his eyes, the sight of these men, their conversation, their danger, all sufficed to restore his resolution. "Merciful God!" thought he, "and is it to the comrade of such lawless villains, to a man, like them, exposed hourly to the most ignominious of deaths, that I have for one section of a moment dreamt of consigning the

innocent and generous girl, whose trust or love is the only crime that could deprive her of the most brilliant destiny?"

Short were Clifford's instructions to his followers, and so much do we do mechanically, that they were delivered with his usual forethought and precision,—“You will leave the town instantly; go not, for your lives, to London, or to rejoin any of your comrades. Ride for the Red Cave; there are provisions stored there, and, since our late alteration of the interior, it will afford ample room to conceal your horses. On the night of the second day from this I will join you. But be sure that you enter the cave at night, and quit it upon no account till I come!”

“Yes!” said he, when he was alone, “I will join you again, but only to quit you. One more offence against the law, or at least one sum wrested from the swollen hands of the rich sufficient to equip me for a foreign army, and I quit the country of my birth and my crimes. If I cannot deserve Lucy Brandon, I will be somewhat less

unworthy. Perhaps—why not? I am young, my nerves are not weak, my brain is not dull, perhaps I may in some field of honourable adventure win a name, that before my death-bed I may not blush to acknowledge to her!”

While this resolve beat high within Clifford's breast, Lucy sadly and in silence was continuing with the Squire her short journey to Bath. The latter was very inquisitive to know why Clifford had gone, and what he had avowed; and Lucy scarcely able to answer, threw every thing on the promised letter of the night.

“I am glad,” muttered the Squire to her, “that he is going to write, “for somehow or other, though I questioned him very tightly, he slipped through my cross-examination, and bursting out at once, as to his love for you, left me as wise about himself as I was before, no doubt—(for my own part I don't see what should prevent his being a great man *incog.*)—this letter will explain all!”

Late that night the letter came; Lucy, for-

tunately for her, was alone in her own room; she opened it, and read as follows:—

CLIFFORD'S LETTER.

“ I have promised to write to you, and I sit down to perform that promise. At this moment the recollection of your goodness, your generous consideration, is warm within me; and while I must choose calm and common words to express what I ought to say, my heart is alternately melted and torn by thoughts which would ask words, oh how different! Your father has questioned me often of my parentage and birth—I have hitherto eluded his interrogatories. Learn now who I am. In a wretched abode, surrounded by the inhabitants of poverty and vice, I recall my earliest recollections. My father is unknown to me as to every one—my mother! to *you* I dare not mention who or what she was;—she died in my infancy. Without a name, but not without an inheritance,—(my inheritance was large—it was infamy!)—I was thrown upon the world: I

had received by accident some education, and imbibed some ideas, not natural to my situation ; since then, I have played many parts in life : books and men I have not so neglected, but that I have gleaned at intervals some little knowledge from both. Hence, if I have seemed to you better than I am, you will perceive the cause : circumstances made me soon my own master, they made me, also one whom honest men do not love to look upon ; my deeds have been, and my character is, of a par with my birth and my fortunes. I came, in the noble hope to raise and redeem myself, by gilding my fate with a wealthy marriage, to this city : I saw you, whom I had once before met. I heard you were rich.—Hate me, Miss Brandon, hate me !—I resolved to make your ruin the cause of my redemption. Happily for you, I scarcely knew you before I loved you — that love deepened — it caught something pure and elevated from yourself. My resolution forsook me ; even now I could throw myself on my knees and thank God that you—you dearest

and noblest of human beings—are not my wife. NOW is my conduct clear to you? if not, imagine me all that is villainous—save in one point, where *you* are concerned—and not a shadow of mystery will remain. Your kind father, overrating the paltry service I rendered you, would have consented to submit my fate to your decision. I blush indignantly for him—for you—that any living man should have dreamt of such profanation for Miss Brandon. Yet I myself was carried away and intoxicated by so sudden and so soft a hope—even I dared to lift my eyes to you, to press you to this guilty heart, to forget myself, and to dream that you might be mine! Can you forgive me for this madness? And hereafter, when in your lofty and glittering sphere of wedded happiness, can you remember my presumption and check your scorn? Perhaps you think that by so *late* a confession I have already deceived you. Alas! you know not what it costs me *now* to confess! I had only one hope in life—it was that you might still, long after you had

ceased to see me, fancy me not utterly beneath the herd with whom you live. This burning, yet selfish vanity, I tear from me, and now I go where no hope can pursue me. No hope for myself, save one which can scarcely deserve the name, for it is rather a rude, and visionary wish, than an expectation:—It is, that under another name, and under different auspices, you may hear of me at some distant time; and when I apprise you that under that name you may recognise one who loves you better than all created things, you may feel *then*, at least, no cause for shame at your lover. What will *you* be then? A happy wife—a mother—the centre of a thousand joys—beloved—admired—blest when the eye sees you and the ear hears! And this is what I ought to hope; this is the consolation that ought to cheer me;—perhaps a little time hence it will. Not that I shall love you less; but that I shall love you less burningly, and therefore less selfishly. I have now written to you all that it becomes you to receive from me. My horse waits below to bear

me from this city, and for ever from your vicinity. For ever!—Ay, you are the only blessing *for ever* forbidden me. Wealth I may gain—a fair name—even glory—I may, perhaps, aspire to! to Heaven itself, I may find a path; but of *you* my very dreams cannot give me the shadow of a hope. I do not say, if you could pierce my soul while I write, that you would pity me. You may think it strange, but I would not have your *pity* for worlds; I think I would even rather have your hate—pity seems so much like contempt. But if you knew what an effort has enabled me to tame down my language, to curb my thoughts, to prevent me from embodying that which now makes my brain whirl, and my hand feel as if the living fire consumed it; if you knew what has enabled me to triumph over the madness at my heart, and spare you what, if writ or spoken, would seem like the ravings of insanity, you would not, and you could not despise me, though you might abhor.

“ And now, heaven guard and bless you! No-

thing on *earth* could injure you. And even the wicked who have looked upon you, learn to pray. *I have prayed for you!*"

Thus (abrupt and signatureless) ended the expected letter. Lucy came down the next morning at her usual hour, and, except that she was very pale, nothing in her appearance seemed to announce past grief or emotion. The Squire asked her if she had received the promised letter? she answered in a clear, though faint voice, that she had — that Mr. Clifford had confessed himself of too low an origin to hope for marriage with Mr. Brandon's family; that she trusted the Squire would keep his secret, and that the subject might never again be alluded to by either. If in this speech there was something alien to Lucy's ingenuous character, and painful to her mind, she felt it, as it were, a duty to her former lover, not to betray the whole of that confession so bitterly wrung from him. Perhaps, too, there was in that letter a charm, which seemed to her too sacred to

be revealed to any one. And mysteries were not excluded even from a love so ill-placed, and seemingly so transitory, as hers.

Lucy's answer touched the Squire in his weak point. "A man of decidedly low origin," he confessed, was utterly out of the question; nevertheless, the young man showed a great deal of candour in his disclosure. He readily promised never to broach a subject necessarily so unpleasant; and though he sighed as he finished his speech, yet the extreme quiet of Lucy's manner re-assured him, and when he perceived that she resumed, though languidly, her wonted avocations, he felt but little doubt of her soon overcoming the remembrance of what he hoped was but a girlish and fleeting fancy. He yielded with avidity to her proposal to return to Warlock; and in the same week as that in which Lucy had received her lover's mysterious letter, the father and daughter commenced their journey home.

CHAPTER XII.

Butler.—What are these, Sir?

Yeoman.—And of what nature — to what use?

Latroch.—Imagine?

THE TRAGEDY OF ROLLO.

Quickly.—He 's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom.

HENRY V.

THE stream of our narrative now conducts us back to William Brandon. The law-promotions previously intended were completed; and to the surprise of the public, the envied barrister, undergoing the degradation of knighthood, had, at the time we return to him, just changed his toilsome occupations for the serene dignity of the Bench. Whatever regret this wily and aspir-

ing schemer might otherwise have felt at an elevation considerably less distinguished than he might reasonably have expected, was entirely removed by the hopes afforded to him by the Administration of a speedy translation to a more brilliant office ; and it was whispered among those not unlikely to foresee such events, that Sir William Brandon might even look beyond the rank of a Chief Justice and a Peer, and that the Woolsack itself was scarcely too high a station for the hopes of one possessed of such interest, such abilities ; and the democrats added, such accommodating principles. Just at this moment too, the fell disease, whose ravages Brandon endeavoured, as jealously as possible, to hide from the public, had appeared suddenly to yield to the skill of a new physician ; and by the administration of medicines, which a man less stern or resolute might have trembled to adopt, (so powerful and for the most part deadly was their nature,) he passed from a state of almost insufferable torture to an elysium of tranquillity and ease : perhaps, however, the medicines which altered, also decayed his constitution ; and it was observable, that in two cases where the physician had attained

a like success by the same means, the patients had died suddenly, exactly at the time when their cure seemed to be finally completed. However, Sir William Brandon appeared very little anticipative of danger. His manner became more cheerful and even than it had ever been before; there was a certain lightness in his gait, a certain exhilaration in his voice and eye, which looked the tokens of one from whom a heavy burden had been suddenly raised, and who was no longer prevented from the eagerness of hope by the engrossing claims of a bodily pain. He had always been bland in society, but now his courtesy breathed less of artifice,—it took a more hearty tone. Another alteration was discernible in him, and that was precisely the reverse of what might have been expected. He became more *thrifty*—more attentive to the expenses of life, than he had been. Though a despiser of show and ostentation, and far too *hard* to be luxurious, he was too scientific an architect of the weaknesses of others, not to have maintained during his public career an opulent appearance, and a hospitable table. The profession he had adopted requires, perhaps, less of

externals to aid it than any other ; still Brandon had affected to preserve parliamentary as well as legal importance ; and, though his house was situated in a quarter entirely professional, he had been accustomed to assemble around his hospitable board whosoever were eminent, in his political party, for rank or for talent. Now, however, when hospitality, and a certain largeness of expenses, better became his station, he grew closer and more exact in his economy. Brandon never could have degenerated into a *miser* ; money to one so habitually wise as he was, could never have passed from *means* into an *object* ; but he had, evidently for some cause or another, formed the resolution to save. Some said it was the result of returning health, and the hope of a prolonged life, to which many objects, for which wealth is desirable, might occur. But when it was accidentally ascertained that Brandon had been making several inquiries respecting a large estate in the neighbourhood of Warlock, formerly in the possession of his family, the gossips — (for Brandon was a man to be gossiped about,) — were no longer in want of a motive false or real, for the Judge's thrift.

It was shortly after his elevation to the Bench, and *before* these signs of change had become noticeable, that the same strange raggamuffin whom we have mentioned before, as introduced by Mr. Swoppem to a private conference with Brandon, was admitted to the Judge's presence.

"Well," said Brandon impatiently, the moment the door was closed, "your news?"

"Vy, your Onor," said the man bashfully, twirling a thing that stood proxy for a hat, "I thinks as ow I shall be hable to satisfy your vorship's onor." Then approaching the Judge, and assuming an important air, he whispered—

"'Tis as ow I thought!"

"My God!" cried Brandon with vehemence. "And, he is alive?—and where?"

"I believes," answered the seemly confidant of Sir William Brandon, "that he be's alive, and if he be's alive, may I flash my ivories in a glass case, if I does not ferret him out; but as to saying where he be at this nick o' the moment, smash me if I can!"

"Is he in this country?" said Brandon; "or do you believe that he has gone abroad?"

“Vy, much of one and not a little of the other!” said the euphonious confidant.

“How! speak plain, man—what do you mean?”

“Vy, I means, your Onor, that I can’t say where he is.”

“And this,” said Brandon with a muttered oath,—“this is your boasted news, is it? Dog, damned, damned dog, if you trifle with me, or play me false, I will hang you,—by the living God, I will!”

The man shrank back involuntarily from Brandon’s vindictive forehead and kindled eyes; but with the cunning peculiar to low vice answered, though in a humbler tone—

“And vot good vill that do your Onor? if so be as ow you scrag I, vill that put your Vorship in the vay of finding *he*?”

Never was there an obstacle in grammar through which a sturdy truth could not break; and Brandon, after a moody pause, said in a milder voice,—“I did not mean to frighten you! never mind what I said; but you can surely guess whereabouts he is, or what means of life he pursues,

perhaps?"—and a momentary paleness crossed Brandon's swarthy visage:—"perhaps he may have been driven into dishonesty, in order to maintain himself!"

The informant replied with great *naïveté*, that "such a thing was not impossible!" and Brandon then entered into a series of seemingly careless but artful cross-questionings, which either the ignorance or the craft of the man enabled him to baffle. After some time, Brandon, disappointed and dissatisfied, gave up his professional task, and bestowing on the man many sagacious and minute instructions, as well as a very liberal donation, he was forced to dismiss his mysterious visitor, and to content himself with an assured assertion, that, if the object of his inquiries should not already be gone to the devil, the strange gentleman employed to discover him, would certainly, sooner or later, bring him to the judge.

This assertion, and the interview preceding it, certainly inspired Sir William Brandon with a feeling like complacency, although it was mingled with a considerable alloy.

"I do not," thought he, in concluding his medi-

tations when he was left alone,—“ I do not see what else I can do ! Since it appears that the boy had not even a name when he set out alone from his wretched abode, I fear that an advertisement would have but little chance of even designating, much less of finding him, after so long an absence. Besides, it might make me the prey to impostors, and in all probability he has either left the country, or adopted some mode of living which would prevent his daring to disclose himself !” This thought plunged the soliloquist into a gloomy abstraction, which lasted several minutes, and from which he started, muttering aloud—

“ Yes, yes ! I dare to believe, to hope it.—Now for the Minister, and the Peerage !” And from that time the root of Sir William Brandon’s ambition spread with a firmer and more extended grasp over his mind.

We grieve very much that the course of our story should now oblige us to record an event which we would willingly have spared ourselves the pain of narrating. The good old Squire of Warlock Manor-house had scarcely reached his

home on his return from Bath, before William Brandon received the following letter from his brother's grey-headed butler.

“ HONNURED SUR,

“ I SEND this with all speede, thof with a hevvy hart, to axquainte you with the sudden (and as it is feered by his loving friends and well wishers, which latter, to be sur, is all as knows him) dangeros illness of the Squire.* He was seezed, poor deer gentleman, (for God never made a better, no offence to your Honnur,) the moment he set footing in his Own hall, and what has hung rond me like a mill-ston ever sin, is that instead of his saying--‘ How do you do, Sampson ?’ as was his wont, whenever he returned from forren parts, sich as Bath, Lunnun, and the like ; he said, ‘ God bless you, Sampson !’ which makes me think sumhow that it will be his last wurd ;

* The reader, who has doubtless noticed how invariably servants of long standing acquire a certain tone from that of their master, may observe, that honest John Sampson had caught from the Squire the habit of parenthetical composition.

for he has never spoke sin, for all Miss Lucy be by his bedside continual. She, poor deer, don't take on at all, in regard of crying and such woman's wurk, but looks nevertheless, for all the wurld, just like a copse. I sends Tom the postilion with this hexpress, nowing he is a good hand at a gallop, having, not sixteen year ago, beat some o' the best on un at a raceng. Hopng as yer Honnur will lose no time in coming to this ' hous of mourning,'

“ I remane, with all respect,

“ Your Honnur's humble sarvant to command,

“ JOHN SAMPSON.”

Sir William Brandon did not give himself time to re-read this letter, in order to make it more intelligible, before he wrote to one of his professional compeers, requesting him to fill his place during his unavoidable absence, on the melancholy occasion of his brother's expected death; and having so done he immediately set off for Warlock. Inexplicable even to himself was that feeling, so nearly approaching to real sorrow, which the worldly lawyer felt at the prospect of losing his

guileless and unspeculating brother. Whether it be that turbulent and ambitious minds, in choosing for their wavering affections the very opposites of themselves, feel (on losing the fellowship of those calm, fair characters, that have never crossed their own rugged path,) as if they lost, in losing them, a kind of haven for their own restless thoughts and tempest-worn designs!—be this as it may, certain it is, that when William Brandon arrived at his brother's door, and was informed by the old butler, who, for the first time, was slow to greet him, that the Squire had just breathed his last, his austere nature forsook him at once, and he felt the shock with a severity perhaps still keener than that which a more genial and affectionate heart would have experienced.

As soon as he had recovered his self-possession, Sir William made question of his niece, and finding that, after an unrelaxing watch during the whole of the Squire's brief illness, nature had failed her at his death, and she had been borne senseless from his chamber to her own, Brandon walked with a step far different from his usual stately gait, to the room where his brother lay.

It was one of the oldest apartments in the house, and much of the ancient splendour that belonged to the mansion ere its size had been reduced, with the fortunes of its successive owners, still distinguished the chamber. The huge mantel-piece ascending to the carved ceiling in grotesque pilasters, and scroll-work of the blackest oak, with the quartered arms of Brandon and Saville escutcheoned in the centre,—the panelled walls of the same dark wainscot,—the *armoire* of ebony,—the high-backed chairs, with their tapestried seats,—the lofty bed, with its hearse-like plumes and draperies of a crimson damask that seemed, so massy was the substance, and so prominent the flowers, as if it were rather a carving than a silk, all conspired, with the size of the room, to give it a feudal solemnity, not perhaps suited to the rest of the house, but well calculated to strike a gloomy awe into the breast of the worldly and proud man who now entered the death-chamber of his brother.

Silently, William Brandon motioned away the attendants, and, silently, he seated himself by the bed, and looked long and wistfully upon the calm

and placid face of the deceased. It is difficult to guess at what passed within him during the space of time in which he remained alone in that room. The apartment itself he could not, at another period, have tenanted without secret emotion. It was that in which, as a boy, he had himself been accustomed to sleep; and, even then a schemer and an aspirant, the very sight of the room sufficed to call back all the hopes and visions, the restless projects, and the feverish desires which had now brought him to the envied state of an acknowledged celebrity and a shattered frame. There must have been something awful in the combination of those active remembrances with the cause which had led him to that apartment; and there was a homily in the serene countenance of the dead, which preached more effectually to the heart of the living, than William Brandon would ever have cared to own. He had been more than an hour in the room, and the evening had already begun to cast deep shadows through the small panes of the half-closed window, when Brandon was startled by a slight noise. He looked up, and beheld Lucy

opposite to him. She did not see him ; but, throwing herself upon the bed, she took the cold hand of the deceased, and, after a long silence, burst into a passion of tears.

“ My father !” she sobbed, — “ my kind, good father, who will love me now ?”

“ I !” said Brandon, deeply affected ; and, passing round the bed, he took his niece in his arms : “ I will be your father, Lucy, and you—the last of our race — shall be to me as a daughter !”

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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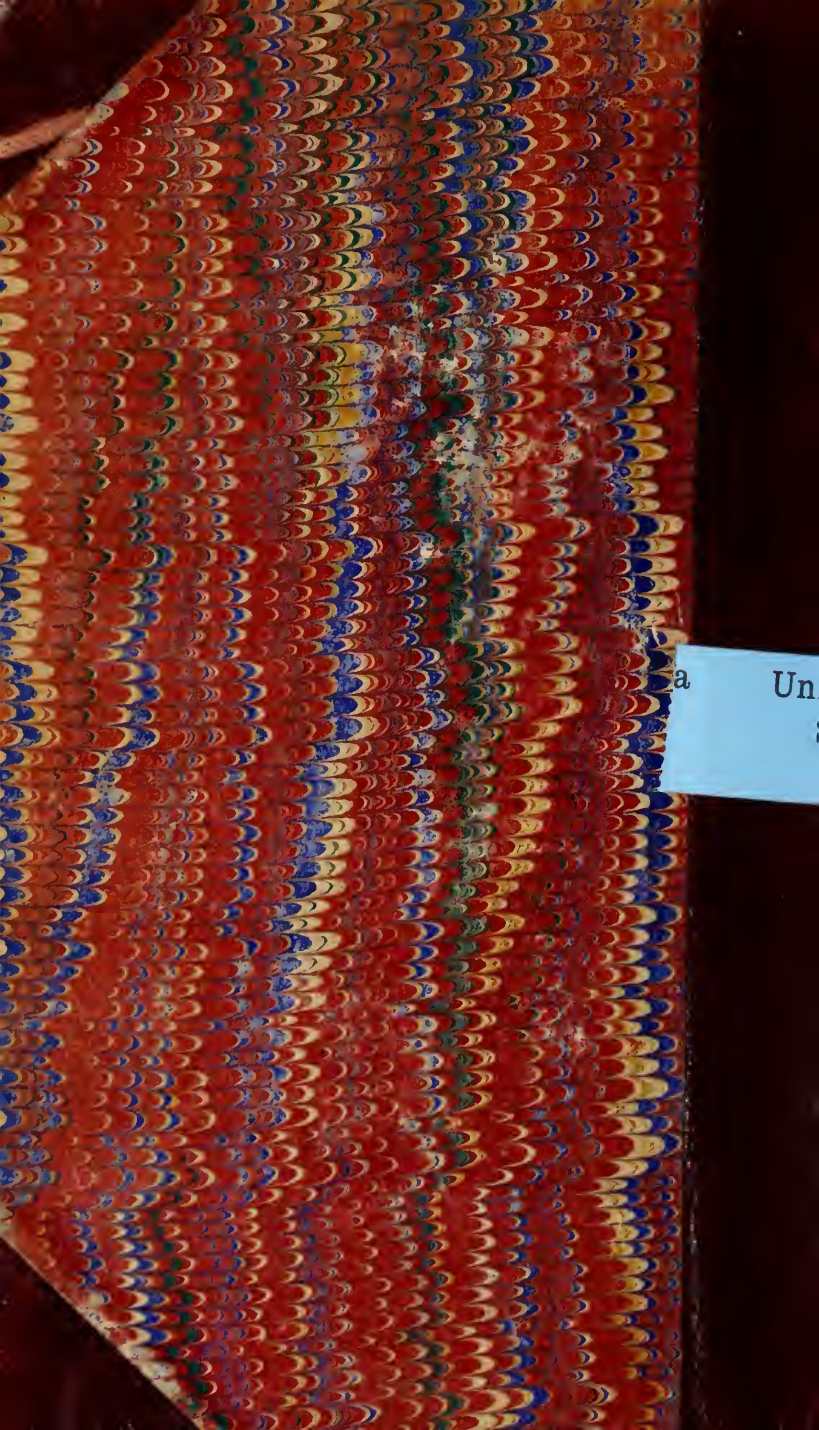
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