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FAMILY STORY-TELLER ;

CONSISTING OF

Original Tales,

ESSAYS, AND SKETCHES OF CHARACTER.

WITH FOURTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. II.

LONDON :—CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

1837.

WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

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LIBRARY OF FICTION.

JOHN HORNER; THE MAN WITH "THE PLUMS."

BY DOUGLAS JERROLD,

AUTHOR OF "JOB PIPPINS," "THE RENT DAY," &c.

UNLESS the early education of the reader has been culpably neglected, he must have a due knowledge of the extraordinary sagacity, and, withal, self-complacency of John Horner, or, as he is familiarly denominated by his historian, "little Jack Horner," the wise child, who---

" Sat in a corner,
Eating a Christmas pie ;
He put in his thumb,
And pulled out a plum,
And said—' what a brave boy am I ! ' "

Touched by the intelligence and amiable self-glorification eternized in this simple verse, we have more than twice regretted the silence of history on the after achievements of the hero : if, we have thought, the child *be* father to the man, what plums must John Horner have picked out—what pœans must he have sounded to his own successful parts ! The world before him, one large Christmas pie, he from his little stool in the chimney-corner of his grandam, to his soft-cushioned chair in the old oak-room of his beautiful manor-house, went on, putting in his thumb, and picking out a plum, and crowing shrill-voiced triumph at every new possession. To such a genius it would matter little, we have thought, where the plums were scattered : it was not necessary to him that they should lie on the surface, to be counted by a blind man—no, were there but a single plum, and that in the pie's centre, the invincible and unerring thumb would dig it forth. How often do we see the thumb of an Apollo grope vainly in a pie full of plums, when the thumb of a John Horner shall pick them out as a hen picks up barley !

Shrewd and happy John Horner! who, shutting his eyes to the vanities of trifling spirits, considered this wide earth as only one large Christmas pie, the only things worth feeling for, the scattered plums. With such fine wisdom, with so just a valuation of the use and purposes of life, the thumb of a John Horner hath greater power than the right arm of Alcides. To us, there has ever appeared such a beautiful adumbration of the prosperous man in the self-satisfied plum-pulling boy, that when we fell upon the record of his later life, in a word, his full history from the chimney-corner to his very handsome tomb—and much do we regret our inability to designate the peace-promising cherubim and the palm leaves thereon in finest marble sculptured—we felt a thrill, a glow of satisfaction, a music of the brain and a dilation of the heart, such as would seize a scholar were he suddenly to come upon that lost heap of gold, the lost Greek tragedies.

It was a short time since our good fortune to be guest in a fine old country house, which, though the largest mansion for ten miles round, was too small for the heart of its possessor. It was one of those capital pigeon-hole mansions, where fifty visitors may do what they will, unknown to each other, until rung down to dinner; a very garrison for good fellows. We had promised—albeit in such matters we are imbecility itself—to assist at the construction of a kite for Master Tommy, the third flaxen-haired, blue-eyed little boy of our worthy host. We commenced our task with proper gravity, and we avow, with best intentions. However, in more serious matters than kite-making, well-meaning goes for little if unaccompanied by success. Tommy, with as much contempt as he could put into a face of seven years old, took his paper, lath and string from our uncultivated fingers, and sought a more skilful workman among the servants. Philosophically resigning ourselves to the poor opinion of Tommy, we sat upon the sward, and in a very few minutes, our thoughts, escaped from all human things, were flying among the rooks, repairing and building their nests on a ring of fine old elms, a bow-shot from the mansion.

A rookery to us presents the almost instant means of escape from less grave matters; there being to our mind something inexpressibly serious in the manner and habits of the birds, which that Cyclops, man—*saniem eructans*---with deadly bow and rifle, murders for his throat. Nay, and when killed, when brought tumbling down from ^{the}their native branches, to be deprived, nine times out of ten, of their lawful reputation, nearly all the pigeon-pies sold by confectioners, being at a certain season---we give the truth on the faith of a late Irish friend---made of young rooks---when slain, they are not even gazetted in paste in their own name! To kill a sparrow is but trifling; indeed, the late Mr. Cobbett assures us that it is the only way to

cure a sparrow of his bad habits: (legislators until lately have held the same opinion of naughty men). To kill a pigeon is a kind of poulterer's sport---little more than cutting the throat of a duck: but to shoot a swallow---that winged soul, that spirit of a bird darting between heaven and earth! We have heard, too, of monsters who have eaten of blackbird pies; nay, roasted larks---think of the glorious creature, "beating the vaulted heaven" with a song that seems to be everlasting---fairly steeping, saturating the fields with music---spitted with twenty minstrels before the kitchen coals! And yet these horrid feasts are less frightful than a banquet from a rookery. The feeder who eats blackbirds and skylarks is, perhaps, little more than a cannibal, fond of young opera-singers: we can, with some stretch of our elastic charity, find some excuse for him in his excessive love of music; but it almost becomes a matter of moral iniquity to shoot rooks for our larder. Mark their gestures---hear them speak, for if they do not speak, the defect is in your ears and not in their voices. With what gravity---what composed reason---they move from bough to bough! What order is in all their movements---what general harmony in their design! Are they not a set of sages, governed by laws as true as truth---spirits sublimed in the regions of unalterable right? They are the Brownes, the Bayles, the Newtons, the Lockes of the air; and the omnivorous glutton who feeds on rooks would, after this our essay, ruthlessly make a meal off a royal astronomer, an historian, or even an archbishop.

Such, influenced by the notes and motions of the jetty builders, was our soft conviction---and in the moment, we think we could have bound ourselves to Brahmin,---when there came a sound from the mansion that struck upon our heart; it was the dinner-bell. Church-bells have been christened the sweetest names, have had the most illustrious sponsors; princes and princesses have answered for their metal sons and daughters. Why doth not the dinner-bell undergo some such ceremony; or is it that we may be safely trusted with our own natural reverence of it, uninfluenced, unschooled by any other teaching? As we hurried towards the house, we felt the question, but had not then time satisfactorily to answer it. As we approached the door, little Tommy with his completed kite, and a look of saucy triumph, stood before us.

"There," said the boy, "if you can't make a kite, I suppose you can make a tail," and, saying this, he held to us a roll of dirty paper for the purpose.

"Yes, Tommy, we'll try and make a tail---but there's a shower coming on, and it's now late. To-morrow, the kite shall have its tail." Tommy was, evidently, not wholly satisfied with the procrastination, but as we had placed the roll of paper in our

pocket, he seemed instinctively to respect the principle of possession; though he looked sulky, he said nothing. Tommy might have taught his elders.

It was a cold night in spring, and the rain pattered against the window, and came at intervals down the chimney, hissing in the fire, as though to remind us of the cheerlessness without and the comfort within, when, the dinner over, we found ourselves in our room, one of the set of warm, comfortable nooks whereof we have already spoken. We sat by the fire---rose---went to the bookshelf---for, let the apartment be ever so small, our host had it stored with what Cicero calls the soul of a house, books. The reader knows the mood with which a man in such a room, and in such a time---with an hour or two to spare from bed---approaches a bookcase. Now, we were solicited by Montaigne---and now, our old friend Apuleius appealed to our ancient love---and now, the wise, the gently-resolute Erasmus silently conjured us---and now our finger was on the pure, firm English of Walton's Lives---and now on that fresh and odorous homily, the Holy Living---and now on rich Boccaccio---now on his plainer, younger brother, Geoffrey Chaucer. We stood undecided---a sultan amid a circle of willing beauties. And as we stood, a reverence fell upon our heart---glowed along our blood---for the unalienable gifts bestowed by books upon us; wealth, which no *præmunire*, no attain, no constructive treason, no bitterness of poverty could take away. We were the guiltless, triumphant Faustus, conjuring by the so potent art of memory the incarnate graces, virtues, beauties of our nature round about us. Mighty sorcery---glorious magic---that hangs a wattled hut with tapestry coloured with richest hues,—that peoples even “the blasted heath” of this working-day world, with things of loveliness, enduring faith and everlasting hope; that turns the eye from outward squalor upon inward glory---that makes deaf the ear to the hurly of mere human days, quickening it to the coming music, as from a far procession, of immortal life!

We turned from the bookcase to the casement; in doing so, we felt in our pocket the roll of paper proffered to us by Tommy. We then perceived that it was carefully tied with a piece of dirty, faded, red tape; which had secured the body of the MS.---for it proved to be one---from the mice, although the edges bore zig-zag evidence of their depredation. Seating ourselves, as carefully as though it had been Egyptian papyrus in lieu of an English copy-book---we unrolled the paper, and judge, reader, how our eyes sparkled and our heart beat, when we deciphered these words;---“*Memoranda of the Life of John Horner, the man with ‘the Plums.’*” We at once felt satisfied that it was the later life of little Jack, the hero of the chimney-corner, and turning to the fire, we already saw our name writ in the embers,

with the glowing addition of "F. R. S. A." an honour fully deserved by the discoverer of so precious a relic as the written life of a man who hath had so many imitators, and among whom are people of what is called the first respectability. Having, however, no interest with the Society, whose favour we yearn to obtain, we take the present means of wooing its encouragement. We have a very few words, of our own, to add. We have left our address with our publisher.

It may not be impertinent to state that the mansion whereat we made the discovery—for as Tommy was recompensed with a quire of gilt-edged writing-paper for the dirty scribbled roll, he had picked from out a lumber-room, he can make no claim whatever to the history—was some years before in the possession of a gentleman, a reverend gentleman, who spent four-fifths of his time in London, of the name of Horner. Whether he was a descendant of little Jack, and if so, in what degree, there is nothing in the manuscript to indicate. It is evident, however, that the writer of the history had a perfect knowledge of his subject; an advantage, whatever may be the honest wishes of an author, not always attainable. He has moreover sprinkled the history with remarks and speculations, arising from the sentiments and conduct of his hero, a vice not to be too much condemned by those who would have their nuts ready cracked for them. We have a high respect for the honesty of a man of this taste, whom we once heard declare, that in reading Tom Jones, he always skipped the introductory chapters and passages. We claim no thanks in awarding to our readers the like privilege, seeing they have the uncontrolled power of taking it.

We have unrolled the MS.; whether it had been more profitably converted into the tail of Tommy's kite, than to its present use, no man of real modesty will consider us called upon to say.

CHAPTER I.

Thomas Horner rented a cottage and two acres of ground, on the borders of the Great Forest; any tree of which had seen as much of the world, had endured as many changes, as the said Thomas. Fixed to the soil—spring, summer, autumn, winter, looked upon him with their unvarying features; and he heeded no revolution, save of the earth about the sun, the human changes on the earth itself all the while unthought of and unknown. And Thomas Horner, taking example of the birds, had paired himself with a female of his species, or as might vulgarly be said, had married a wife. And Mr. and Mrs. Horner were of the same clay. Happy, thrice happy are such matches; when

joined by the "moral fitness of things," there is no assumption of superiority, no impatient sense of better knowledge—no fatal contrast. We had an excellent aunt, a woman of exalted gifts, inhumanly married in her sixteenth year to a pains-taking fox-hunter. She outlived her husband, though not the memory of him, and yet we had never known the hymeneal discrepancy, but for a trifling household accident. A giddy, laughing cousin, setting the tea-things, inadvertently placed a common white clay cup (how it came there we know not) in a radiant china saucer, real India. Our aunt turned pale, and trembled; with tears in the good woman's eyes, and her heart in her voice, she lifted up her fan, saying solemnly, "Barbara, why will you be so thoughtless? If you did but know, if you could but think, what a pang it is to me to see a common cup in a china saucer!" The emotion of our aunt at once disclosed to us her long-hidden sorrow.

The loves of Thomas and Susan Horner were requited with a boy, the hero of our tale—in fact, with John Horner. Who that saw him crawling at the paternal door, could have prophesied his future greatness? At six years old, however, he shewed signs of superior wit, though, unhappily, the exhibition was too often lost upon the beholders. Nay, at five, an incident occurred which, with Ben, the pedlar, marked him for serious things: for, with very little hesitation he satisfied the querist Ben, of the precise number of black beans and white beans required to make three. Ben shook his head, and upon his own responsibility, declared the boy was born for a bishop. This prophecy obtained new weight from a circumstance that happened about a year afterwards. A neighbour cottager had lost his pig; it had strayed into the forest, and it was supposed—a belief, by the way, extremely unjust to the natural sagacity of the pig—that the animal had lost its way, or, what was much more probable, had been transmuted into bacon by the gipsies.

"What would you give for your pig?" asked little Jack of the owner, who had almost resigned himself to the loss, but whose hopes were once more quickened by the question, "Will you give one leg of him?"

"Not an ear, Jack—not an ear; I did know he'd come home," said the man, now quite assured of his long lost pork. Another week, however, passed, and there was no pig. "What will you give for him?—two legs?" asked Jack, again accosted by the owner, anxious for his property. It was in vain, that the simple Thomas Horner essayed his paternal authority to induce Jack to disclose the retreat of the hog gratis. The boy avowed that he merely inquired the extent of the reward, in case he might meet, in his rambles in the forest, for he knew every inch of it, the lamented fugitive. Days rolled on, and at length

the owner of the beast came to the cottage of Horner to make conditions. Susan Horner and her hope, Jack, were alone at home.

“ I’ll tell ye what, dame, if the pig be brought to me, and I know Jack knows where he is, I don’t mind giving—”

“ Three legs ?” chirped Jack from the chimney corner.

“ I don’t mind giving—”

“ Why, neighbour,” said the elder Horner, entering the house ; “ your pig is safe and sound, and fat as butter, stied in the hollow of the great oak in the middle of the forest. Whoever has left him there, has left him well—he hasn’t wanted mast I warrant.”

This was quite true : whoever had fallen in with the straying animal, had safely housed it from wind and weather, and fed it daily with acorns and beech-nuts. It cannot be denied that suspicion fell upon little Jack, who was, however, rewarded for the ill-opinion, by the arrival of several of the neighbours who declared that in the business of the pig, Jack Horner had discovered intelligence enough for a vicar. Proceed we with the growing wisdom of little Jack.

It was Christmas-day, and Jack had completed his eighth year. His friend Ben, the pedlar, in acknowledgment of small courtesies done him by dame Horner, presented Jack with a plum-pie, from a shop in the neighbouring town. On that day Ben was a guest at the cottage, where the families of two or three acquaintances were gathered about the fire--little Jack ---with his Christmas-pie upon his lap, having silently chosen the warmest corner. Jack remained dumb, but still Jack fed.

“ Why, you’ll never eat all the pie yourself, Jack,” said a neighbour, “ you’ll give a piece to Bill ?”

“ Oh ! yes,” and Jack held forth the remains ; “ for I—ha ! ha !—I have picked out all the plums.”

The pedlar laughed at the extraordinary sagacity of Jack, who, encouraged, again declared the achievement, which, put into metre by a native poet, has come down to us a touching allegory of worldly wisdom, and worldly self-respect.

The pedlar settled into thoughtful looks at Jack, and next morning opened his mind to Thomas Horner. “ The boy was losing himself in such a place ; he had only to go into the world to become a man—it was to slight the gifts of Providence to put such a light under a bushel. He (Ben) was not so young as he had been ; and wanted help with his pack—besides, he had taken a liking to the boy, and as it was plain he would never be of any use to his father, why not save his food and clothes ?”

We pass the conference of man and wife—the half-objections of the father, the tears of the mother—it was decided; Jack Horner was to go into the world—he was to follow the pedlar. With misty eyes, Jack turned from the door, but, in a trice, began to whistle like a black-bird. The pedlar looked down with pride upon his pupil; and, in truth, Jack was worthy of no worse a master.

Ben, the pedlar, knew men, as the generality of men know clocks. It was enough for him to address himself according to the hour; he considered only the outward marks of things, caring little, asking not, to know, the inward wheels and springs which move the hands of life. "He didn't make men," he would say, "he only traded with them. A guinea was a guinea all the world over, and the best of consciences couldn't make it five-and-twenty shillings." And by this light, Jack Horner saw, as it is called, the world. And then Jack's golden thumb! He would pick plums from what seemed hopeless places—still vaunting his bravery to the world, all too apt to take a resolute man at his own valuation. Jack had faithfully followed the pedlar nine whole years, when an accident occurred that, somewhat rudely, snapt the tie between them. Ben, in his peripatetic mode of traffic, had many strange customers: now Ben was a man above vulgar curiosity, and in his dealings in the highway and by the road-side, for there was no place, where business calling, he would not open his pack, he never asked the name or calling of a stranger, his whereabouts, or any other prying question. Ben bought or sold, buying and selling being to him the only aim of serious man. But the truth is, Ben had made a weary pilgrimage about the earth, and now began to feel fitful yearnings for home and rest. The Unicorn was a thriving house, on the Warwick road, and in all his life, he had never felt so placid, so composed, so open to the influence of peace and good humour, as when seated in the easy chair of the late Mr. Wassail, looking with the eyes of anticipation upon the living relic of the buried man. Mrs. Wassail was about five-and-forty, with one of those neutral faces, which escape observation, unless, as it sometimes happens, a scrutiny be rigorously insisted upon by the owner.

"I wonder, Mrs. Wassail," thus, one evening, spoke Ben, "I wonder, that you let your neighbours take such advantage of you?"

"Lord, Mr. Benjamin, what can a lone woman do? Here, Dolly—I wish, Mr. Benjamin, you wouldn't bring that Jack here, there's no getting nothing done for him—Dolly, take these pipes into the parlour."

"I'm sure, Mrs. Wassail, if you desire it, I'll send Jack

Horner about his business. I think with you, that he begins to be troublesome."

"Pah! how I hate 'em, when they're neither men nor boys," exclaimed the widow with marked disgust in her face.

"True, Mrs. Wassail, true. Perhaps, the autumn of life is the only time for real happiness—all on this side of forty is, I am now convinced, nothing but smoke. After forty, begins solid enjoyment."

"I don't know," said Mrs. Wassail, delicately insinuating by her manner, that she was not yet capable of judging.

Ben shifted his ground. "As you say, Mrs. Wassail, once let a woman be left alone, and everybody puts upon her. Do you see what they've been doing at the Black Bull? Ha! all spite and malice against the Unicorn; you may see the sign three miles off—there's gold enough on the horns and collar, and chains of the bull to gild the Lord Mayor's coach. Then, to be sure, as you say, there's a man at the Black Bull, and yet it's hardly fair of him towards a widow."

"Let him do his worst," said Mrs. Wassail, "yes, his worst; I'll be a match for him! Ha, Mr. Ochre, pray come in."

Benjamin suddenly bit his pipe, lowered the corners of his mouth, and, with his eyes fixed upon the visitor, jerked a nod of recognition. Rubens Ochre, to the mechanic trades of plumbing and glazing, added the loftier graces of sign-painting. Now, although Benjamin was no enemy to the arts in the abstract, he was no friend to Ochre, simply because it was the misfortune of the poor man to be an unencumbered widower. And this fact had been three times forced upon the knowledge of Ben by the presence of Ochre fixed in the chair of the late landlord. Indeed, there had been as much silent manœuvring—as great a display of tactics between Benjamin and Ochre to obtain possession of the chair, as between any two generals for vantâgé ground. Ochre, casting a look of civil malignity—and the reader, if he has seen anything, must have seen such looks—at the occupied seat, a look which was met by Benjamin stretching himself to his full length, ostentatiously publishing his enjoyment,—subsided into resignation, and meekly sank upon a chair, rush-bottomed.

"How odd!" said Mrs. Wassail, "Mr. Benjamin was just speaking of you, Mr. Ochre."

"I!" said Benjamin, wonderingly.

"Of me?" asked the painter, as if resenting a liberty.

"It's all the same, I mean of the Black Bull," observed Mrs. Wassail. "To be sure they've made a fine show."

"I hope, Mrs. Wassail, you don't think it's my work? A bull! well, if it isn't more like a zebra! But, as I said, you don't think I'd paint against the Unicorn?"

“No, no, I’m sure not, Mr. Ochre; but Mr. Benjamin was about—I know he was—about to say, that if our Unicorn—”

“True, true, I was going to say that *our* Unicorn—” and the eyes of Benjamin sparkled at the possessive pronoun—“pray, for I suppose that is your business,” and it was extraordinary how soon Ben fell into the air of the master, “pray, what colour do you intend to paint our Unicorn?”

“What colour?” asked the artist, “why, what colour would you have him painted?”

“Why, let me see,” said Benjamin, seriously taking the question as an appeal to his judgment, “I should say—”

“As if unicorns were of two colours. Ha! ha! what colour?” and Ochre laughed with professional ferocity.

“And why not?” asked Ben, very seriously. “Why not?”

“I can’t say; it isn’t for a painter to dispute with nature; all he has to do is to copy her. Therefore, depend upon it, Mrs. Wassail,” and the artist turned with a smile upon the widow, “the Unicorn shall be as like as life.”

“Still, as we’ve never yet had a sign, but only the name, though the poor man who is in his grave could say it wasn’t my fault, I should like to know the colour.”

“To be sure, Mrs. Wassail, the real natural colour; a bright white with a dash of sky-blue.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed Benjamin, “and why not pink with spots of yellow? Blue for a unicorn! Ha! Ha!”

“The natural colour, the colour of life, the only colour,” asserted the painter with proper vehemence.

“The only colour! You don’t mean to tell me,” said Benjamin, beginning to be stern, “that there ar’n’t unicorns of all colours?”

“I suppose, next you’ll say there are piebalds?” cried Ochre with a sneer.

“*Will* say? to be sure I will. It’s very well for people who grow like a cabbage upon one spot, but I—I have seen the world; the world, Mr. Ochre, and I say there are piebald unicorns.”

“Did you ever see ’em?” rapidly returned the painter.

Ben opened his mouth, and was, we fear, suddenly about to soil his reputation for truth, when recovering himself, he sank back in his chair, and with a dignity, very useful on difficult occasions, asked, “What is that to you?”

“Yes, I thought so. I tell you, Mrs. Wassail, that the carriage of the king of the Indies is drawn by six unicorns, all of ’em white with a dash of blue,” said the artist.

“If that be the case,” observed Mrs. Wassail, “we can’t do better.”

“White and blue?—they’re all greys,” cried the pedlar.

“You don’t mean to call me a liar?” asked Mr. Ochre.

“I mean to call your white grey, that’s all,” returned Benjamin.

“I’m satisfied,” said the painter, “for I can bear much, Mr. Benjamin; but no *skit* upon my truth. I’m satisfied.”

“It’s more than I am; and I say if you paint our unicorn any other colour but grey---”

“Why, what’s the matter,” said a thin, tall, elderly man, who had the right of entry into the parlour, by virtue of his office of schoolmaster, and caster-up of Mrs. Wassail’s accompts. “What’s the matter?” said Mr. Birchenough, not without a sinister glance at the chair of the late landlord, possessed by Benjamin. It was odd, but the three seemed to look upon the easy chair as the lawful first step to the widow’s bed; hence, the uneasy associations suggested by rival occupancy.

“The matter! Why, and it’s so silly, they will quarrel,” said the landlady, “about the colour of the king of Indy’s unicorns.”

“White, white, with a dash of blue---” cried Ochre, looking to Birchenough as an umpire.

“Grey, or mottled grey,” shouted Benjamin, nodding at the schoolmaster.

“There again,” fired the artist, “do you mean to say I tell an untruth?” and his rage was rising above blood heat.

“Yes, do you mean to say that Mr. Ochre isn’t to be believed?” asked Birchenough, benevolently stirring the coals.

“I mean to say this: as a man, a husband, and a father ---when he had a wife and child---he is, and was, the pattern of truth; but as a painter he is the greatest liar upon earth.”

“Say no more, Mr. Benjamin; so as you said nothing against my private character, I am satisfied.” Here is a delicate distinction, which, if pondered upon by ministers and politicians, may happily save much gunpowder. Ochre cared but little for his veracity as a painter of public signs, but was morbidly sensitive upon the score of private virtues. All his horses might, for what he cared, be abused as long-eared asses—his white swans geese, but he was not, at the same time, to be accused of the slightest tendency to misrepresent.

“And you’ve been quarrelling about the colour of unicorns?” asked Birchenough ironically. “Why didn’t you first prove beyond all doubt that there *were* unicorns?”

Though Birchenough put this question with a malicious intention, it is nevertheless a query that might induce fiercer disputants than even the painter and the pedlar, to defer *sine die* more weighty debates than that on the colour of an unicorn.

CHAPTER II.

Jack Horner, at the present time of our story, was in his eighteenth year. "If there be something in true beauty which vulgar souls cannot admire," and we do not hesitate to strengthen Mr. Congreve's opinion with our own, Jack Horner was calculated to pass upon nine people out of ten as a very pretty fellow. He was slim and straight, and of good growth; he had red cheeks, curly black hair, and a something in his eye which Dolly called spirit, but which one less observing might denominate cunning. Jack was precisely one of those lucky people to whom nature bountifully denies the fatal gift of sensibility. He was, morally, cased like an armadillo. Jack, however, had his virtues: let us give him his due. He never told a lie when the truth would do just as well; never offended man, woman, or child, when it was clear nothing was to be got by the injury. Moreover, Jack Horner would very often use the word respectability. Now, here was a youth to carry a pack along the highway of life, filling it, ere he had travelled half the road, with the best gifts of fortune, and halting at the top of the hill to build and plant. And Jack Horner was wisely provident: his shrewdness at eight years old, so touchingly manifested in the matter of the plum pie, never deserted him. No; let the world crack about him, Jack Horner never forgot the plums! Let us renew the history of Jack with an illustrative instance.

Jack, among his many shining parts, had a peculiarly susceptible ear; nature had endowed him with an admirable organ, and Jack, like a grateful servant, cultivated the good gift. Indeed, very often he has been known to give himself a lesson at a key-hole. We have felt it necessary to state thus much to account in some way for what still must seem the strange behaviour of our hero. We trust that the dispute in the matter of unicorns has not yet escaped the reader. Be it known, then, that as Birchenough delivered himself of, what we consider a most perplexing query, "Smash, the exciseman," joined the party in the parlour, and was almost immediately followed by Jack Horner himself.

"Why, how now, Jack?" said Ben, taking the pipe an inch from his mouth, and looking a look of offended authority at the intrusion. "How now, Jack?"

"Won't you sit down, John?" said Mrs. Wassail, with sudden complacency; and all the seats being engaged, we are bound to state that she looked in the eyes of Master Horner, then threw a glance at the easy chair of the late Mr. Wassail, and—but she had been troubled with a cold some days—slightly coughed. "Won't you sit down?" asked the widow, but not one of the party offered to move.

“No, I thank you, ma’am, said John, with a modesty that would have won the heart of any woman, more hearts—we are convinced being won by modesty, than by any other masculine faculty of the mind. “I want to speak to you,” and John looked at Benjamin.

“Come along then, Jack,” and Benjamin rose from his chair, and immediately walked out of the parlour. He was, however, met in the passage by Mrs. Wassail, who had gone for a seat for John, and was urged back into the room.

“There, do sit down,” said the widow, and with smiling violence she thrust Jack into the easy chair of the late Mr. Wassail, at the same time offering a less voluptuous seat—in fact, a wooden stool—to Benjamin the master. Mr. Ochre stared like a man who has made a sudden discovery—Birchenough uttered a prolonged “hem,” and Benjamin twisted on the stool, as though he were seated upon broken glass—Smash laughed outright.

“Well, John Horner?” said Benjamin, the politeness of some people rising in proportion with their disgust.

“I’ve been thinking, master,” said John, “that I’ve been a great deal of trouble to you;” Benjamin courteously suffered John to proceed without interruption—“a great deal of trouble to you; and as I know the goodness of your heart is so great, that whatever burden I might be upon you, you would never think of turning me away,”—

“Do take some ale, John,” said Mrs. Wassail, pressing the beverage upon the speaker, and preparing herself to be much affected.

“I—I—your health, gentlemen—I think it but right that I should leave you of my own accord.”

Benjamin was evidently struck by this self-sacrifice on the part of John; he, however, concealed whatever emotion he felt, merely slightly nodding affirmation.

“Why, John, you’d never think of going, like a lamb alone in the world?” asked the widow, feeling for the corner of her apron.

“There’s a providence, Mrs. Wassail,” said John.

“To be sure there is,” corroborated Benjamin.

“A very excellent young man,” said Ochre, the other suitor for the easy chair.

“It does one good to witness such a lively trust in heaven. Beautifully said—yes, there is a providence,” exclaimed Birchenough, and he too, from the corner of his eye, looked at the chair.

“Since I’ve been in business,” observed the exciseman, “I never doubted it.”

“I hope I’ve never lost sight of it, even when I lost my

husband," said Mrs. Wassail, "but still, that so young a creature,"—

"Young," said the painter, "I was married when I was eighteen."

"To be sure," said Mrs. Wassail, and she fixed her eyes upon John Horner.

"Though it was very wrong," suddenly rejoined the artist, feeling that *he* had just been very wrong—"though it was very wrong,—"

"Well Jack, but you were saying," said the master pedlar, returning to the point.

"That as I can't think of any longer being a weight upon you, I am come to say good b'ye."

"Good b'ye, John," said Benjamin, with a smile, and "good b'ye was uttered with touching cordiality by Ochre and Birch-enough.

"But before I go," said John, "as you've been so good to me, I should wish you to see that everything is right; and so I'll just bring the packs before these gentlemen, and lay out all the articles, and get Mr. Smash to be a witness—"

"Not at all necessary," said Benjamin insistingly.

"But I must for my own satisfaction. You know there's a great deal of property, and if anything---"

"I am quite satisfied, John, and why should you trouble yourself?" asked Benjamin.

"You know, now I'm leaving you, I have nothing but my character---and if there should be any after-clap---I must bring down the bales," and Jack half-rose from his chair, but was pushed down again by Benjamin, in whose features there was a sudden look of ferocity darkly contrasting with the simple and composed face of John Horner.

"Really, I think the young lad is only right," said Smash, the exciseman, "and for my part, I don't mind being witness, aye, and signing the inventory of the articles."

"Thank'ee," said John, again rising upon his legs, and again pushed down upon the chair by Benjamin, "thank'ee, because there's a great deal of nice property. In the first place, there's the Brussels lace"---

"What!" cried the exciseman, and the exclamation pierced the marrow of Benjamin.

"And the French cambric and crimson velvet"—and John Horner unconsciously enumerated several articles which aroused the suspicious mind of the exciseman, and awakened smiles in the faces of Ochre and Birchenough, still looking at the chair. Benjamin swelled and turned black at the innocent discoveries made by his unsophisticated pupil.

“I say, Mr. Benjamin, this must be looked into,” said Smash with an ominous visage.

“It’s all a lie,” said the pedlar---“lace! not a thread---French cambric! not a strip---the scoundrel wants to ruin me; there isn’t a---”

“What!” cried John Horner, lively in his love of truth, “you don’t mean to say there isn’t in the green pack--”

“The green pack!” roared Benjamin, drawing himself up, and looking wonderingly.

“The green pack!” repeated Horner, in unchanged tones.

“What have I to do with the green pack? Ar’n’t you ashamed of yourself? you must smuggle, forsooth---rob the King, God bless him, of his lawful right, and then hope to put your sins upon me? Isn’t the green pack, and all in it, your own? Is it likely, gentlemen, that I would have a lad for nine long years---and it was a bad day for me, when I took him from the chimney corner---without letting him do something for himself?” And Benjamin looked an appeal to the company.

“But the green pack,” said Smash, with the stern purpose of an exciseman.

“Hear me, gentlemen;” cried Benjamin. “I was one night at the Three Bells; I had had a good week, and my heart was open---he must recollect it.”

“I don’t indeed, master,” replied John, unmoved in his serenity.

“We went up to our beds, and there as I lay, thinking of this life and the next, and one thing and another, I said to John---he was lying on the floor in one of the corners---I said to him, John, says I, you’re growing up, and should think of doing something for yourself. There isn’t much in the green pack---he always carried the green one---but what there is I give you to trade with---be a good, honest, hard-working man and copy me. Now, all this I said, and if I didn’t may I”---

“Then the green pack is Jack’s?” asked the exciseman.

“And every thread that’s in it,” replied Benjamin---“I’m willing to take my oath of it. He knows all my talk to him at the Three Bells.”

“Then it wasn’t a dream?” said John Horner, courageously looking in the face of his master.

“A dream!” echoed Benjamin, and he ground his teeth, as he tried to smile upon John.

“Why, I do recollect all that you say, at the Three Bells, but I was so heavy to sleep at night, that in the morning, I thought it was only a dream. How could I expect that?---”

“But where is the pack?---the green pack,” cried the exciseman, roaring for his prey.

"Yes, where is it?" said Benjamin, "and, rascal, for your wicked lies I do hope they'll transport you."

"Serve him right," judged the painter.

"Transportation is too good for him," remarked Birchenough with a leer, for John Horner was still in the easy chair.

"What! for a little—little smuggling?" asked Mrs. Wassail; the charity of the sex assailed by cambric and Brussels lace.

"The man who'd smuggle," said the schoolmaster, whose patriotism had advanced with his ale score, he, like Regulus, best vindicating his country when deep in a barrel, "the man who'd smuggle would murder."

"You're right," cried Benjamin, and his clenched fist on the table gave solemnity to the apophthegm.

The green pack was speedily produced, and its contents rigidly scrutinized by the exciseman. However, albeit the pack had many excellent commodities, there was nothing that could be held contraband. John Horner merely uttered something about a mistake, and again arranged the pack, Benjamin bursting with silent anger.

CHAPTER III.

"Where is John Horner?" asked Mrs. Wassail of Dolly, next morning.

"Gone, ma'am!" said Dolly in tears.

"Gone!" cried the widow, biting her lip.

"Gone!" shouted Benjamin, and he groaned.

"Gone," sobbed the maid---"gone, green pack and all.

Dolly spoke the truth; at day-light, John quitted the Unicorn, bearing on his shoulders the green pack, which before, as he said, he had dreamt to be his, but which was now his assured property by the testimony of the donor.

Benjamin was somewhat comforted under his loss by the departure of John—the ungrateful John; inasmuch as a dangerous rival for the easy chair was removed from the field, though the victory remained long disputed, fortune, at various seasons, equally favouring the three combatants. Astounded are we, that Mr. Wassail, poor man, rested quietly in his grave, whilst his relic was so variously assailed for his easy chair.

To return to John Horner: The reader may have felt some surprise at the absence of the contraband articles from the green pack. Let us explain as we proceed; the truth is, John had removed them; in other words, he had—picked out the plums.

John moved onward with his pack, and there was a fluttering at his heart, and a singing in his brain, and he was all but overcome with the sense of his own capacity—with the glory of his recent triumph. He was now his own master: he carried his

own pack. However, tranquillity came with time, and some twelve hours after his departure from the Unicorn, John was seated in the chimney corner of a hedge ale-house, calmly calculating his future prospects. John sat with thoughtful eye upon his pack; and, perhaps, he cared not from a deep sense of gratitude to compete with his old master; but, certain it is, he pondered with growing disgust upon the trade of pedlar.

“What! Jack! How’s Ben?”

John slowly turned his head towards the speaker, and beheld Josiah Weevil, a small dealer of Stratford, who had alighted from his horse on his way to Birmingham, for goods in his trade: “I’m told,” said Weevil, “if he isn’t already married to the Unicorn, he ought to be.”

“Ha! Master Weevil, that little parlour, and that nice chair—I’m a thinking they’re better than tramping through mud and dust, under rain, and sun, and snow and hail. To be sure,” and John thought of the penalty attending the parlour and the chair, “to be sure, there’s the widow herself.”

“Can’t buy land without stones, nor meat without bones,” was the homely, yet ungallant expression of Weevil. “And now, I suppose, as Ben is all snug, he’s turned you off?” John drew a long sigh. “I thought so,—the way of the world, John. But I always thought Ben was all for himself.”

“It’s hard to name any body he likes better,” observed Horner; “and therefore I oughtn’t to complain.”

“And whose pack is that, John?” asked Josiah; “it’s a full-grown one.”

“Pretty well,” replied John, with philosophical indifference. “But, Master Weevil, I don’t like the trade; it isn’t the work of a Christian, but an elephant. No—I—I’ll sell my pack.”

“And is it really yours?” asked the small trader, and his eyes glistened.

“And little enough for nine years’ walking. I’ll sell off my stock; and, as father and mother are getting old, I’ll go home and live with them, and take all my money to them, and—yes, I hope I hav’n’t forgot to honour my father and mother.”

The old woman of the house clasped her withered hands, and looked down on the filial John Horner with speaking tenderness. Bridget, her daughter, sighed at the goodness of the youth, and Josiah Weevil drew close to the young pedlar, and snatched up his hand; squeezing it, he began, “John, I always thought you too good for the trade.”

“You must lie so, to do anything at it,” said Horner.

“But I was not aware,” continued Weevil, “that you had such a proper feeling towards the authors of your being; I mean, your father and your mother.”

“I hope I shall never forget my own flesh and blood,” re-

plied Horner with animation, and we can answer for him, that he never did.

“What have you got in your pack, John?” asked the trader, sinking with dignity from morals to business.

“Cloth, stuffs, linen, and—yes, Master Weevil, I shall never be happy till I’m at home again.”

“An excellent son, John. Any silks?”

“A remnant of thunder-and-lightning. There’s nobody like a mother.”

“True, true. Has—” and the trader lowered his voice, and with the manner of a man who puts a dear question to a dear friend,—“Has a bit of Brussels fallen of late?”

“Ha!” and John sighed and whispered, “smuggling isn’t what it was.” And then aloud: “Poor soul! I hear she’s much altered.”

“All mortal things change. What for a bit of cambric?”

“Don’t talk in that way,” said Horner, melted, taking the back of his hand to his eyes. “Don’t talk in that way. Hem! a handkerchief’s now worth any money.”

“And you intend to go home, and turn husbandman, eh, John? Well, you are right, very right; there is something so noble in getting your bread from the soil—oh, they’re nobody,” said Weevil, observing the eye of John cast from the old woman to Bridget. “Let’s look at the pack; who knows, I may be saved a ride to Birmingham.”

The pack was unbuckled, its contents laid open to the eye of Weevil, who with an educated look scrutinized every article. “Ha—humph! Yes, John; a bit of earth, a few seeds and a spade,—what so good? You cheat nobody—you flatter nobody—you backbite nobody—you envy nobody.” And then recurring to the immediate business: “How much, now, for the lot?”

“Very true, Master Weevil; a bit of land of your own—a spade—a strong arm, and a clear conscience. Let me see; how many guineas,” and John began silently to calculate with his fingers.

“How nice, to see your little crop springing, and to know that it comes from nobody’s loss! How very sweet to eat the bread, not of other people’s misfortune, but of our own honest labour! I wouldn’t give a pin for that,” and Josiah suddenly pointed to an article, which, as it appeared to him, John considered “too curiously.”

“Ha! I shall, indeed, never be happy till I get home again; to eat what we sow, eh? That’s something like, Master Weevil. I should say twelve guineas for the whole pack.”

“Twelve guineas! Pooh! buckle up again, John. Twelve fiddlesticks! I’m sure I wish I could give up trade, and go to the fields; that is, indeed, a pure employment.”

"I gave three pound for the velvet," said John.

"For at your business," observed Josiah, not hearing the pedlar, "as you say, to make anything you must lie so. I should say nine guineas would be one too many for the lot."

"I'm sure eleven is one too little; but there's no harm done," and John Horner proceeded to secure the pack.

"Well, I might—and yet I—well, it's a little rash of me, but—say nine guineas."

John was about to close the bargain, when turning his eye up from the pack, he saw the visage of Josiah, and seeing it, he held his peace, and continued to buckle. There was a pause for a minute, when Weevil cordially slapt John on the shoulder.

"As I'm a living man, John," said Weevil, "I wouldn't give anybody else eight pound; but, I like you—yes, it isn't often that we meet with a son who has such a respect for his parents—such a good, dutiful lad. Ha! John, you remind me of myself when I was your age; yes, just such another;—and so, lad, I'll give you what you asked. Here's the ten pounds."

"Guineas," said John Horner, with peculiar expressiveness. It was but a word, and yet, like the "swear" of the Ghost in Hamlet, it seemed to vibrate with the very soul of the speaker.

"Well, well—friends ought not to part upon pounds and guineas," said the benevolent Weevil.

"To be sure not," acquiesced John Horner. "Guineas."

"Well, may I die if you don't drive the hardest bargain," cried Weevil, reddening at the tenacity of John.

"My father and my mother," said John, and he counted the money laid upon the table by Josiah.

Let it suffice the reader to be told that Josiah Weevil mounted his horse, and with the pack—a bargain, as in his heart he knew full well—before him, turned his way towards Stratford. John resumed his seat in the chimney-corner, holding council with himself as to his next day's march. We dare not doubt that, with the rising sun, he would have started for his home near the forest, had not his humanity been most powerfully appealed to by a sudden lamentable accident, of which we must give the following rise and progress.

CHAPTER IV.

"Well, father, you know, it isn't my fault; you know, I must eat."

"To be opposed by one's own flesh and blood."—

"Times are so bad, father."—

"This—this it is to have a son."—

"Right's right, father—don't blame me for that. I'm sure I wouldn't have joined the opposition, if I could have lived without it."—

“Ha!—well, it can’t last, that’s one comfort: it can’t last. Do your worst, we shall beat the opposition.”—

“They pay very well, that’s all I know.”—

“They promise to pay, you mean; but I know every place they have upon hand, and I know how they fill ’em. But—ha! ha! join the opposition!—it can’t last.”

Let not the reader hastily conclude, from the preceding colloquy, that we would trap him into politics. By no means; the father and son above conversing are not members of Parliament: patriotism is not their theme; they speak of stage-coaches, and not of a ministry. The opposition is the opposition on the Birmingham road, and not on the road to Windsor.

“I must do my duty to my employer,” said Young Tom, “and so, father, you won’t think the worse of me as a son, if I beat you.”

“Beat *me!*” and the soul of a Greek charioteer glowed in the eye, and elevated the expression of Old Tom, as he scornfully smiled at the impossibility. “But you’ve always been a trouble to me.”

“I can’t help it, if I was found too big for a jockey. I had rather been on the turf than the box, I’m sure; but it’s flying in the face of providence to blame me for my weight. Good bye, father, we start at six;” and Young Tom still lingered, and unsatisfactorily played with his fingers, and looked in Old Tom’s face. “Good bye, father.” Old Tom bent his brow, and smoked his pipe, with greater determination; but Old Tom spoke not. “Good bye, father”—more smoke: “good bye, father,” yet an increase of smoke—“well, if you won’t say, good bye, why, good bye father,” and Young Tom, like Æneas, departed in a cloud.

The “Comet” driven by Old Tom, started at due season, and pursued its fiery way, when, to the agony of the driver, the axle broke, and a delay of two hours was the unhappy consequence. Passing a few intense exclamations on the part of Old Tom, it may suffice to state that the accident was repaired, and the coach once more away. The time, however, lost by Old Tom, had been gained by Tom’s son, who, though announced to start an hour later than the “Comet” was, if reputation be not a bubble---which we sometimes think it is, seeing how very easily some people blow it---pledged to reach the goal even before his father. The “Comet” travelled on, the horses being visited with the sins of the broken axle; the creatures fairly “devoured the way,” and many were the mute glances of remonstrance cast by the passengers at Old Tom, who, it was plain, had made himself up for desperation. Now, a traveller would venture to suggest a less rate of speed, when Old Tom, with his mottled cheeks, his under lip turning over like the lip of

a ewer, and his green and yellow eyes glaring down upon his horseflesh, deigned no answer, but applied the whip.

"For God's sake! Mr. Coachman," said, or rather crowed an elderly inside lady, thrusting her head out of the window.

Down came the whip.

"Mr. Coachman, I suppose---" it was a legal gentleman of Staple's Inn, who now addressed Old Tom, "I suppose, you are aware that, no matter what accident may come to us, we may all recover?"

Again the horses sprang and quivered.

"My good man," cried a third passenger, and again the cattle suffered, Old Tom resenting every attempted interference of the biped on the quadruped.

"Hast thou *no* humanity?" asked a Quaker.

"None," replied the lash, for not one syllable escaped Old Tom.

"I'll get out, if we live to change," said the inside lady, a spinster; though she bore a "charmed life," being an annuitant.

A pause ensued, and the goaded horses began to feel the good effects of silence, when the noise of wheels was heard behind. Old Tom turned his head---it was but for a moment. Gripping his reins as a Cyclops would gripe a bar, setting his teeth, and his eyes burning like molten glass, he looked at his horses, like a hungry Abyssinian choosing a dinner from the living animal. The lash cut through the air like steel, and amidst the cries of the men, and the shrieks of the women, the horses, urged to madness, tore away. Still the "Star," guided by Young Tom, gained upon the "Comet." Old Tom turned all colours as the sound became more heavy; putting his stony heart into his arm, he lashed and lashed---but yet the "Star" came nearer. Five minutes, and the coaches were parallel. Young Tom ventured a look from the corner of his off-eye at his respected parent; that look met no returning glance---for Old Tom seemed no longer a man, but an automaton flail. For a brief time, the speed between father and son was equal. At length, the "Star" advances---and the "Comet," thanks to infuriated horse-flesh---wins the way, and again a grim smile makes terrible the face of Old Tom. However, Young Tom has too much of the old man in him, to give---in a matter of business---any precedence to his own father. He, too, has a whip, and the horses know it. The "Comet" is a bow-shot before---Young Tom wields his right arm---the "Star" shoots on! There is a narrow lane, but what is that to the cause of the "opposition?"---what the near declivity? Again the whips sing in the air---the "Star" gains upon the "Comet"---is near it---so near, that wheels strike wheels---the leaders of the "Star" break from their

traces—the “Comet” overturns—the “Star has a clear roof from the concussion—and, amidst the plunging of the horses, the shrieks and groans, and faintings of the terrified and the wounded, Young Tom has vindicated the dignity of the “opposition.” Old Tom lies stunned with a broken arm, and Young Tom mourns two fractured ribs.

Scattered here and there were the various outside passengers, those of the inside crawling as they best could from the window. The legal gentleman from Staple’s-inn, shrugged his shoulders, with a satisfied air, and approaching the Quaker---who was seated on a heap of stones, declaring that he was dead---bade him take heart, assuring him that he was certain “to recover.” This was the more magnanimous of the attorney, as he, upon his own evidence, was suffering martyrdom from an “inward bruise.” Happily, there were no mortal accidents. The shrieks and groans were, however, of the most appalling kind; mothers, crying for their children---husbands, yes, husbands, calling for their wives. Old Tom swearing---Young Tom shouting. In the midst of this, it was a sight for Socrates to behold the exquisite equanimity of a former inside passenger. He was a middle-sized man, with the appearance of a belly: he had clawed a box from the outside of the overturned coach; and, unlocking it, with considerable agitation withdrew its contents; in other words, a very handsome violoncello. The musician, his features quite aghast, set him down on a heap of gravel next the Quaker, and---the air yet ringing with the sound of lamentation from his fellow passengers,---he twanged the strings, and dismay fled from his countenance. He next essayed a successful *pizzicato*, and his features lighted up as he went fiddling on, and at length with a gladdened face, and in a voice of triumph, he exclaimed to the wounded Quaker---“Providential escape! not the slightest damage done!”

Fortunately, the accident took place within a few yards of the public-house, where sat and mused our hero. Old Tom and Young Tom were, for good reasons, placed in the same bed, the other spare room being devoted to another passenger, seriously injured. “How are you, father?” said Young Tom, on the departure of the doctor, who had carefully attended to their hurts. “How are you, father?”

Old Tom grunted and was silent. At length he spoke; but more to his own communing spirit than to his own flesh and blood. “Humph! How can people expect good luck, when they lower the prices?”

“If I had had but Betsy for the off-leader,” said Young Tom, imitating the independence of his father, and talking only to himself,—“if I had only had Betsy.”

"Humph! Well, he ought to drive horse-flesh, that's what he ought, but it should be in a wheel-barrow," said Old Tom, soliloquising.

"Well, you have been wrong, mayhap, you have," said Young Tom, "but, poor fellow, how can you help it, if you hav'n't been taught no better?"

"What!" cried Old Tom, suddenly twisting himself in bed, and jerking his broken arm, he groaned and turned pale.

"Father,---how are you, father?" and Young Tom raised himself so quickly up, that he gasped with the pain of his fractured ribs. "How are you, father?" And Young Tom leaned over, looking in his father's face. "Well, father, if ever you find me in the road in opposition again, send the wheels over me. Why, it's a judgment!"

"Tom," said the old man, and he took hold of his son's hand.

"Father!"

"Tom!" and Old Tom shook his son's hand and smiled.

"Tom,---how are you?"

"Why, I may say, hearty---how are you?"

"Tom," and again the old man smiled and squeezed his hand, "it can't be mended now, but there *was* room between me and the stump."

Young Tom said nothing in defence---but he kept his word: he was never again found in opposition to his father. (There is---it will be allowed---sometimes good to be picked from a broken bone.)

The coachmen disposed of, let us attend to the other wounded passenger, the tenant of the best room in the way-side house.

On the crash without, John Horner, the landlady and her daughter, immediately rushed into the road. John looked about him, not knowing, in the confusion, who to aid. At length, he espied a middle-aged gentleman dressed in glossy black, with a massive gold watch-chain, three rings on his fingers, and a brooch the size of a half-crown in his bosom, lying in the road, screaming for help. The sympathies of John were touched, and compassion lending him strength, he lifted the wounded man, with the nicest care into the house. Nay, with the consent of the guard, he took one of the horses, and galloped off for a surgeon, who, on his arrival, pronounced a fracture to have taken place in the right leg of Andrew Thiselton, stock-broker, such being the name and profession of the well-dressed sufferer.

Now, until this untoward accident, Andrew Thiselton had been one of those unbelievers, who, walking on rose-leaves all their lives, have no faith in the possibility of weariness and blisters. He was one of those who are content to take tales of martyrdom as bold designs on the credence of human nature:

mere pen-and ink sufferings, never endured, because *they* could not endure them. Andrew once visited the Tower, and, on being shewn the interesting spoils of the Armada, declared he had no faith in the thumb-screw: he was induced to try it, and then, certainly, he roared himself a convert. If people were unfortunate, Andrew would put a wise face upon the calamity, declaring that every man was master of his fate. In a word, Andrew Thiselton would have met the rumour of a famine in a neighbouring state, by triumphantly producing the receipts of *his* wine-merchant, poulterer, and butcher. After all, there is an unconscious humility in the race of Thiseltons: themselves wanting nothing, they cannot understand how fortune should have been sparing towards their neighbours.

For a whole fortnight, Andrew remained at the public-house, and John Horner was as constant to the bed, as the bed-post. The patient was quite won by the disinterested assiduity of the youth, who had been pronounced by the landlady as one of the most affectionate of sons, giving all he had to his father and mother. One night, as John sat by the sufferer, fanning what might be the flies from Andrew's face, lest they should disturb him in his sleep—not that John was certain that he slept---Mr. Thiselton observed---“John! how should you like to go to London, John?”

“Any where in the world, sir---for all over the world, sir, honest bread has the same taste.”

“Have you wound up my watch, John?”

“Yes, sir,”---and to give John his due, he had been particularly careful of the chronometer; he had, moreover, twenty times counted the jewels with which it was stopped; for the diamonds were to him stars in which he tried to read the character and destiny of the owner. Now, he thought nothing less than a lord could afford their brilliancy---now, if not a lord, a baronet at least.

“Humph! John,---how should you like a place?”

“Jewelled---in eight holes,”---said John, in a reverie, his thoughts driven back to the watch.

“What!” said Andrew Thiselton.

“Sir!” said John, startled, and again addressed himself to flap away the imaginary flies that might disturb the patient.

“That will do, John---I don't see any flies, myself.”

“No, sir---perhaps not, sir; but, saving your presence, sir, I do;” and again John flapped,---John feeling with people of higher station and higher sense, that it is sometimes necessary to feign the flies to hold the employment.

“Well, John, as the doctor says I may be removed next Monday, you shall go with me to London!”

Happy was the hour, when John, standing among the appalled

and wounded, selected Andrew Thiselton, the wearer of the chain, the brooch, and the rings! Gifted John! endowed by nature with that cool yet quick perception which at all times, and in all cases,---picks out the plums!

CHAPTER V.

Next to living in a square is to live in a street "out" of a square. The house of Andrew Thiselton was thus fortunately placed. The dinner was just over, as the master of the house, attended by John Horner, drove to the door. Andrew, however, had to meet a new inmate---a gentleman, henceforth to be garnered up as an especial friend of the family. Whilst Mr. Thiselton disputes with the hackney-coachman, we have time to sketch the characters of his interesting household.

Mrs. Thiselton had brought her husband ten thousand pounds, and thought any other attention in a wife a low-minded superfluity. She was not handsome: indeed, she was of that clay, which demands very thick gilding. Miss Whitney, her sister, was a middle-aged maid: she owned to six lustres, though it was shrewdly supposed by her bosom friends, that she did not acknowledge all her griefs. But, Miss Whitney---to use a phrase that ladies sometimes apply to their gowns, though rarely to each other---wore well: that is, she wore not at all. She was one of the few people, who look as if they had never been younger; and, consequently, would never look older: in short, Miss Margaret Whitney was a maid in Dresden china.

There were three children, the offspring of the mutual love, or mutual matrimony, of Mr. and Mrs. Thiselton; but as the pledges were in the nursery, they provoke, on our part, no further attention.

On the arrival of Mr. Thiselton, two gentlemen were with the family. The eldest was named Nehemiah Sackcloth---the youngest, Joseph Sackcloth: it will at once be presumed, they were brothers. But the following incident will illustrate the fraternal connexion in a most touching and instructive manner. Joseph had been called from the room, when Nehemiah---he was a square-built man, with a large head, buff complexion, big black eyes, a profusion of whisker, and glossy raven hair, clipped formally round the forehead---thus, in modulated voice, bespoke the sympathy of his hearers, Mrs. Thiselton, and Miss Margaret Whitney.

"Ha! ladies, you can hardly conceive the anguish *that* man"---he spoke of his absent brother---"that man causes me. Had I not been supported by the charity and resignation which peculiarly belong to my profession"---let us not omit to state that Nehemiah Sackcloth called himself reverend, he having an

independent congregation in a subscription chapel a few miles from town, where the influence of his character had had its marked effect on the sins and levity of his neighbours. Some idea may be received of the austere virtues, and eloquent persuasion of the reverend gentleman, when we state that Mr. Sackcloth had, among other benevolent triumphs, induced two dairy-men not to milk their cows of a Sunday! To proceed—"The charity and resignation which peculiarly belong to my profession, I should have sunk under the shameful—no, let me not say shameful—the imprudent conduct of Joseph."

"You never say so?" exclaimed Mrs. Thiselton, rather surprised, for Nehemiah had an hour before shaken Joseph by the hand, very warmly.

"I wish I didn't," said Nehemiah, ostentatiously strangling a groan.

"Can it be? Then why do you acknowledge him?" asked Miss Whitney.

"After all, madam, he is my brother: I have long struggled with myself, but—you have no conception of what he is capable."

"You alarm me, Mr. Sackcloth," said Mrs. Thiselton, with much composure.

"I think he'd compass any imprudence," said, or rather cried Nehemiah; for as he went on blackening his brother, he became greatly affected at the negro he was painting.

"Would he, indeed?" said Miss Whitney. "Well, I'm sure he looks—"

"Oh, madam, in this world of sin and outsides, who would trust to looks?" asked the reverend Nehemiah, and he stroked his hair.

"Very true, no one—no one," concluded Mrs. Thiselton. "But what—what may be his peculiar vice?"

"Dear lady, it is hard for a brother to speak thus; but he is a crafty man—a generally wicked man—a man of no principle. In fact"—and the voice of the speaker thickened with emotion,— "in fact, I should be very sorry to trust him with my spoons." And the reverend Nehemiah Sackcloth took out his pocket handkerchief, and wept. Almost at the same moment, Joseph entered and Nehemiah, doubtless urged by disgust of the sinner, making an excuse to see the children, quitted the apartment.

Joseph Sackcloth and the ladies sat for a space in silence. At length, Joseph folded his arms, moved his head backwards and forwards, and sighed very profoundly. "Ladies," said Joseph, "you saw *that* man? Ha! I blush to call him—my brother."

"Mr. Sackcloth!" exclaimed the ladies together.

“ Yes,—I blush, ladies---blush. You little know what he can do.”

“ I thought you were the best friends when you met ?” said Mrs. Thiselton.

“ Would it have been right, madam, to quarrel in your house ? Friends ! Oh, Miss Whitney, you don’t know what he is.”

“ What ?” asked Miss Whitney ; and “ what ?” questioned Mrs. Thiselton.

“ He is an artful man, madam—a very designing, artful man ; I may say a dishonest man. He is my brother, but”—and Joseph took out his pocket-handkerchief for the climax,—“ but he’s a thief !”

“ A thief !” cried the ladies.

“ Yes, a thief,” repeated Joseph ; “ for now I recollect, he once did steal a fiddle.”

A loud knock at the door announced the arrival of Mr. Thiselton, and at the same time abridged the fraternal sorrows of Joseph. Mr. Thiselton hurried into the room to embrace his wife, who, though she always dwelt in the cold proprieties of affection, was on the present occasion, as Andrew thought, more than usually chilly.

“ Why, my dear—well—I thought after my terrible accident,—nearly lost my leg—rather lame now—I did think you’d have been glad to see me, after such an accident.”

“ Oh, Mr. Thiselton, we have thought of it !”—

“ And where—and how are the children ?”

“ And they, too, have thought of it : Mr. Sackcloth has written them such a beautiful thanksgiving for the chastening mercy that has fallen upon you, to win you from the vanities of life.”

“ What ! thanks for my broken leg ?” asked the father.

“ Don’t speak in that light way, Mr. Thiselton. A broken leg, in your case, is a mercy, as Mr. Sackcloth—”

“ And who is Mr. Sackcloth ?” said Mr. Thiselton ; and as he put the question, Mr. Nehemiah entered the room, and with his linked hands lying on his bosom, his eyes upon the carpet, and his mouth fixed with a smile, he moved gently towards the former master of the house. Mr. Joseph Sackcloth at the like time advanced to Mr. Thiselton, who stood perplexed between both the brothers, when the three children walked into the apartment. The father started at the altered manner of his little ones, who were wont to frolic like kids. “ Billy---Emma---Robert,” cried the parent, and held out his arms ; but Billy, Emma, and Robert, glancing at Mr. Nehemiah Sackcloth, the little puppets, pulled by strings, fell by one accord upon their knees, and putting up their innocent hands, began aloud and together to repeat the “ beautiful thanksgiving” composed by the Reverend Nehe-

miah Sackcloth, for the broken leg vouchsafed their father, as the means of winning his heart from all carnal delights.* Poor Andrew Thiselton! he was not, as we have prefaced, of the softest nature; but in this instance, he stared for a moment, like one possessed, at the thanksgiving group, and stumbling into a chair, sobbed and wept. Mrs. Thiselton smiled grimly at the emotion of her husband, and approaching him, said she was happy to perceive that the truth had at last found him out! Mr. Nehemiah Sackcloth raised his eyes to the ceiling, and moved his lips with inward prayer; but whether for the soul of Andrew Thiselton, or in penance for a stolen fiddle, we cannot determine. Miss Whitney, like the Mother Teresa, was in an ecstasy, looking at Andrew—and Joseph, with busy, tender thoughts, contemplated Miss Whitney. At this solemn and affecting moment, John Horner somewhat clumsily entered the room. He was instantaneously transfixed by the eyes of Mrs. Thiselton. John stood fascinated by the glance; he felt that he had broken into a sanctuary. Now, a less judicious youth would have instantly withdrawn, with a damaged character for decency; but John Horner was resolved to stay, and amend his error. Thus, gently closing the door behind him, he sank upon his knees, and held up his hands, in admirable imitation of the little children.

The solemnity over, Mrs. Thiselton, looking at John Horner, asked her husband, "Who is this?"

"A youth whom I found of some use to me in my late trial; I have brought him up to take him into my service," said Andrew.

"I hope you know who he is, Mr. Thiselton. I trust he is decent and respectable; because, you know, Fanny must sleep with him," said Mrs. Thiselton, and John Horner stared.

"I don't intend that he should be here, but, I think, I have a corner for him at the office," replied Mr. Thiselton.

(It may be necessary to state that Edward the footman had been discharged in consequence of his non-attendance at a sermon preached by Nehemiah Sackcloth, and that it was the duty of the footman of the house to sleep with Fanny, the silky-haired spaniel of Mrs. Thiselton.)

"He seems a youth of considerable piety," said Miss Whitney, as John Horner quitted the room.

"He didn't go upon his knees as if he were used to do so," said the uncharitable Joseph Sackcloth.

"Right, dear Joseph—I marked that," said Nehemiah.

"And now you mention it, there was an awkwardness in his manner that—I trust, Mr. Thiselton, you have not brought an atheist into the family?" asked his wife.

* The reader may possibly be shocked at this ghastly improbability. It is from life.

“A very excellent young man,” said Andrew. But why need you be so particular? Don’t I tell you that he’ll not be in the house, but at my office—that I want him for the ’Change?”

“Ha! Mr. Thiselton, there is no wonder that you have lost so much in stock of late! How can you hope to prosper on ’Change, whilst you employ clerks of such lax morality?”

“Yes, madam—but the irreligion of money-changers!” said Nehemiah Sackcloth, and sighed.

“Yes, sir—yes: with such people about him, it’s no matter of astonishment that Mr. Thiselton is so often an unprofitable ‘bear.’”

Mr. Nehemiah Sackcloth said nothing, but he sighed again, and left the room; Joseph and Miss Whitney followed him. Mrs. Thiselton sat opposite her husband; she evidently wished to prolong the subject of his sinfulness in the money-market, but the subject was too much for her. Hence, after a violent struggle of some minutes, she rose, and placing her handkerchief to her eyes, quitted the apartment.

Andrew Thiselton looked about him, stunned and bewildered; he had never been allowed to exercise pure despotism in his house, but he now found himself almost wholly stripped of his little prerogative: it was therefore with a trembling hand, and a feeling of suspense, that he rang the bell to inquire of the servant if he might be allowed any thing for dinner.

CHAPTER VI.

“What sort of a creature is Fanny?” asked John Horner of one of the maids.

“Such a beautiful creature!” was the answer, and so good-tempered.”

John paused at his meal, for he was dining in the kitchen. “I suppose, you hav’n’t too many beds in this house?” said John.

“Not too many,” said the maid. “You’ll have to take Fanny out every day in the Park.”

“I shan’t mind that at all—’specially if you say she’s so good-tempered,” answered John.

“She has only one bad habit; she will run into the water,” said the maid.

“Bless me!” said John.

“But that’s to be got over, if you walk with a string about her neck.”

“A string!” cried John.

“Here the pretty creature is! Fan, Fan,”—and the silky-haired spaniel gamboled into the kitchen, leaped upon the table, and with genuine hospitality, began to lick the face of the discomforted John. The next day, however, Horner learned the full intentions of Mr. Thiselton, who proposed, as John was no mean

arithmetician, to place him as something between a clerk and a light porter, in the office in the city. John had been installed about a fortnight, in which time he had given the liveliest satisfaction to his employer, who, albeit he said no word of encouragement, could not hide the feeling from the quick perception of the new-comer. John's fellow-clerks, however, despising his industry, which they called sycophancy, resolved to keep him down. "Horner," said one of the principal clerks, "run with this parcel to the Blue Boar."

"No," says Horner. "No?" asked the astonished clerk; and in a deeper tone, "No," replied John.

This may be called impudence in John; we rather think it good policy, and will illustrate the wisdom of Horner by a short story.

It happened that two gentlemen, whose high profession was the display of the passions, or as they themselves would have said, "the holding the mirror up to nature," &c. &c., met in a parlour to arrange the business of the coming season. A compliment was paid to Mr. Tobin, by the selection of *The Honey-moon* as the first drama of the session. The gentleman who seemed to be the "better wisdom" of the two, ran through the list of characters, coupling them with their several representatives. At length the manager came to *Lopez*, a part of minor dignity. "Let me see," said the manager—"oh, yes, Mizzlehurst will play *Lopez*."—"Never, never; depend upon't you'll never induce him to do that. *Lopez!* he'll never do it," vouched the second gentleman. "Yes, yes," said the manager; "I'll arrange it—I'll talk him into it," and Mizzlehurst was written down for *Lopez*. The manager next proceeded to allot the characters in the farce; all of which he settled to his satisfaction, except the *Servant*, a part of three lines. "Of course," cried the manager, discovering at last his man, "Mizzlehurst will play the *Servant*."—"Hang it! he play the servant!—*Lopez*, though that is something below him, perhaps he may do; but the *Servant!*—why, it's only three lines," said the gentleman. "Very true," replied the manager, "very true; but don't you see, my dear fellow, if I can only persuade Mizzlehurst to go a little down, to play *Lopez*, I can *make* him play the *Servant*." Now, John Horner was one of those men, who, once well-placed, owe their future success to never consenting to "play *Lopez*."

It may be remembered that John did not arrive in London in the proper predicament of genius: no, he had some fifteen guineas in his possession, which, he solemnly promised himself, should increase and multiply, no matter how. This resolution he carried into the office of Mr. Thiselton, where he speedily acquired—if it be an acquisition,—for our part, we think it an inborn faculty—the best knowledge for the improvement of his

capital. He, of course, began with the humility of small funds, but time and success gave him confidence in his talent and his money. By degrees, Andrew Thiselton—whether from the caprice of growing years, or whether, as his wife would have insinuated, from natural stubbornness of heart, we will not say—but certainly, by degrees, Andrew became less kind to John, his now third clerk. To be sure, Andrew—possibly in consequence of the wickedness charged upon him by his wife, was less successful than heretofore in his speculations: and he remembered that he hardly ever returned to the office, fevered, flustered by a loss, that he did not see John Horner in the best possible humour, all smiles and self-satisfaction.

“Humph! Mr. Horner—well I—zounds!” Such were the incoherent words of the stockbroker, as he returned from ‘Change to his office one winter’s evening.

“It is very cold, sir,” said Horner, poking the fire; “and I’m afraid, sir, the frost affects your leg.” It was very strange, but Horner never lost an opportunity of alluding to that accident, for the which Mr. Nehemiah Sackcloth had written such a beautiful thanksgiving.

“My leg! humph—yes—ha! if things go on in this manner, I shall want legs, for there will be no standing such luck. Sold again, when I should have bought. Why, Mr. Horner—yes, sir, I can’t help saying it—you always seem mightily pleased when I lose.”

“I, sir? Oh, sir!” said John, and again he poked the fire. The truth is, John really deserved great praise for his modesty. Had he owned his satisfaction, he must have confessed that though his master had lost by selling, his clerk, with superior sagacity, had gained by buying. This, however, John cared not to publish, trusting to chance to conceal or reveal the matter to Andrew Thiselton.

“I am sorry, sir—very sorry, if you think me no longer worthy of your esteem.” Such was the speech of John Horner to his master, on the following morning. “And therefore, sir, with many thanks, I hope I may be allowed to leave you.”

“Very well,” said Andrew Thiselton.

“Thank you, sir,” said his disappointed clerk, and he could have severed his tongue that gave the warning; for John only wished to show his spirit and not his heels to his master.

For some months, John seemed to be out of employment;—we say seemed, for, though he had no apparent occupation, his brain was continually working. Massaniello protested, on his elevation, that his head became full of boiling lead: the head of John Horner worked with boiling gold. It was July, and John Horner, now some five-and-twenty years old, lay on the beach, looking at the sea, and thinking of his wealth to come. Yes,

John had slipped from London to make holiday with nature ; he had travelled to the shores of Kent, to soothe and purify his spirit from the moil and smoke of city life. And as he lay upon the beach, love—yes, love—wanton on the strand. But very different was the Cupid of John Horner to the Cupid of the poets. John's little god had neither bow nor arrows ; but in either chubby hand he bore a bag, and chinking metal kept time to his dancing. John's Cupid pointed to no rose-decked bower—no green and odorous nook, with ringdoves cooing among the boughs, but to a most substantial freehold of fine red brick, with gardens, orchard, fish-ponds, arable land, outhouses, and all that makes this vale of tears inhabitable. At the time whereof we write, this "desirable residence" was the property of a virgin lady named Ruth Thompson, who, in the disposal of some portion of her wealth, had employed Mr. Thiselton, and thus afforded a fine exercise to the native perseverance of John Horner. Briefly, John knew the amount of Ruth's property to the last shilling. Now, by a strange accident which sometimes favours the adoring, Miss Thompson happened to be at Ramsgate at the very time John lay upon the beach. In those days, Ramsgate was a more sequestered spot than in these stirring times—it was then a retreat, and not a rendezvous. For two hours did John look upon the sea, and then he got upon his legs as a man determined. John walked onward, and at length paused at a neat lodging-house ; he coughed for resolution, and then knocked. In few words, he was ushered into the presence of Miss Thompson, who, with her bosom friend, Miss Whitney—for Joseph Sackcloth, to his great repugnance, had been compelled by his creditors to leave that blossom still unplucked—was engaged, like Penelope, at work. There sat the two maids, and had John been poetical, they must have suggested to his mind the

" ——— knot of cowslips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand."

Miss Whitney had a particular friendship for Miss Thompson, although she was even much plainer than herself ; indeed, her regard was so great that she never liked to stir abroad without Ruth.

" Well, Mr. Horner—sit down, pray—so, how does that reprobate brother of mine get on ?" asked Miss Whitney.

" You are aware, madam, that I have no further business with Mr. Thiselton, except my good wishes," said Horner.

" Yes, yes ; I know. Well, I only pray, for the sake of those who trust him, that his heart may be turned," and Miss Whitney proceeded stitching.

" My dear, you know he's my broker," said Miss Thompson. " I hope there is nothing suspicious---nothing--- "

“ My dear Ruth, how can any man hope to prosper, who has his dinner cooked on a Sunday ?” asked Miss Whitney.

“ But you always dine with him on the Sabbath ?” said Ruth, a little unconsciously.

“ Where’s the green silk ?” asked Miss Whitney.

“ Here it is,” said John Horner, picking it from the floor, and gracefully extending it to Miss Whitney, who smiled more than ordinarily. As the maidens sat, like *Helena* and *Hermia*,

“ — with their neelds creating both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,”

John Horner paused, and a feeling very like that which is said to possess the breast of a certain domestic creature of the feline race, happily placed in a warehouse of delicate viands, shot into the breast of our hero. Simply, for the moment, John knew not which to choose. A slight incident—of what cobwebs are love’s strong fetters made!—decided him.

“ Can you thread a needle, Mr. Horner ?” asked Miss Thompson, with an expression of arch ugliness. John smiled at the waggish question, and, with a roguish air, advanced to try the novel experiment. Miss Whitney looked a little surprised as John took the small instrument from the fingers of Miss Thompson, and essayed to thread.

“ Captain White,” said the servant, and just as the captain entered the room, John Horner accomplished his delicate task, and bowing, returned the needle to Miss Thompson.

Captain White was a man of about five feet two, with the symmetry of a mile-stone. He rolled one eye at John, for the military discipline he had laid upon himself, together with a bale of cravat, prevented his turning his neck. The captain had three recommendations to the heart of Miss Thompson: he was a tanner of extensive practice—he held a post in the Middlesex militia—and he was the best whist-player, as she, with woman’s fondness, said, in all the world. This, his last accomplishment, Miss Thompson had kept from Miss Whitney, who abhorred cards—an aversion which Ruth publicly manifested, though in her heart she loved a little loo.

Captain White condescended to raise himself upon his toes, and inflating himself with an airiness of manner, he approached the ladies, and laid his broad hand upon their embroidered work. “ Beautiful—very beautiful—what is it?—who is it for ?”

“ A favourite of mine,” said Miss Thompson.

“ Indeed !” said the captain, and he showed the ruins of his teeth. “ And what may it be ?”

“ You will see in good time,” said Miss Whitney.

“ Why, they’re laurel leaves, you’re working, eh ?” Asked the captain, his military habits assisting him in the discovery.

"To be sure," replied Miss Thompson, and she laughed.

"And for a favourite, eh?" And the captain threw his hands behind him, drew himself up, and blew out his face into a smile. "A favourite?"

"You'll see how well it will look," said Miss Whitney.

"Can it look otherwise from such fingers?" asked the gallant captain. "But, ladies, are you for a walk?"

The ladies answered in the affirmative, by immediately rising, and having slightly curtsied to John Horner, retiring into the adjoining apartment. John Horner, somewhat abashed, was about to quit the room; he had reached the door, when the captain, with a voice of authority and a look of defiance, said—"Don't do that again, sir."

"Do what, sir?" asked John, very mildly.

"I found you threading Miss Thompson's needle. That's a liberty, sir," and the captain grew broader.

"A liberty!" said John.

"Blood, sir---blood has been shed for a smaller freedom."

"I see no freedom---I"---

"Perhaps not, sir; you may have no sense of refined honour—but when I tell you, sir, that Miss Thompson will very speedily become Mrs. Captain White, I think you will feel it prudent not to repeat the insult."

"Mrs. Captain---"

"Yes, sir: I think there can be little doubt of a lady's choice of a gentleman, when she is discovered embroidering his waistcoat."

John thought so too; and Miss Thompson's freehold dissolved in mist before him. John made no answer, but descended the stairs, the captain calling from above---"Don't do that again, sir."

John's melancholy was evanescent, for above his ruined hopes of Miss Thompson, there glowed the smiling face of Miss Whitney. Again and again John brought to his mind's eye the gracious looks of the gentle sempstress; hence, he remained some days at Ramsgate, dogging Miss Whitney in her walks, and, indeed, proceeding very far into the fortress of her heart. She at first thought of the disparity of their relative situations, but then what she had in money, John wanted in years. As John advanced in the affections of Miss Whitney, the captain became less ferocious. Days passed on, the embroidery proceeded, and the captain---like a new butterfly---exulted in the thoughts of his waistcoat, when the vanity, or the hopes, of the lover received a rebuke which, well-considered, has its moral.

The two pair of lovers strolled on the beach,---and the sun was sinking in the western wave---and "the gentleness of heaven was on the sea"—and the ocean murmured as with sea-

nymph melodies,—and all things brought sweet tranquillity to the heart of man, when the captain thought of his waistcoat. He was about to touch upon the interesting subject, when Miss Thompson, having turned her head, observed—“There, captain, there’s my favourite—I told you how well he’d look in it.” Captain White turned and saw—

Yet a word. People are never so humane as when they visit the sea-side. The town of Ramsgate had long been shamed by the cruelty of its indigenious ass-drivers. At last, a man of a benevolent mind, brought new asses to the town; they bore in their sleek coats, and happy countenances, irresistible evidence of the soft-heartedness of their master. This was not lost upon the gentle bosoms of the visiters; and several ladies instantly resolved to shame the cruel into mercy, by affixing a distinguishing mark of their approbation of the man on the man’s beasts. Thus, when Captain White turned his head, he saw the embroidery, which he fondly hoped would grace his waistcoat, decking the saddle-cloth of an eater of thistles! He had dreamt that Miss Thompson worked for him—for him, who would have prized the gift more than the heart it covered! Alas, she had cast away her thoughts---her hours---her best accomplishments, on an insensible---an unregarding ass! That woman---pretty woman---should ever so mistake!

Captain White bit his lip and frowned at his dumb rival with more than mortal hatred. Poor wretch! he was rather the object of pity than of hate. The embroidered saddle-cloth brought him a constant burden; and while other asses, with empty saddles, cropt their meal in quiet, the ass with the finery was selected from his brethren by all riders. Never did the benevolence of a master cause so many burdens to be laid upon his beast!

However, the captain was somewhat soothed for his loss of the waistcoat by the yielding sweetness of Miss Thompson, who on the same evening, fixed the happy day. Miss Whitney---merely to keep her friend company---consented to make one in the ceremony with Mr. Horner. The solemnity, it was agreed, should be gone through as privately as possible. The day arrived and Miss Thompson became Mrs. Captain White. An accident---an unlooked for calamity, deferred the union of John Horner and Miss Whitney; for only the previous evening, he received intelligence of the mortal sickness of his mother, who wished to bless him ere she died, and---what could a son do?---with heart-strings torn to pieces, he quitted Ramsgate for Hampshire---left a bridal couch for the death-bed of his parent. Poor Miss Whitney! she was especially unfortunate; for, by a luckless coincidence, the day before the departure of John---her beloved John---Mr. Thiselton, involved in a rash speculation---

we know not whether roast mutton on Sundays had called down the evil---lost not only all his own fortune, but all his sister's. A poor forty pounds a year was all that was gathered from the ruin. A wooden memorial in a church-yard in Wales informs posterity that Margaret Whitney died a virgin at the ripe age of eighty-four!

CHAPTER VII.

John Horner quietly, but surely, continued to pick out the plums of life, and at thirty-eight, he was a most respectable man—a householder—and a person of some consideration in the vestry. To fill up his leisure hours, he had accepted an office under the crown. Indeed, he held one of the most important offices of government---we may say, the most important. He was the collector of taxes due to his majesty for the proper support and dignity of the state. John Horner felt the weight, the delicacy of his place---and was wont to talk to the procrastinating parishioners about the “solemn compact” between the tax-payer and the crown. The last man to be cheated, he would say, is the king: we think so too. There was, John would insist, a moral duty implied in the payment of a rate: constructive treason in the vain attempt to avoid it. “Soldiers and sailors bleed,” John would observe, “what remains for us but to pay?” These stern ideas of public duty, John had still further strengthened by a perusal of an abridgment of the Roman history. He was also particularly learned in his knowledge of the value of Roman money; and would at times astonish the ignorant with the words *sestertius*, *denarius*. It was moreover alleged against him---but we think the accusation was the fruit of his envy---that he had written a tragedy on the Jugurthian war; a tragedy, it was averred by John, very similar to Mr. Addison's *Cato*, inasmuch as it contained precisely the same number of lines. John, having assured himself an independence, could now afford to dally with the graces of life: it was not that he had a violent passion for them, but they implied a gentility in their admirer, and nothing was more easy than to admire.

John remained a bachelor; he sometimes thought of Miss Margaret Whitney---the poor human vegetable in Wales---and then he thought, how shocking it was that she had lost her money. Indeed, in his moments of confidence, John would tell his married acquaintance that they little knew what it was to be disappointed in love: for John, as he grew older and richer, did not dislike the interesting reputation, falling to a man of blighted nopes in the way of the fair sex. As John approached forty, he began to learn the meaning of the word sentiment; and made very frequent use of the discovery. Hence, John---in his

middle age---was a favourite with widows and elderly spinsters; who allowed him to have a taste,---and, indeed, to exercise it in many little commissions. Yes, John became the pet of a tea-table; and the merits of no new play were decided upon until Mr. Horner had given judgment. The Sunday's sermon was as rigidly criticised by John, as have been the books of Ariosto. Not, be it understood, that he suffered such matters to interfere with the graver concerns of life. No---John knew what was due to society, and to the most important person in it---himself.

And thus John proceeded in his earthly pilgrimage. If the reader feel any disappointment at the absence of stirring and exciting events in the life of John Horner, we must remind him that they do not belong to the Horner species; we have written the quiet, subtle, plodding life of a picker of plums; and do not profess to give the history of a military hero. Our biography is that of the mole, and not of the lion: of the mouse who bites the net---not of the beast that roars and struggles in it.

We have endeavoured to show the reader how John Horner obtained a taste for the refinements of life. He liked books, pictures, music,—as some people like olives, for the gentility of the thing. He would have fallen into admiration with a work of Corregio's, the instant he could afford to buy it: however, having bought the veriest daub, he would protest it to be worth all the world beside, simply because it was his. John Horner would enter a pig-stye; and he being there, and calling it his own, the pig-stye would become a Grecian temple. Though he picked bad currants, they became raisins of the sun.

John, in the course of his profession, arrived at a pretty correct knowledge of the fortunes of the people in his district. There were three widows, of almost equal property, and John was puzzled. Unhappily, polygamy was not allowed by the English law, and whatever John's benevolent intentions might be, the institutions of his country restricted him to one wife at a time.

It was an evening in cold November, and John's old house-keeper had had strict orders to put every thing in the nicest condition. There was evidently something in the mind of the master of the dwelling; for though he tried to sit in an easy, careless attitude, he would every now and then rise and go to the windows, and look out on the black night; then return, and poke the fire, and then sit down, and run his fingers over the keys of a spinnet, albeit he knew no more of music than the cat upon the rug. The table was covered with books of light poetry, some pictures, and a few pieces of china, besides two silver snuff-boxes presented to Mr. Horner as testimonies of his rectitude as the secretary of a benefit society, and his conduct as a vestryman, every one of the body having similarly compli-

mented themselves. Horner was dressed in a very rich morning gown, and his hair was not half-an-hour from the hands of the barber. What could Mr. Horner be after? thought the house-keeper.

A hackney-coach drove to the door,—and, in an instant, the knocker loudly summoned Mr. Horner's man.

“Is the tax-gatherer at home?” asked a lady in an angry and impatient voice.

“Will you step into his office, ma'am?” said Luke. The lady complied with the request, and Mr. Horner, being summoned by his man, crossed the passage, and entered his office.

“Well, sir!”—exclaimed the lady, as her eye caught the coming tax-gatherer.

“Bless me!” cried Horner, in the liveliest astonishment. “What,—Mrs. White!”

“Yes, sir, Mrs. White! And I am come to ask the reason of this impertinence.”—

“Impertinence!” said Horner, very innocently---“My dear Mrs. White,”---

“Don't dear me, sir---dear, forsooth! Had the captain been still alive, he'd have shaken you out of your shoes.”

“Really, madam---I---if I have offended---what is the matter?” asked Horner.

“The matter! Ask your man, if he is your man,” said Mrs. White, with the most ingenuous contempt.

“Luke---what is the meaning of this?” and Horner turned fiercely round upon his servant.

“I don't know, sir,” replied Luke.

“Don't know!” exclaimed the widow White --- “pray, fellow, what message did you leave at my house this morning?”

“I left only what my master told me,” said Luke.

“What I told you!” asked Horner, wonderingly.

“Yes, about the taxes. I left word that if Mrs. White didn't send the money for his majesty,” Luke had caught the magnificent style of his master, when touching on taxes, “this evening, that you'd distrain.”

“Yes, told my footman that you'd put a man in,” said the widow.

“You did?” asked, or rather shouted John Horner.

“Yes, sir; and when I told him so, the footman laughed and asked if you couldn't make it a woman,” and Luke grinned.

“And is it thus, sir, that you insult wealthy and loyal parishioners---ladies, who know what is due to the crown?”---said Horner.

“I only told 'em what you told me to say,”---urged Luke in defence.

“*I!* But this is the second time---leave my house, sir---this

instant—be gone—I won't hear a word—that a lady like Mrs. White—a lady whose character for all that is just, punctual, and benevolent—take your box, fellow, and be gone.” Vain was it for Luke to attempt a reply; sentence of discharge was pronounced, and Horner was inexorable. Mrs. White, though not naturally severe, smiled commendation on the energy of Mr. Horner.

“ I believe, madam, there is a family a few doors from you of the name of Knight---shocking people---I only hope they ar'n't Jacobins; but they take no pleasure in paying taxes, and it was to them I sent the message, which”---

“ I felt there must be some mistake, and after a minute's thought, I was resolved to come and have it cleared up myself,” said Mrs. White.

“ Though I regret the incivility of my man, if you will pardon my saying it, I can hardly be sorry for any cause that brings Mrs. White to my humble roof. But the office is cold---will you step into”---

“ Not at all—there, sir,” and Mrs. White laid down, as Horner would have said, the money for the monarch, and asked for a receipt.

“ Bless me! It is some years, Mrs. White, since you and I met,” said Horner, “ and yet, to look in your face, Mrs. White, it doesn't seem as many weeks. Really, the office is cold.”

“ It is a little cold,” said Mrs. White, and immediately followed Horner into his parlour. The widow had no sooner entered the circle of the enchanter than she seemed to feel his influence. There was a propriety—a comfort—a taste in the apartment so rare to be met with in the abodes of bachelors.

“ Well, it's very odd,” said Mrs. White, “ but only on Tuesday, I had a dream about poor dear Miss Whitney.”

“ Hem!” said John, “ it was a pity she was of so melancholy a temper. For my part, I had an esteem”—

“ Oh, Mr. Horner, it's a good thing her heart didn't break, or her ghost would certainly have haunted you,” said Mrs. White smilingly.

Horner smiled too; then said—“ The truth is, Mrs. White, our hearts were not, I found, made to pair; she—she hadn't taste.”

“ Dear me, how it pours!—I hope the coach”—

“ The coachman—oh—he would'nt stay”—Horner had, by means of his housekeeper, discharged him,---“ but Deborah can soon get another.”

“ Well, then, if you will write the receipt, Mr. Horner.”

“ To be sure, my dear Mrs. White—the pen and ink are only in the other room. Why---now, that's very odd; how very strange!”

“What, Mr. Horner?”

“Very strange, that the song,—‘*My lodging is on the cold ground*,’—that song which I heard you sing so beautifully at Ramsgate, should be lying uppermost of the heap. That song you used to sing to the captain.”

“I recollect---ha! how time flies!---how soon, Mr. Horner, one’s singing days go over!”

“The true nightingale, Mrs. White,” and John moved his chair towards her, and repeated the words, “the true nightingale never gets old.”

Mrs. White, with the modest perception of a woman, changed the subject. “You have a nice, comfortable house, here, Mr. Horner?”

“Cold—dull—and miserable,” sighed Horner. “I sometimes wish I had been a papist.”

“Lord!” exclaimed the lady, in considerable alarm. “What for?”

“That I might have sold off all I had, and turned monk. It is a woman, madam, who gives life and warmth to a house.”

“My receipt, Mr. Horner,” said the widow languidly.

“Who gives the last grace—the last comfort—whose taste—well, I declare, now, if that isn’t odd,” and Horner smiled benignantly at Tib, the cat, who at that moment leapt from the rug into the lap of the widow. “Would you believe it, Mrs. White, Tib never did that to a stranger before.” Mrs. White smiled, and patted Tib. “Never to anybody before. Well, sir,” and Horner chucklingly addressed the cat—“you seem quite at home; I’m sure, if you were his mistress, he couldn’t be more at his ease. But, perhaps, he troubles you,” and Horner stretched forth his arms to remove the intruder.

“Let him be,” said Mrs. White, and again she patted Tib, who renewed a recognition of the patronage.

“Yes, madam, I was saying”—

“The partridge is done,” said Deborah, unceremoniously opening the door, whereupon Mr. Horner started to his feet, and Mrs. White, with a slight blush shook the cat from her lap.

“Bring it up,” said Horner.

“The receipt, Mr. Horner—I really had no notion it was so late—I”—

“You must stay, and take a bit of partridge,” said John, and a sudden gust of wind, and a splash of rain at the window in good time seconded his eloquence.

“They’ll think I’m lost,” said Mrs. White, and she untied her bonnet.

The partridge was served. “I declare, I’m robbing you of your supper, Mr. Horner,” said the widow.

“I don’t know how it is, but I have not the slightest appetite

—you must have the breast—I could'nt eat a bird of paradise.”

“But when it's plain the bird was cooked for yourself,” said the unconscious Mrs. White—“now you shall eat a bit.”

“It must be a leg, then,” and John helped himself to the scanty limb, and continued to cut atoms of flesh from the bone, chewing and looking with fixed eyes upon the widow.

“Past ten o'clock,” cried the watchman without, and Mrs. White sprang from her seat, declaring she hadn't thought it eight, and insisted upon a coach. Deborah was dispatched for a vehicle, and John Horner, sighing, very profoundly assisted the lady into it. The door was closed, and the horses about to start, when John exclaimed—“Dear me! you have forgotten the receipt.”

“And so I have,” said Mrs. White,---and then in the softest tone, “would it be too much trouble, Mr. Horner, for you to drop in with it to-morrow?” The coachman, anticipating Horner's consent, drove off.

Mr. Horner, as a middle-aged man, was a man of gallantry. He therefore failed not the next day to call on Mrs. White with her receipt in full: he called again and again, until more than one neighbour remarked, that the state ought to be much beholden to Mrs. White, for surely she paid more to the king than half the parish put together. Ere another quarter's taxes were due, Mrs. White was Mrs. Horner!

John retired with his wife to an old and spacious country seat. The late Captain White had been very prosperous as a tanner; two or three distant relations had, moreover, died on purpose as it seemed to leave him their money; hence, John Horner, with the plums he had picked himself, and the fruit he obtained with the relict of the captain, achieved that enviable distinction, so ardently yearned for by the many---he died rich. A hymn was composed for his funeral---and a marble monument covered his remains. He died---says his epitaph---full of hope; to the which history may add---and full of plums.

THE TEMPTER,
A TALE OF JERUSALEM.

BY T. S. COYNE.

It was fast approaching the eleventh hour; the busy hum of the Holy City had sunk into comparative stillness, and, save some straggling wayfarers, and field labourers returning from their daily toil, few passengers were to be seen in the streets of Jerusalem. One middle-aged man alone kept his seat in the Water Gate, looking with placid smile along the rugged road which led down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: a silver gerah was held between his fingers, as in the act of giving an alms; but for some minutes no object appeared on whom it might properly be bestowed. He rose from his seat, and gathering his flowing robe around him, was preparing to depart, when the figure of an aged man tottering slowly up the steep, arrested his attention. The old man was meanly clad; and, as he leant feebly on his staff, to take breath after his toilsome ascent, his glance rested upon the person of the sage Rabbi Abimelech, for it was he who sat in the gate distributing his daily alms to the poor, the hungry, and the wayfarer.

“The Lord direct thy goings out and thy comings in,” said the Rabbi, with a self-satisfied smile, dropping the coin into the extended palm of the stranger. “Lo! I have tarried from the ninth hour, until the towers and pinnacles of the Temple have thrown their dark shadows, across the brook of Cedron, even unto the base of the Mount of Olives, to bestow this last gerah of forty in an alms, according to a vow which I made last Pentecost, and behold thou art here to receive it.”

“Precious is the gift which cometh from the heart, more precious than the Arabian frankincense, and sweeter than the rich honey of Hebron. If I might know my lord’s name, my heart would not forget it when I lift up my voice in prayer to the Ruler of Israel,” said the stranger respectfully.

“I am called the Rabbi Abimelech.”

“He whom men term ‘*the sinless?*’—whose voice is as the neighing of a war-horse in the Temple—whose works are the works of righteousness—who clothes the naked, feeds the hun-

gry, and gives alms of the tenth part of his substance?"—asked the stranger.

"The same," answered the self-glorified Rabbi; "and now, let me pray of thee, thy name, and in what city thou art a dweller?"

"Alas!" answered the stranger, I am as a reproach to my kindred, and my name is a defilement to the lips of an Israelite."

"Unfortunate man! in what hast thou offended against the law?"

"In this thing have I offended. Behold, I went forth at the last vintage season into the vineyards, and the vintagers were pressing the grapes in the wine-presses; and the red wine ran into the vats, even the red wine of Lebanon—and, being weary with the toil and heat of the day, I was tempted, and in foolishness I did drink of the wine, which should have been an abomination unto me, seeing that I am a Nazarite from my youth."

The scrupulous Rabbi shrank from the degraded Israelite as from a tainted leper, and elevating his brow, said with a sanctimonious air, "The way of the wise man is pleasant, but the feet of the fool treadeth in the mire."

"Stop," said the stranger, as the Rabbi was departing. "Is it not also said that 'the vain-glorious man shall fall in the snares of his own proud heart?' Rabbi Abimelech, thy life has been righteous, but fire hath not yet tried, nor water purified thee. *See that thou stand fast when the time cometh.*"

At these words the stranger, with more alertness than his seeming feebleness indicated, turned into an obscure street, while Abimelech, pondering on the warning of the strange man, took his way towards his own dwelling. On reaching his house, Abimelech retired to his own chamber. It was a small closet or oratory on the house-top, furnished in a style of simplicity approaching to rudeness, and its cold cheerless appearance was increased by the dim twilight. There was still, however, sufficient light for Abimelech to distinguish a female figure standing in a thoughtful attitude in the centre of the apartment. A rich, mellow ray fell upon her shape, which exceeded in height the usual standard of her sex, but was so exquisitely proportioned as to convey only an idea of graceful dignity to the beholder. Her eye, as she turned it upon Abimelech, seemed dark and lustrous, and her smile was as a sunbeam upon the bosom of the still waters. The Rabbi stood motionless, for he never before had beheld so much beauty; a new pulse stirred in his bosom, and an unusual fire burned in his veins. At length he found words to express his admiration and astonishment. "Fair damsel," cried he, "thy visit is unforeseen; but thou art more welcome to my chamber than the pleasant odour of the young vines in the spring season."

"I am," said the abashed intruder, while a roseate blush over-

spread the marble whiteness of her soft cheek and lofty brow, "I am, as you may perceive, a stranger and a Gentile, unworthy to come beneath the roof of the far-famed Rabbi Abimelech, the words of whose lips are wisdom, and whose precepts are as pearls of great price. Nevertheless, let thy handmaiden find favour in thy sight, and turn aside, I pray thee, unto my lodgings, which are nigh at hand, and let thy handmaiden rejoice in the light of thy countenance, and in the sweet sound of thy voice." The Rabbi, though surprised at this novel address, felt a strange sensation thrill through his frame. Gazing upon the lovely speaker, his resolution began to waver, and, almost unconsciously, he permitted himself to be led out by his unknown visiter. Proceeding at a rapid pace towards the western quarter of the city, they at length stopped before a house of handsome exterior, but which Abimelech could not remember ever having seen before. A single tap at the door caused it to open, and the Rabbi, still following his mysterious conductor, entered a hall, feebly lighted with a single lamp. Here she motioned him to remain for a short time, and disappearing through a passage, the Rabbi was left alone to meditate upon the strange adventure in which he was engaged. But he had little time allowed him for reflection, ere the heavy folds of a curtain, which overhung a small door, were partially withdrawn, and a fair hand and sweet soft voice invited him to enter. He approached, lifted up the curtain, and beheld a superbly furnished apartment, lit with silver lamps, fed with the perfumed oil of Samaria. Mirrors of polished metal hung around the room, while, on a low couch, sat, or rather reclined, the beautiful stranger, whose charms now shone with a splendour far surpassing any thing the Rabbi could imagine of mortal mould. He essayed to speak, but the words dwelt upon his lips. She beckoned him to take a seat beside her. He obeyed tremblingly; but the gentle, assuring smile which she cast upon him, at once banished his timidity, and he suffered his eyes to wander in unrestrained freedom over those voluptuous beauties till the sight became painful from extreme delight. A female attendant spread before them a light but luxurious repast of fresh and dried fruits, grapes, figs, apricots, olives, pomegranates, and dates, interspersed with pots of pure honey, rose cakes of Damascus, and bananas of Rosetta; with Egyptian syrup, and crystal vases, in which the rich wine of Helbon sparkled with tempting brilliancy.

"Fairest of the daughters of men, may I crave thy name, and that of thy father's house?" said the Rabbi, addressing his unknown companion. "My name is Zorah," replied the damsel. "My father is of the children of Ishmael, an abider in the desert; the fame of the sage Abimelech has reached unto the further borders of the wilderness, and behold, the heart of thy hand-

maiden was moved to see the man of whose wisdom all nations spake."—"Lovely Zorah!" exclaimed the enamoured sage, "my wisdom is become as withered grass before thy beauty, and the strength of my heart as dew in the consuming light of thine eyes. Suffer me, therefore, to be unto thee even as Boaz was unto Ruth, and to love thee with the love wherewith Jacob loved Rachel." Zorah smiled at the earnestness with which these words were uttered, and filling the cup, presented it to the delighted Rabbi, who instinctively shrank from the dangerous libation; but Zorah would not be denied.

"Urge me not, fair damsel," said he. "I have a vow against the juice of the vine until next new moon."

Zorah's countenance fell, and the big tear hung trembling on her dark eyes' silken lash. Abimelech, torn with conflicting passions, passed his arm around her waist, and drew her unresistingly to his bosom: he felt the quick pulses of her heart throb against his—her warm sighs were upon his cheek, and the perfumed wine-cup at his lips;—human strength could resist no longer,—he seized the cup with desperate hands, and at a single draught quaffed it to the bottom. *His vow was broken*, and having nothing farther to hope or fear, draught followed draught in quick succession, till his flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes bore evidence that he was no longer under the dominion of reason.

"Zorah, my beautiful Zorah!" cried he, "my love for thee is as the love which floods cannot quench, nor many waters drown. Thou art the light of mine eyes—I cannot part from thee; let us, therefore, flee unto thy father's tents, even unto the wilderness as unto a city of refuge."

"Ah! my lord, thy servant hath neither gold nor silver to bear the charge. Could we live like the raven or the stork of the desert?"

This objection had not struck Abimelech before; he was rich himself, but he could not immediately convert his possessions into money, and his passion was too violent to admit delay. He seemed perplexed and spake not, till Zorah enquired, in a careless manner, if his next-door neighbour was not the rich publican, Aaron Ben Rabiath.

"It is even so," replied the Rabbi, still musing.

"And he hath, I am told, coffers filled with shekels of pure silver?"

"It is said so."

"And shekels of gold, and pots of double Maccabees, and precious stones, pearls, and sardonyx, and carbuncles, more costly than the jewels of the high-priest's breast-plate?"

"Hah!" exclaimed Abimelech, as if a sudden ray of light had darted across his mind: "speak on."

“Aaron Ben Rabiath is stricken in years and liveth alone,—riches are to him as the dust of the earth,—there is a private way from thy house into his.”

“Stop, stop!” cried the agitated man, grasping the arm of the tempter convulsively. “What wouldst thou? Shall I peril my soul in this thing? Zorah! Zorah! Thy words are pleasant to my ears as the murmurs of falling waters in the desert, but the bitterness of Marah, even the bitterness of death, is in their taste:—nevertheless, in this also I will obey thee.”

“Go about it then, instantly,” said Zorah, rising; “thou knowest the private passage into the old miser’s chamber. Take this weapon—thou mayest need it,—and when thou hast secured the treasure return quickly hither, and all things shall be ready for our flight.”

Abimelech, whose scruples had by this time completely vanished, was no less eager than his impetuous mistress to accomplish the deed; he ran with incredible speed through the now silent streets, and quickly reached his own dwelling. Lighting a small lamp, he entered a private passage, which in times of danger had been contrived between the two houses, and in a few moments found himself in the strong chamber of Aaron Ben Rabiath.

Around him lay coffers filled with gold and silver coins, and caskets charged with precious stones, that trembled with varied but incessant lustre in the sickly beams of the lamp he bore. He had raised one jewel box to his eyes, to examine it more closely, when, slipping from his fingers, it fell to the floor with a loud crash, and the next moment the alarmed miser rushed into the apartment. Seeing a stranger, at such an hour, in the sanctuary of the god of his idolatry, he uttered a piercing scream, and throwing himself upon the robber, grappled him with almost supernatural strength. Vainly did Abimelech endeavour to escape from the old man’s grasp, or to still his screams: every moment increased his danger: he heard the steps of persons ascending the stairs: not an instant was to be lost; the dagger which Zorah had given him was in his girdle; he drew it, and plunged it into the heart of the old man. A piercing shriek rung through the chamber, and the unfortunate Aaron Ben Rabiath fell lifeless on the floor. Instead of providing for his safety, the guilty Rabbi stood petrified with horror over the quivering body of his victim, watching the life-stream welling from his side in a bubbling tide. When the persons attracted by the publican’s screams entered the room, he made no attempt to escape, but surrendered himself quietly into their hands. He was instantly hurried to prison, and, amidst the revilings of the crowd, was plunged into a dark noisome dungeon, to await the public ignominy of a trial on the following day, in the sight of



that people before whom he had set himself up as an example of righteousness. Dashing himself on the earth, he lay writhing in bitter agony, cursing the hour of his birth and the fatal madness which had led his steps from the paths of virtue; when suddenly a ray of light illuminated his prison—he looked up—it was Zorah. Her eyes' dark orbs still shone with undiminished lustre; but there was in the proud smile which curled her elevated lip an expression of demoniac triumph, which chilled the Rabbi's blood. Hiding his face in his robe, he exclaimed:

“False tempter, begone. I have done thy bidding---and lo! innocent blood is upon my hands. I am broken and trodden under foot like a defiled thing. The cup of my pride has been filled with gall. Depart, therefore, I pray thee, lest in the bitterness of my wrath I curse thee also.”

“Rabbi Abimelech, it is said, ‘the vain-glorious man shall fall in the snare of his own heart.’ *The time hath come, and thou could'st not stand fast.*”

“*Racca! art thou there?*” shouted Abimelech, as he recognised in the speaker the voice of the mendicant to whom he had given alms at the Water-gate on the previous evening. Burning with rage, he seized the prophet of evil by the throat; but the strength of the old man far exceeded his own, and he flung him to the earth with a violence that shook his frame. Starting up he beheld, not the old beggar of the Water-gate, nor the tempter Zorah. He was alone, not in the dungeon of a prison, but in his little chamber, with a yellow harvest-moon streaming through the lattice. Several minutes elapsed before he could convince himself that the horrors he had undergone were but the airy painting of a dream, and then, prostrating himself on the ground, he exclaimed, in the fullness of his heart, “It is a lesson from the Lord—I was proud of my own strength, and when the trial came I was delivered to the Evil One!”

From that day forth the Rabbi Abimelech walked in the paths of humility. He had experienced the dangers of self-confidence, and he learned to pity rather than condemn those who, like himself, had fallen in the struggle with *The Tempter*.

MONSIEUR ANTONY BOUGAINVILLE;
OR, THE PETITION.

BY ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

MONSIEUR ANTONY BOUGAINVILLE was born in the small village of Champfort, in the South of France, on the 4th day of February, in the year of our Lord 1786, at half-past three in the morning precisely. We like accuracy in such matters.

Monsieur Antony's parents were poor, exceedingly poor; but it is well for the world, and it was well for Monsieur Antony in particular, that poverty in the parents does not, by any means, preclude genius in the children. At least, it most certainly had no such effect in the case of Monsieur Antony; for he, as the sequel will show, was a man of extraordinary acquirements, and possessed of a singular versatility of talent.

The personal appearance of Monsieur Antony, too, was exceedingly prepossessing; that is, of course, after he grew up a bit. He was tall, well made, and (unlike the majority of his countrymen,) was, in short, what might be called a whacking fellow. He was gifted, moreover, with a capital front; that is, with a face capable of facing any thing—one of the most valuable qualities of which a man can be possessed, and which its traducers would in vain attempt to disparage by calling it impudence.

At an early age, Monsieur Bougainville felt the first impulses of that genius which subsequently made his fortune. These impulses, however he felt not, like ordinary geniuses, in his head, but in his heels. *There* he felt an itching, and an excess of vital energy, that kept constantly impelling him into the air, and as plainly indicated as any such hint could possibly do, that he was born to be a dancing-master.

Satisfied of this himself, Monsieur Bougainville, after undergoing in his own person a thorough course of instruction in the saltatory art, began teaching it to others. He opened a small school in his native village, but, truth compels us to admit the fact, without the success which his genius merited. The thing, in truth, from whatever cause, would not do. He could get only a very few pupils; and of these very few, very few ever paid him any thing; and, in reference to this subject, often did poor Monsieur Antony wish that there had been a law to enable

dancing-masters to tie the feet of those scholars who had not paid their instructors, and thus prevent them ever making use of the art they had so dishonestly obtained.

As it was, however, Monsieur Bougainville was often both mortified and perplexed to see groups of young men and women assemble on the green at the back of the village of an evening, dancing away, it might be said, at his cost; for he had taught them, and yet not a single pirouette, not a shuffle, not a shake had ever been paid for. They all, in fact, belonged to him. They were his property, of which these persons had fraudulently possessed themselves—and Monsieur Bougainville felt it to be so.

We have said that Monsieur Bougainville's success as a teacher of dancing in his native village was but very indifferent. It was so; and Monsieur Bougainville himself diluted the fact in many little circumstances, but most especially in the meagreness of his diet, to which he still felt himself confined.

To be sure, it was fine, light living for a dancing-master, and therefore so far appropriate; but then it was a leetle too light, being chiefly onion soup made after the family recipe, which said, "Take a gallon of pure, clear water; add three onions, and half an ounce of garlic; boil well, and dish up with salt and pepper. Not a very strong soup," adds the recipe in question, "but sits light on the stomach, and is of easy digestion."*

How the soup sat on Monsieur Bougainville's stomach, we do not know, but we do know that his situation generally would not sit on it at all, and he therefore determined to cut both the one and the other as soon as he possibly could.

It has been asserted at the beginning of this memoir that Monsieur Bougainville was a man of many accomplishments, and of singular versatility of talent; but it has yet, after all, only been shown that he excelled in dancing. We have still, therefore, to enumerate the others, and to this pleasing task we now set ourselves.

Monsieur Bougainville, then, besides being a first-rate dancer, was an excellent musician. He played uncommonly well on the violin. Another gift he had, Heaven knows how acquired: he wrote very pretty poetry. He sang uncommonly well, too; and was a very fair composer of music. To all these acquirements, he added that of writing an uncommonly beautiful hand.

How Monsieur Bougainville became possessed of all these accomplishments, we cannot pretend to say; but certain it is, that he did possess them, and that in no small degree.

For a long time, however, this unison of acquirements,

* Few and sparing as are the ingredients in this soup, we should prefer it infinitely to *Soup de Boulogne*, which is made by boiling an old shoe in nine buckets of water.—ED.

which rendered their possessor a perfect constellation of talent, availed him nothing. No opening presented itself wherein he could make these acquirements available. At length, however, something likely *did* offer. This was the vacancy of an ushership in a large seminary in the Arrondissement, a district in which he lived. It is true, the appointment was not exactly in his way ; but Monsieur Bougainville thought himself, nevertheless, quite equal to it—as, in truth, he was ; and he therefore determined to apply for it.

The ushership in question, he it observed, was in the gift of the minister of public instruction, with the concurrence and approbation of a local committee, consisting of some six or eight members especially appointed to watch over the education of youth within their district.

Well, Monsieur Bougainville having made up his mind, as we have said, to apply for the situation alluded to, he proceeded to the first step of the preliminary process, which was to draw up a petition to the committee, setting forth his qualifications, and praying for the appointment,—and this he did in his very best handwriting, and really a pretty piece of caligraphy it was. Instead, however, of sending this document at once to the committee as a body, Monsieur Bougainville thought it would not be a bad plan to send it, along with an explanatory card, to each of the members separately, in rotation, before presenting it to them collectively, and thus to secure, as far as possible, the good graces of the gentlemen individually.

Acting on this resolution, Monsieur Bougainville sent his petition and card to one of the members, choosing one to begin with, with whom he had some slight previous acquaintance. On the following day, he waited on this gentleman personally, and was well received. He praised Monsieur B.'s handwriting, and took such an interest in his success as to advise him to wait immediately on M. d'Aubigny, another member of the committee.

“ He is a person of considerable influence amongst us,” said Monsieur Bougainville's patron ; “ and if you can gain him, you will have made no small progress towards your object. He is a very worthy man, with only one failing that I know of, but of a remarkable character---namely, an outrageous admiration of poetry, real or affected. 'Tis a strange fancy in a man of his description, but so it is. Now, my friend, you must humour him in this particular, should he broach it to you during your interview. Indeed, I am not without fear that he may insist on your composing a piece of poetry, as a condition of your obtaining his influence ; but if you can only get over this difficulty, you are safe as far as regards him.”

Monsieur Bougainville thanked his patron for the hint, said

he would do what he could to secure M. D'Aubigny's favour, and withdrew.

Immediately thereafter, Monsieur Bougainville sent his petition, accompanied by a card, as before, to the gentleman above-named, and then, as in the preceding instance, waited on him personally.

M. D'Aubigny received the candidate with great politeness; told him he had read his petition—that he admired the handwriting very much, and not less the style of the language. “I am proud of your approbation, sir,” said Monsieur Bougainville, bowing; “very proud indeed, sir; but perhaps, sir, you would like it better in this shape—in poetry, sir.” And he laid a versified copy of the petition before the astonished committeeman.

“Ah! indeed!” said the latter, taking up the paper. “Have you put it into a poetical dress? That is very ingenious. I like the conceit exceedingly.” And he began to read.

“Mighty well, indeed!” exclaimed M. d'Aubigny, when he had done, and at the same time raising up his spectacles on his forehead. “Mighty well, indeed! I like the talent and genius displayed in these pretty verses vastly, and not less, sir, the skill which has enabled you to keep so close to the text without becoming in the least tame or prosaic. You shall have my influence, sir,” he added, with a patronising air. “You shall, indeed. But I must tell you candidly, I fear, unless you can secure M. Lebrun, you will hardly, after all, succeed; and he is exceedingly troublesome. He unreasonably expects almost every qualification from those applying for educational situations, whether they bear immediately on the particular appointment sought or not. His hobby is music, and being fond of it himself, he is apt to be annoying on that particular subject. However, show him this poetry, and if that alone does not win him, he is still more unreasonable than I thought him.”

Poor Bougainville was at first a good deal disconcerted by this; seeing that he had no sooner conquered one difficulty than another started up to oppose his progress. But Monsieur Bougainville had a reasonable degree of confidence in his own talents, and he determined to face this new obstacle boldly, and to overcome it, if he could.

As in the former case, he expressed thanks for the hint given him, and withdrew from the presence of M. d'Aubigny. Having previously sent his petition to Lebrun, Monsieur Bougainville called himself on that gentleman.

“Ah,” said the latter on his entrance, “you are the person who is applying for the ushership?”

"I am, sir," replied Monsieur Bougainville, with an obsequious bow.

"Why, I like the style of your petition very much. It is well worded, and the handwriting is exceedingly good."

Monsieur Bougainville bowed low, and said he was delighted beyond measure by the praises of so competent a judge. Then putting his hand into a side-pocket, and drawing thence a neatly folded paper:—"Thinking, sir," he said, "that some of the gentlemen of the committee might prefer poetry to prose, and at the same time to show that I can boast of more than one or two accomplishments, I have put my petition into verse.

"What! into verse?" exclaimed the little fat committee-man—for he *was* a little fat man—with an air of pleasant surprise: "Well, that is clever, ingenious. Let me see it, if you please." And he began to peruse Monsieur Bougainville's versified petition. When he had done,

"Very clever, sir; very clever, indeed," he said.

Monsieur Bougainville bowed with a gratified smile, and putting his hand again into his side-pocket, drew forth another paper, saying, "Since you are so well satisfied with my poetry, sir, probably I may be equally fortunate in pleasing you with a specimen of my musical talents. Here, sir, is my versified petition set to music."

"What! what! what!" exclaimed the little committee-man, leaping from his seat in an ecstasy of delight and astonishment. "Set to music! The petition set to music! Why, this is really wonderful. Let me see it—let me see it." And he seized the paper impatiently, and began to hum over the air. It pleased the little man greatly.

"Admirable!—beautiful!—excellent!" he said, after he had gone twice over it. "Really a delightful air. You *shall* have my influence, sir, in procuring the appointment you desire, and I have only to regret that it is not more worthy of your extraordinary talents." Then after a pause,

"Have you yet seen M. Lefevre?" inquired the little fat man. "You know he is an influential man amongst us."

"No, sir," replied Monsieur Bougainville, "I have not. But he is the very next person on whom I intend calling in this matter."

"Right. Do so," said M. Lebrun. "Show him the music, and I'm sure he'll be delighted with it, for he is a great singer. Indeed, between you and me, my friend, this is his weak point, and if you could only contrive to please him, somehow or other, in that way, you might secure him, a sous to a Louis d'or!"

Monsieur Bougainville thanked the little committee-man for

the kind interest he took in his success, and for the promise of his support, and took his leave.

Next day he despatched his petition to the singing member of the committee, and shortly after was himself in the presence of that gentleman.

“You write an excellent hand,” said M. Lefevre, on his making himself known; “a very excellent hand indeed, and that is a very desirable qualification for the appointment you aspire to. But there are others necessary, young man. You would require, in fact, to be possessed of what I should call a general stock of talent. That is—to be possessed of various accomplishments connected both with literature and the arts.”

“Why, sir,” replied Monsieur Bougainville, putting his hand into that favourite receptacle of the productions of his versatile genius---his side-pocket, “perhaps this may tend to satisfy you that I possess something of the general talent you speak of. Here,” he said, laying a paper, which he had pulled out, before M. Lefevre, “here is my petition done into verse, sir.”

“Indeed!” said M. Lefevre, taking up the paper, and beginning to read: “Ah! very well.---Nicely turned. ---Excellent idea,” he muttered from time to time, as he went on; and at length, when he had finished, “Vastly clever,” he repeated, with emphasis.

Monsieur Bougainville bowed the gratitude he felt, and putting his hand once more into the side-pocket,

“I have also set it to music, sir,” he said, simply and briefly.

“To music! Indeed! That is a curiosity, to be sure,” said M. Lefevre, with a pleased look. “Vocal or instrumental, sir?”

“Vocal, sir,” replied Monsieur Bougainville. “I have adapted it for two voices. A duet, sir; and if you will do me the honour to take one of the parts, we will go over it, if you please.

“With all my heart,” said M. Lefevre, delightedly; and the two immediately struck up the air, or rather the petition, with great animation and spirit.

The member was in ecstasies with the beauties of the piece, and insisted on its being sung over again and again, until he had nearly committed both the air and the words to memory. When satisfied, he seized Monsieur Bougainville by the hand, and declared that he had made him his friend, adding, “Now, my dear sir, go directly to Monsieur Dufour; that is, if you have not already seen him---he is one of our members, you know:---show him this music, and the appointment is all but secured to you. He is chiefly, indeed I may say wholly, in the instrumental way, yet he cannot but appreciate the merits of

this exquisite little piece. Run, my dear sir, run as fast as you can, to Monsieur Dufour.”

Monsieur Bougainville went to Monsieur Dufour, but not quite so quickly as he had been recommended. He went home first, and accomplished a certain matter which he thought might be of essential service to him with that gentleman. This done, he waited on Monsieur Dufour, having, as in all the former cases, sent in his petition previously.

With this, the last of the members of the committee, Monsieur Bougainville went through precisely the same process as he had done with the others---showing the petition in its various shapes. But in one of these, namely, the musical one, there was now a novelty. It was adapted as a solo for the fiddle; and Monsieur Bougainville having obtained, at his particular request, the loan of Monsieur Dufour's violin, played it over to the great delight of the latter, who, when he had done, complimented him in the most flattering terms on his musical talents, and ended with assuring him of his interest.

Thus, by an unparalleled exertion of genius, Monsieur Bougainville secured the whole committee in his favour; but this, after all, was little more than half the battle. He had yet to obtain the good graces of the minister of public instruction; for the reader will please to recollect that it was he, in fact, who had the nomination of the appointment, although with the concurrence of the committee. The recommendation of the latter, it is true, was generally understood to secure such offices to candidates, as the minister rarely opposed the wishes of that body.

This recommendation, then, as may be foreseen, was at once given by the committee to Monsieur Bougainville; and with it, and the petition together—the original one—for the approval of the members was written, according to custom, on the same sheet—Monsieur Bougainville proceeded to Paris to wait on the minister.

On arriving in the capital, Monsieur Bougainville forwarded his petition to the proper quarter, accompanied by an explanatory memoir, and on the following day he received an official reply, commanding him to wait on the minister at a certain hour of the evening. The candidate was punctual, but was greatly disheartened to find his reception, notwithstanding the strong recommendation of the committee, a very cold one. The minister was exceedingly haughty and ungracious. The truth was, he had a protégé of his own, to whom he wished to give the appointment aspired to by Monsieur Bougainville, and he had therefore merely sent for the latter out of deference to the committee, but without any intention whatever of conforming to its recom-

mendation. Perhaps he had another reason for sending for him. Nay, there is no doubt he had. This was, to question him as to his acquirements, and to discover, by such examination, as he had no doubt he should, some such deficiencies as would afford a fair pretext for rejecting him.

On Monsieur Bougainville's being ushered into the presence of the great man,

"You are aware, sir," said the latter, sternly, "or if you are not, you ought to be, that the person who is to fill the situation you have applied for, ought to be a man of various accomplishments. He ought to write a good style and a good hand. This, however, I see you do," glancing at the petition which lay before him. "He ought to have a literary turn---none the worse if it were poetical. He ought to have a competent knowledge of music. He ought to be able to compose it---to sing---to play on some instrument, and, above all things, to dance gracefully." (The minister, be it here observed, piqued himself on his dancing. It was one of his hobbies.) "He who does not is a clown, a boor, a brute, and unfit for any respectable station in society. Now, sir," added the minister, with a portentous frown, "how do you stand with regard to these acquirements, to begin with?"

"Why, sir," said Monsieur Bougainville, modestly, "you may have an opportunity of judging for yourself, if you would take the trouble. Here is my petition rendered into poetry." Saying this, he plunged his hand into the oft-referred-to side-pocket, and produced the poetical version of his prayer.

"Odd idea!" said the minister, taking the paper, which having read, he returned with a remark, coldly made, that "it was well enough."---"I have set it also to music, sir," said Monsieur Bougainville; and he produced another copy.

"Oh, you have, sir?" replied the minister---still, however, in a dry tone; although, perhaps, rather softened; and he looked over the air.

"Ah! not amiss, I must acknowledge," he said, on finishing its perusal.

"I will sing it, sir," said Monsieur Bougainville, "if you have no objection."

"Oh, none in the world," replied the minister, now considerably mollified. "Proceed."

Monsieur Bougainville *sang* the petition. The minister applauded, though still rather cautiously. He allowed, however, that the air was pretty, and sung in good taste.

"I will play it on the violin, sir, if you will allow me," said Monsieur Bougainville, producing, at the same time, the instrument he spoke of from a green bag which he carried.

The minister nodded assent with a smile.

Monsieur Bougainville *played* the petition, and so well that the minister said "Delightful!"

"I have invented a dance to it, sir," said Monsieur Bougainville, calmly, and will dance it, if you please."

"A dance!" shouted the minister, in rapture, and leaping from his seat. "Indeed! why *that* is most extraordinary!"

"Shall I dance it, sir?" inquired Monsieur Bougainville.

"By all means," said the minister. "And I myself," he said, in the enthusiasm of the moment, "will play to you." And he seized the violin, and commenced the performance with much spirit and energy.

Monsieur Bougainville *danced* the petition. The minister was delighted. The steps were all new, and exceedingly graceful. When he had done, the minister walked up to him, and exclaimed, as he took him by the hand, "Monsieur Bougainville, your genius has triumphed. The situation is yours."

Monsieur Bougainville was accordingly appointed; and there are, we should imagine, few of the readers of this narrative who will say that he did not deserve it.





THE GUERILLA

BY SHERIDAN KNOWLES,

Author of "THE HUNCHBACK," &c.

ON came the crowd shouting, "The Guerilla! The Guerilla!" ferocious exultation in the sound of their voices and in their looks. On they came right to the place of execution, gathering new accessions at every yard. Arrived at the fatal spot, they stopped; and, drawing back on every side, formed a little ring, densely bounded; in the centre of which stood a Guerilla, with a boy about fifteen or sixteen years old, apparently his son; and along with them a Spaniard of superior rank, one or two public functionaries of a subordinate class, and the executioner.

Several murders had been recently committed in the mountains; among the rest one upon the son of the Spaniard who was extremely popular in Burgos; and against the Guerillas the retaliation of summary justice was proclaimed by the edict of the people; of which act of popular despotism the man and the boy, who had been taken at a few leagues' distance from the city, were now about to become the victims.

Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the two. The man, of swarthy complexion and stalworth form, with lank black hair, and just sufficient of intelligence in his countenance to give direction to a bold and reckless nature; defiance, not deprecation, in his eye—the boy, with a skin of bright and transparent olive; a frame, slender, though not spare; dark—jet-dark hair hanging almost to the waist in clusters of curls; and a countenance shining with sensibility and intellect; his eye, with an expression of intense terror, cast here and there upon the crowd; with one hand clasped in that of his robust companion, and with the other grasping his arm, to which he shrinkingly clung. There was something so irresistibly subduing in the group—now that their tormentors had halted, and had leisure to look on—that clamour subsided into perfect silence, which lasted for several minutes. At length the Guerilla, with a smile, stretched forth his hand—

"Fellow-Christians!" he exclaimed—but his voice was instantly drowned with cries of execration.

"Pinion him! Strangle him!" was vociferated from a thousand mouths.

Finding it impossible to obtain a hearing, he now had recourse to gesture, and his extended hands were gradually lowered in

the direction of the boy; then moving his eyes from right to left, backwards and forwards, as far as he could turn his head—occasionally glancing at the boy—while the smile never once quitted his face, he plainly told what he would say. The promiscuous mass was touched again, and clamour once more was superseded by silence.

“Pinion *me!*” exclaimed the Guerilla. “Pinion me, and execute me if you please. I am a fair object for your vengeance, and you shall see that I will prove myself worthy of it; but why wreak it upon a child?—a boy who has done nothing to you? He is not a Guerilla, nor the son of a Guerilla. He is one of yourselves. Burgos was the place of his birth.”

Hesitation, doubt, pity, dissatisfaction, revenge, were variously painted in the faces of the crowd. At length one—who seemed to be a sort of leader—by a single word recalled the passion which had originally predominated.

“Antonio!” was all he said, but in a voice in which there was doom, without refuge or mitigation. He was echoed by a thousand throats. The air resounded with “Antonio:”—It was the name of the Senor’s son—the young man that had been murdered. Cries of “Pinion them!” “Strangle them!” succeeded. The executioner looked towards the Senor.—The Senor nodded; and the former instantly proceeded to pinion the boy. The boy, submitting without a struggle, looked up in the Guerilla’s face. The Guerilla looked down at the boy—and still with a smile!

The process was nearly completed, when the Guerilla in a voice of thunder and command cried, “Stop!” The executioner, mechanically desisting, gaped at the Guerilla, as did also the Senor and the crowd—all seemed electrified by the tone in which the Guerilla uttered that single word.

“Is there a man in Burgos—” in the same tone proceeded the Guerilla, “Is there a man in Burgos who lost about sixteen years ago a daughter two years old?”

The Senor started, and now bent upon the Guerilla a look of the most intense interest and eager inquiry.

“What mean you?” said the Senor.

“What I say!” replied the Guerilla, and repeated the question.

“Yes; I am that man!” said the Senor: “I lost a daughter sixteen years ago at the age of two years old! Knowest thou aught of that girl?”

“You see I do!”

“And what?”

“Unbind the boy!” said the Guerilla, calmly folding his arms.



“Does she live?” impetuously inquired the Senor.

“Unbind the boy!”

“Knowest thou where she is?” asked the Senor with increasing impatience.

“Unbind the boy!”

“Wretch!” furiously vociferated the Senor, “you shall be put to the torture!”

A loud hoarse laugh was the reply of the Guerilla, and “Unbind the boy!” was again calmly repeated. The indignation—the impatience, of the Senor all at once subsided. The expression of his eye changed to something like respect and deference as he kept it still fixed upon the Guerilla, upon whom the crowd now gazed with a feeling rather of admiration than hostility. The boy never moved his eyes from his companion, whose smile seemed as permanent as the hue of his cheek while he stood like a figure hewn out of rock. There was a dead silence of several minutes.

“Unbind the boy!” at length said the Senor. He was obeyed. “Now?” said he, addressing the Guerilla.

“Remove us hence!” calmly rejoined the latter.

“Do you sport with me?” with renewed impatience, inquired the Senor.

“No!”—coolly replied the Guerilla. “You know I don’t. You know that a child—a girl of two years old—was stolen from Burgos sixteen years ago, and that you are the father of that girl. You may well believe, Senor, that what I know a part of, and so well, I can reveal wholly—thoroughly! I will do so; but not here. Take me to your own house. There, but there alone, will I disclose to you what it will be a happiness to you to know, and a satisfaction also to my friends the good people of Burgos, by whom I perceive you are held in no small estimation.”

The Senor cast around him an inquiring look, as if to learn the pleasure of the crowd—they understood him.

“Give him his life. Take him away!” was vociferated on all sides.

The Senor, accompanied by the Guerilla and the boy, and followed by a portion of the populace, walked hurriedly home. The three were presently seated in the library of the Senor.

“Now?” said the Senor.

“Not yet!” was the Guerilla’s reply.

“Do you mean to deceive me?” sternly demanded the Senor.

“No!” said the Guerilla; “but I must think—I must reflect—and that takes time. I must stipulate too; and that requires deliberation—caution. Thus far, however, thou shalt be informed. Thy daughter lives. The place of her residence is known to me. She is in safety there. I can restore hert you,

and I will! but you must abide my pleasure as to the *when* and the *where*—with this assurance, I shall disclose all in the course of the next seven days. But mark you, Senor; and pay due heed to what I say. The girl is a hostage for my life and that of the boy; so look carefully to our safety. And give us handsome entertainment too. Lodge us as your guests, and board us as such. You must not turn us over to your household. We will eat at no table, but that whereat you preside. 'Tis the least courtesy you can show towards those who have ventured their lives in coming to Burgos, to restore to you your only living child!"

The Senor sat silent with astonishment. He eyed the Guerilla and the boy alternately from head to foot. The Guerilla, following his eyes, said nothing for a time; but at length bursting into a hearty laugh:

"Your guests, I perceive," he exclaimed, "have their habiliments to thank for the questionable welcome you give them. 'Tis all very right. 'Tis the way of the world, and 'tis natural to go with the throng! Men's natures ought to lie in the stuffs that cover their bodies, and not in their bodies themselves; though I have seen many a velvet arm make sorry work with a rapier opposed to one wielded by an arm in buff! No matter: heed not our habits, Senor! The Guerilla and the boy will be fit for your table to-morrow. To-day they are content to dine alone. Give orders, however, that they be treated as becomes your guests. They bring good news to Burgos, and at the risk of their necks."

The Senor neither spake nor moved; but sat staring at the Guerilla, whose peculiar smile kept its place upon his cheek. The latter suddenly started up. The Senor did the same—as if instinctively.

"Senor!" ejaculated the Guerilla, firmly, and with an air of command that indicated the most thorough confidence in himself; "Senor, are you, or are you not, the father of the girl that was stolen from Burgos sixteen years ago? If you are, and if you wish the child to be restored to you, I have told you the way. Take it or not as it pleases you. Give me the time I demand, and the treatment I look for during that time; if not—forth to the place of execution again!—but remember, your daughter's life depends upon the safety of mine and of that boy's."

"One question!" interposed the Senor.

"I will answer none till my time!"

"Only this—has the girl any mark upon her person?"

The Guerilla whispered the Senor.

The Senor threw himself into his chair and leaned back for a time, pressing both his hands upon his forehead. The Guerilla

remained standing—his eyes scrutinizingly fixed upon him as if he would penetrate the determination that was forming.

“Alphonso!” exclaimed the Guerilla. The boy started up.

“Every thing shall be as you require!” hastily exclaimed the Senor. “Your name?”

“Nunez!”

“And the boy’s?”

“You heard it just now—Alphonso!”

“’Tis well! You shall be looked to in all that you desire!”

The Guerilla and the boy were treated in every respect like the choice friends of the Senor. The day following, their mountain dresses were exchanged for that of the Spanish gentleman, and the youth of gentle blood. Their couches were the best under the Senor’s roof; they dined at the same board, and had all the honour paid to them which the Senor himself was accustomed to receive.

“Senor,” said the Guerilla, the second day, as they sat at table after the domestics had retired. “Senor, I have told you but half the errand that brought me to Burgos. What I have further to inform you of refers to a subject of pain, not pleasure. Will you hear it?”

The Senor bowed. The Guerilla went on:—

“I had always set my face against acts of ferocity; I have repeatedly punished those who have committed them. I was in sight when your son was attacked; I called to the ruffians to desist—I flew with all the speed I could in hopes to rescue him; but I arrived too late. He was mortally wounded. His own reckless courage accelerated his fate. I had him conveyed, still alive, to my own habitation, where he survived six hours; a portion of which time he occupied in penning, with great difficulty, the contents of this paper.”

The Guerilla here drew a small packet from his breast and handed it to the Senor, who, glancing at the superscription, hurriedly quitted the room. He returned in about a quarter of an hour, went directly up to the Guerilla, and, without trusting himself to speak, wrung him warmly by the hand.

“A youth—a son of mine,” said the Guerilla—

“You have another son?” interrupted the Senor.

The Guerilla went on without noticing the question. “A youth, a son of mine, was wounded in endeavouring to save the young cavalier. He momentarily expects my summons to repair to Burgos; will you ensure him security of life and person if he comes?”

“Certainly!” said the Senor.

“I shall send for him at once!” said the Guerilla.

“Do so; and tell him to come hither. This is his home.”

The Guerilla and the boy were now indeed the friends of the

Senor. It seemed as if he could never make enough of them. On the fourth day of their sojourn at his house he made a feast for them, to which he invited the most esteemed and worthy among his relations and friends.

Besides the Guerilla and the boy, there was but one stranger present—a young Italian about five-and-twenty, who was on a visit with one of the guests. He was a youth whose general appearance was rather prepossessing, with the exception of his eye, which was peculiarly dark, small and sparkling. During dinner he sat directly opposite to the boy, whose countenance, remarkable for nothing but its sweetness and blandness, he kept constantly scrutinizing, to the no small annoyance of the other, who attempted to repel the freedom by glances of coldness, and, occasionally, even of displeasure—in such a manner, however, as to avoid remark on the part of the rest of the company.

After dinner the guests amused themselves as their several tastes directed. Some repaired to the billiard-room; some played at cards. Music was the recreation of others, and, among the rest, of the boy and the young Italian, who with persevering obtrusiveness had followed him to a window where he was standing, and contrived to keep him in discourse in spite of half-replies and pointed inattention. The Guerilla and the Senor were deeply engaged in conversation in a corner of the room.

A charming passage of Mozart's was executing by a finger of truth and soul. All were enchained. Even the young Italian discontinued his persecution of the boy, when the latter, uttering a shriek, suddenly darted out of the room. Every one ran to the windows to see what had excited such emotion. Some town officers were conducting a Guerilla youth towards the house, which fronted the street up which they were coming. Before they came half a dozen steps nearer, the Guerilla youth was in the arms of the boy.

“The poor brothers!” exclaimed the Senor, the tears starting into his eyes. Every one ran down into the hall. There they were met by the youth and the boy, still clinging to each other:—the latter, overpowered by his feelings, almost carried by the former! Both looking into one another's eyes, strainingly, as if their souls were issuing from them, and blending, like their bodies, in embraces. Never was happiness at reunion more touchingly depicted; especially upon the part of the younger, who kissed alternately the forehead, the eyes, the cheeks, the neck, the hair of the young Guerilla; and wept and laughed, and murmured unintelligible words of welcome—and at last was with difficulty taken by gentle force away.

Variouly were the spectators affected by this interview. The Senor wept like a child. The young Italian looked, as if he

had never been acquainted with a tear. His countenance lowered with that cloud which throws the deepest shade; and which gathers in the mind. The tenderness which the boy displayed seemed to act upon him with the effect of an object of some natural, strong and uncontrollable antipathy. His eyes flashed loathing! and, with clenched hands, he pressed his folded arms convulsively upon his breast. The rest of the company sympathized with the youth and the boy; while the Guerilla, his figure drawn up to the full extent of his stature, gravely, and musingly, looked on!

The youth held forth a paper. The Guerilla took it; and, withdrawing to a corner of the saloon, whither the company had now returned, perused it with deep attention. The youth and the boy sat together, hand in hand. Of absorbing interest was the subject of their discourse. Their breaths mingled as they spoke. Their faces were never for a moment turned away; until roused by a sigh, deep drawn, and, almost amounting to a groan, the elder started up, and confronted the Italian, who was standing close opposite to him, evidently trying to catch the purport of their conversation. The flash of the youth's full manly eye, on fire with indignation, was too much for the Italian. With assumed carelessness, he turned his head, and presently slunk out of the apartment.

"Carlos!" exclaimed the Guerilla. The youth stood beside him in a moment. They whispered for a time. The Guerilla then approached the Senor.

"Senor," said he, "I must leave Burgos. I shall be absent ten days—thus doubling the time for which I stipulated: but, I leave the young people as my hostages. For your daughter's sake you will look to their security, and handsome entertainment. At the expiration of ten days, she shall be restored to you. Do not expostulate! Necessity is a peremptory master, whose exactions we feel least, when we make up our minds to comply with them. I request the youth may occupy my room; the next to that in which your hospitality has lodged the boy."

The Senor gazed vacantly upon the Guerilla. For a minute or two he was silent with disappointment and perplexity.

"It shall be as you desire," at length said he. "When do you depart?"

"This moment."

"May I ask whither?"

"To Madrid."

"Madrid!" echoed the Senor with surprise.

"Madrid!" calmly rejoined the Guerilla.

"May I ask"—continued the Senor.

"Senor," interrupted the Guerilla: "I depart the moment a conveyance is ready. My journey is a long one; and the time I have to take it in is short."

“ You shall be conveyed the first two stages by my own horses and people,” said the Senor, and left the room. The Guerilla exchanging a few words with the youth and the boy, presently followed him.

“ I should like to adopt one of those boys !” said the Senor, as he sat by himself, musing, after his visitors had retired, and his young guests had withdrawn to their respective apartments. “ There is about them a freshness of nature which acts upon my feelings in a manner in which they were never affected before ; and, there is a vacuum in my heart—but that, to be sure, the recovery of my long lost daughter will supply—yet, not wholly : I gloried in the manhood of my Antonio : I shall yet feel the want of my son ! I would the elder boy were not the son of a Guerilla ! Yet, is he a Guerilla ? The boys are brothers : and, he said the younger was not a Guerilla’s son, but was born in Burgos. And he is evidently the father of both, for they are brothers.—Death is an instructor,” continued the Senor. “ When I looked on my poor Antonio, my vain heart swelled with the pride of blood. I gloried in the ancestry which he could trace. Now, I perceive another, a new, and, I suspect, a higher source of exultation—the endowments, with which nature enriches. That young Italian is of noble birth ; yet, how he cowered before the rebuking eye of the youth. He could not bear its gaze. He withdrew from the apartment ; nor ventured to enter it again. I marked it with astonishment. How the boy looks up to the youth ! How he hangs upon him !—seems to exist in him ! Children have penetration. He must have a nature of high excellence to command such love and such dependence. He is the making of a cavalier ! I should like to adopt him—but, the brand of the Guerilla is upon him ; it matters not whether by nature or by chance.”

Here the Senor was alarmed by a shriek. He started, and listened. It was repeated ; and instantly followed by a scuffle in the chamber overhead. It was that in which the boy slept. The Senor snatched a candle, and rushed up stairs. The door of the chamber was open. He entered. The Italian lay stretched upon the floor, and the youth, with one foot upon his breast, was standing over him.

“ The matter ?” impatiently inquired the Senor.

The youth made no reply ; but convulsively clasped his hands.

“ The matter ?” repeated the Senor, with increased eagerness.

No breath—no sound—uttered the youth in reply ; but stood with his hands still clasped.

“ The matter, young man ?” a third time authoritatively demanded the Senor—advancing close up to the youth—but with no better success.

The faculty of speech seemed to have suddenly and utterly

vanished, as well as that of motion. One feeling alone had taken entire possession of him, that of intense wonder. That he had been recently agitated by emotions of a harsher kind, was certain from the attitude in which he stood, and from the prostrate figure beneath him; but not a trace of those emotions now remained. His soul and frame had evidently room and use for only the one feeling; and that feeling spoke out of his eyes, the direction of which the Senor following, soon stood himself the image of wonder too; for on the side of the bed lay its occupant in a swoon; the night-dress half torn from the shoulders, as by violence; but instead of the neck of a boy, presenting the rich bosom of a ripe and lovely girl.

The Senor was the first that recovered his self-possession. He turned to the youth, and endeavoured by shaking him to recal him to himself, but in vain. At this moment some of the attendants, who had retired to rest, but, like their master, had been alarmed, presented themselves at the door of the apartment. The Senor, previously drawing the curtains of the bed, to conceal the unconscious form that reclined upon it, ordered them to enter and remove the Italian; who seemed to have been stunned by the fall which he had doubtless received from the youth. He was obeyed. He now turned again to the youth. An entire change seemed to have taken place in him. The passion which had possessed him a moment before—which had strained his every faculty to the utmost capability of tension—was gone; and another, and a no less powerful one, appeared to have arisen in its place. The very spirit of tenderness shone meltingly in his eyes, which looked as if every moment they would gush; languid and deep was his respiration; and a universal tremour was perceptible to the Senor, when he took him by the hand, and led him, unresisting, from the apartment.

“Attend to the young person in that room,” said the Senor to a female domestic who was passing. Then calling to the attendants below—those who had removed the young Italian—he inquired if the latter had recovered; and being answered in the affirmative, gave orders for his immediate dismissal from the house.

The Senor and the youth were now in the apartment of the latter: they sat opposite to each other—the Senor meditating, his companion abstracted.

“You have made a discovery I think,” said the Senor. “I perceive your astonishment is as great as mine. Till to-night you were unacquainted with the sex of your young friend.”

“Till to-night!” was the brief but emphatic reply of the youth.

“You took her for a brother?”

“No, Senor, for a cousin.”

“Have you been much together?”

“Constantly; particularly in our studies.”

“Your studies!” repeated the Senor with surprise.

“Yes, Senor; my father had received a liberal education in his youth: he studied at Salamanca. My mother had been bred in a convent—they jointly instructed us.”

“And you never suspected the sex of your companion?”

“Never!”

“What language do you know besides your own?”

“Latin and French.”

“What do you know of the use of arms?”

“My father says I am a tolerable master of the rapier.”

“Was your companion taught it?”

“No, Senor! I was always instructed to believe that he was of a constitution too delicate to encounter robust exercises. In our walks and pastimes, I was forbid to lead him into any thing which might require great exertion. Hence I never suffered him to leap a brook; but waded it, carrying him in my arms.”

“What do you know of the life of a Guerilla?”

“Little, Senor. My father lives in their mountains, he adopts their domestic habits, partakes in their sports, and has a sort of command amongst them; but in their lawless proceedings he has never taken part.”

“Then he is not a Guerilla?”

“No further than I have told you, Senor.”

“One question more,” said the Senor, thoughtfully. “Your companion has always been very fond of you; did your parents encourage this affection?”

“No, Senor, they rather checked it; not harshly though. It was sometimes painful to me; but as I saw that repulsing it gave greater pain, I suffered it; though I have often said it made us look more like girls than boys.”

“Would you repulse it now?” asked the Senor, bending an earnest glance upon the youth. The youth sighed, and his head dropped upon his breast: the Senor rose and quitted the apartment. He met the female domestic coming out of the adjoining one. She told him that its occupant had come to herself, and had entreated her to leave her. The Senor dismissed her for the night. For a considerable time he remained standing at the door, which at length he softly opened, and, assured by the breathing of its inmate that she had fallen into a sleep, entered on tiptoe, approached the bed, and gently undrew the curtains. One arm was bent under the head of the sleeper, the other, of exquisite mould, lay exposed upon the rich satin quilt. The Senor stooped down to examine it. There was a small scar a little above the wrist. The Senor sank upon his knees, his eyes raised to Heaven: he wept, but the tears fell from eyes that were bright with thanksgiving and joy.

“Whither will you go?” said the Senor to the youth, as they sat the next morning at breakfast in the Senor’s study. “You cannot remain here—you cannot remain in Burgos—will you follow your father to Madrid? I will supply you with the charges of your journey, and ample funds shall await you when you arrive there.”

The youth made no reply; deep melancholy was painted in his countenance, as he gazed vacantly in the Senor’s face.

“Young man,” resumed the Senor, “he is a false friend who, from motives of compassion, encourages hopes which he knows can never be realized. You have been brought up from childhood with my daughter, of whose sex it appears you were ignorant till last night. Her rank and yours forbid the continuance of that familiarity which has hitherto subsisted between you, and which might now lead to results to which, from the most weighty reasons, my wishes are opposed. It must cease—cease here. I cannot permit you to speak to her, or even to see her!”

“Not speak to her! not see her again!” ejaculated the youth, striking his forehead with his hand, and starting from his seat.

“No!” said the Senor calmly.

The youth frantically paced the chamber for a minute or two, then suddenly stopped short, and fixed his full eyes upon the Senor’s face. The soul of deprecation was in that look: his colour wavered; his lips began to quiver; his respiration became short, difficult, and tremulous; the blood rushed all at once into his face, and a torrent of tears burst from his eyes, as he threw himself at the feet of the Senor.

“No!—no!—no!” was all he could utter, as he convulsively grasped the Senor’s hand, which he raised at every interval to his lips; “No!—no!—no!”

The Senor was one of those inexplicable characters, who exhibit at one time the greatest sensibility, and at another, the greatest obtuseness of feeling. At a cause of sympathy, where no personal interest was opposed, he would melt as he did at the affecting interview between the Guerilla youth and his supposed brother; but let that appeal interfere with his own inclinations, aims, resolves, he could be as callous as if his heart had never known the touch of ruth, pity, or generosity. Coldly he contemplated the prostrate image of supplicating agony, that knelt before him. There was no effort, no struggle, no more than in a rock upon which water breaks, leaving it as it found it. “No!—no!—no!” in vain continued the youth, half suffocated with his sobs, and almost blind with weeping. The Senor calmly disengaged his hands, rose—the youth still retaining his posture—approached the door, opened it, turned and paused for a moment or two with his hand upon the lock.

"I shall give directions for your immediate departure," said the Senor: "the cause of your disorder is too apparent. Hope is the nourisher of wishes; they droop, wither, and die when it is withdrawn. Within four days from this, my daughter will be espoused by a kinsman, whom I have fixed upon for her husband; you leave Burgos instantly!"

In a quarter of an hour, the youth was on his way to Madrid.

The Senor sat alone in his saloon, his eyes constantly directed towards the door of his apartment: it opened—it presented to him the loveliest female form that had ever entered it, conducted by the Senor's principal female domestic. Expectation, uncertainty, were blended in the expression of her countenance; her eyes rested a moment on those of the Senor; then fell; and without lifting them again, she was led up to him. Her knees inclined to the ground, the Senor's arms prevented them from reaching it, and folded her to his breast.

"My child!"

"My father!"—was all that was uttered for several minutes. The lost, found daughter had been cautiously prepared for the interview.

Having given vent to their emotions, and the attendant having withdrawn, the father and the daughter now sat side by side. For a time she listened with interest to his account of the consternation and distraction which her sudden disappearance when a child had excited; of the various means which had been resorted to, but in vain, to effect her recovery; of the different conjectures which had been formed, as to the cause and manner of her abduction, and the quarter whither she had been conveyed—but gradually her attention slackened, and slackened until at last the Senor stopped, finding that he was pouring his communication into ears that took no note of it, while the now abstracted maid sat fixed in the attitude of listening. An expression of deep thought and anxiety spread itself over the countenance of the Senor as he sat contemplating the breathing statue before him.

A footstep was heard in the passage. It aroused her—she listened—it passed—she sighed and relapsed into her trance. Another footstep was heard—she was awake again—she listened—it was close to the door—the door opened—almost she arose from her seat—a domestic entered—she heaved a deeper sigh than before, and the spell of abstraction again came over her. The gloom of the Senor's countenance deepened; his brow became contracted; he frowned upon his new-found child; he felt his heart rising into his throat, but he bit his lip, and kept his emotions in.

"Come," said he at last, rising from his seat: "let me make you acquainted with your father's house, of which as yet you only know a room or two."

She rose mechanically and took the arm which he proffered. He conducted her through the various apartments of a very noble mansion; furniture, the most costly, was uncovered to solicit her admiration; the richest apparel was taken from costly wardrobes, and spread before her; cabinets were unlocked; jewels were withdrawn from their cases, and put into her hands, or disposed here and there about her person, that she might view them in spacious mirrors; the history of this set and that set—the choicest in the collection—was told to her; she saw, she heard, but she noted not—the impression of her senses vanished the moment the causes were withdrawn—once only was that interest, which makes impression permanent, excited—when she looked at the portrait of her mother. She stood before it mute—reverence scarce lifting its eye to the object it venerates and would look upon: she crossed her arms upon her breast—she dropped her eyes, half bowed, and raised them to the portrait again; a tear started and trickled. It was plain that the portrait was awakening other ideas besides that of the original—she slowly turned her face towards the Senor who stood beside her—a want and a wistfulness were depicted in that face.

“You’ll be kind to me,” she said, and bursting into tears hid her face in the Senor’s breast.

Dinner was announced: she eagerly took the Senor’s hand when he offered it to conduct her to the room where it was laid. She almost went before him, but she had scarcely entered the door and looked around, when she faltered as though she was about to drop. No one sat down to table but the Senor and her. One cover was laid before her, she tasted its contents, and no more. Another and another followed with the same result. Appetite was gone—nothing could provoke it. The dessert was as little honoured as the dinner. Wine was poured out for her; she touched the lip of the cup, but its contents went away untasted.

“Almeira!” said the Senor, as soon as they were left alone, “are you unhappy at having found your father?”

“No!” ejaculated the ingenuous girl, lifting her eyes and looking full in the Senor’s face.

“Yet are you unhappy at something!” added the Senor inquiringly: the girl was silent.

“Your new state of fortunes, Almeira,” resumed the Senor, “must give rise to new habits—new pursuits—new connexions:—” the Senor was going on, but observing that the colour was rapidly leaving the cheek of his auditor, he paused; and differently from what he had intended, at length went on: “Your happiness, Almeira, shall be the first care, as it is the first wish of your father.”

The girl's eyes brightened up—the colour returned to her cheek—she started from her seat, throwing her arms round the neck of the Senor; whose countenance, instead of being irradiated like that of his child, now lowered with an expression of deep perplexity and trouble.

“Take your seat again, Almeira,” said the Senor. The girl returned to her seat.

“Happiness, my child,” said the Senor, “is the result of doing, not merely what we wish, but what we know to be wise and right. You must have no concealments from your father. Tell me, did you not expect to-day to meet with some one whom you have missed?”

A face and neck of scarlet formed the reply of the maid, as she sat with downcast eyes and hardly appeared to breathe.

“I know you did, Almeira,” resumed the Senor, his countenance darkening: “but he has left this house.”

A slight convulsive inspiration was all that was uttered by the maid, but, where there was crimson before, there was now the hue of ashes.

“He has left Burgos,” continued the Senor.

She gasped.

“He must never return to it!” firmly added he.

The girl lay senseless on the floor.

The evening of the third day after the departure of the youth, the house of the Senor was lighted up for festivity; his doors, thrown open for the reception of all who chose to enter, disclosed in the distance an illuminated garden. The company was of various descriptions, the costume such as pleased the fancy of the wearers; some came in masks and dominoes; some in fancy and some in plain dresses; group after group passed in. Numbers of the common class of people remained stationary in the street, sufficiently interested in watching the arrival of the visitors. Among them, and in the front, stood a young man enveloped in an ample cloak, with which, as well as with his hat that was pulled down over his eyes, he partly concealed his countenance.

“Can you tell me the meaning of this?” said he to one who stood by him.

“Don't you know?” abruptly demanded the other. “I thought every one in Burgos was acquainted with it. The Senor gives a feast to-night, in joy for having recovered his long-lost daughter, and in honor of her approaching nuptials, which are to take place to-morrow. Stand up,” continued he, in a tone of slight impatience: “What ails you that you stagger so? are you drunk?”

“No,” replied the first speaker—yet caught by the arm of his neighbour, evidently for support. It was the youth. After a

day's journey and a half, he had turned, and, reckless of consequences, come back to Burgos. He had no life now but what was centred in a passion, whose root was as deep as the recollections of his boyhood. He thrilled with the thought of a thousand embraces and other acts of endearment, which, when they occurred, were received as welcome but merely customary things. His lips now clung in fancy to lips whose pressure he had but half returned—nay, often checked; he felt as if he could have parted with the whole store of his life's breath to feel now for one moment the sweet breath of those lips. He had arrived in Burgos that very evening about dusk; had taken up his quarters at the house of an old woman, who, perceiving by his attire that he was a mountaineer—a truce had just been proclaimed between the Guerillas and the inhabitants of Burgos—had called him to her, and asked him if he would undertake to convoy a grandson of hers, who was sickly, into the mountains that night. He had consented, having begun to plan the wildest schemes for the abduction of the Senor's daughter; and providing himself with a cloak which would thoroughly conceal his figure, he hastened into the street where the Senor lived, and planted himself with the rest before the house.

"May be," said the man whom he had accosted, feeling that he leaned upon him from faintness: "May be you have not eaten to-day, and are exhausted with fasting. If so, yonder is food enough," continued he, pointing to the Senor's door, "and nobody is prohibited from entering."

"Nobody?" echoed the youth inquiringly.

"Nobody!" reiterated his neighbour, who scarcely missed the youth from his side when he saw him glide into the Senor's house.

In the hall the youth encountered the Senor—whom, however, masking his face by a profound bow as he moved on, he contrived to pass without being discovered. He turned into the parlour; it was full, but the object whom he sought was not there; he mixed with the company that were amusing themselves with minstrelsy and dancing in the garden, but with no better success. He ascended to the library, but his searching eyes, that eagerly looked from side to side, examining every group, were unrewarded for their pains. He passed into the saloon, which was the most crowded; with no small difficulty he made his way to the head of the apartment, where a small space was kept clear, in the centre of which sat, upon something like a throne, a female of the most exquisite form, richly but simply attired. She was leaning back, displaying to full advantage the curve of a beautifully arched neck, her face quite turned away, in earnest conversation with an elderly woman, evidently of subordinate rank, who stood behind her. The youth gasped for

breath. He felt a movement among those who were standing near him, as if to make way for some person who was approaching: he mechanically yielded, without once withdrawing his regards from the object upon whom he had first fixed them. The Senor entered the area, conducting a young cavalier by the hand.

“Almeira!” said he.

The queen of the festivities turned her head, and presented to the youth the face of the companion of his childhood and boyhood; but how enhanced in beauty, from the more congenial attire which its owner had assumed. The Senor presented the cavalier, who took and kissed the hand which, however, she did not offer. The youth moved his hand towards his sword, but checked himself, and drew his mantle closer about him.

“Who is that young cavalier?” with as much composure as he could command, inquired he of the person who stood next him.

“The intended husband of the Senora.”

His hand moved towards his sword again, but again he checked himself.

The Senor whispered his daughter—she rose. The cavalier presented his arm—she took it. They moved through the stately apartment, the company making way as they approached. The youth mechanically followed.

With what feelings did he contemplate the lovely form before him!—the graceful-falling shoulders!—the slender waist!—the full-curving sweep of the downward portion of the figure!—the ankle that seemed made for ornament rather than support! all set off by the effect of female drapery. A thousand wild and maddening resolves passed in rapid, stormy succession through his mind, but they all settled into one—to die before her!—To reveal himself and die!

He turned for a moment to look for the Senor. He had stopped to converse with some friends. He followed the pair through the library, and down into the garden, withering at the looks of gratulation and delight that were cast upon them on every side as they passed. The minstrelsy and dance were proceeding. Her companion conducted her to an arbour, and seated himself there beside her. The youth took his station at some distance, directly in front. The full blaze of the lights displayed every feature as clear as if it were noonday. Her full, dark eye sparkled!—cheerfulness shone in her countenance!—she had forgotten the companion of her youth!—she was listening to him with whom the remainder of her life was to be passed!—What was life or the world to the deserted one?

The aged female he had remarked in the saloon approached. She rose instantly and met her before she reached the arbour.

They whispered and separated. She resumed her seat, her countenance brighter than before.

"They have been speaking about her approaching nuptials," sighed the youth to himself. "She will be a bride to-morrow!"

The cavalier now addressed her. She bowed. He rose and hastily left the arbour. The youth thought that this was the time. He stood before her, his hand upon his dagger. He was about to breathe the well-known name, but it was unnecessary. She knew him enveloped as he was, and uttered a half suppressed shriek. By a violent effort, however, she instantly recovered herself.

"Fly to the mountains!" she said, as rapidly as she could articulate. "I shall meet thee there to-morrow!"

He stood astounded.

"Fly!" she reiterated. "Living or dead I will be thine!—He returns! Fly—as you love me, fly!"

He looked in the direction whither the cavalier had departed. He was returning, carrying a basket of fruit, and followed by the Senor. The youth bent one gaze upon her, such as she had never received from him before. He saw that it penetrated her soul. She answered it, pressing her hand upon her heart. He darted into a group that stood near; gradually, but as fast as he could, withdrew from the garden, and quitted the house, his soul in a ferment with feelings which he could not define, but which were transport compared to those which he had experienced but a few minutes before.

"Where is your grandson?" he eagerly inquired of his hostess as he entered.

"He will be here at midnight, of which it only wants an hour. In the meantime you can take some refreshment."

He sat down to the first repast he had tasted with relish for the last three days. He ate heartily, and washed down the viands with an ample draught of excellent wine. The dame did not play the niggard to her grandson's guide. He inquired the time. It wanted yet half an hour of midnight. He became restless.

"Are you positive," said he, "that your grandson will be here?"

"Positive," she replied.

At length the church clock struck the hour, and at the last stroke a knock came to the door. He flew to open it. Two mules were without, upon one of which was mounted his expected fellow-traveller. He sprang upon the back of the other, and they set off.

Engrossed with his own reflections, the youth did not interchange a syllable with his companion. The lovely, stately form of the Senor's daughter was ever before him, but contemplated

with feelings far different from those with which he had followed it in the saloon. He dwelt with wonder on its fair stature—its rich outline—its bewildering symmetry! He became lost in a trance of delicious meditation, unconscious that he was following the charge whom he had undertaken to conduct. They had now reached the mountains. The breath of his native air first recalled him to himself. It was grey dawn. He was several paces in the rear of his companion. He rode up to him.

“To what part of the mountains would you go?” inquired he.

“Blessed virgin!” ejaculated the other, suddenly drawing the bridle. The youth did the same; sprang from the animal that carried him, and clasped the Senor’s daughter in his arms, returned to her boy’s disguise. His neck felt the clasp which it had often felt before, but never as now;---the lips printed kisses where they had before passively received them, nor was their pressure unreturned.

The aged female in the saloon and garden had been the nurse of the Senor’s daughter---had received her from the Senor when she had swooned in the dining-room, and learned from her the cause. Feeling that the daughter’s life must fall a sacrifice, if she was forced to comply with the Senor’s wishes, she planned the escape, and effected it, determining to follow, and end her days with one, whom, an infant, she had nourished in her bosom.

“You are mine!” exultingly exclaimed the youth, as he sprang again into his saddle. The trampling of horses was heard close behind them! They looked back,---they were pursued. They endeavoured, by urging their mules to the top of their speed, to escape, but they were overtaken. In vain the youth attempted resistance; he was disarmed, bound, and in a state of distraction conducted with the Senor’s daughter back again to Burgos.

“I shall give him his life,” said the Senor; “but he shall see her married before his face.”

The priest was summoned,---the bridegroom was ready. The Senor’s daughter was led drooping into the room, supported by two domestics. The priest proceeded as he was directed, but no response could entreaties or threats induce the maid to give.

“I will answer for her,” said the Senor.

“It is murder!” shrieked the youth, and with a convulsive effort of his arms, burst the cords by which they were constrained, and darting forwards, clasped the maiden madly to his breast; the maiden, roused by the action, clung wildly to him!

“Separate them,” vociferated the Senor.

The attendants endeavoured to obey him, but in vain. The

hands of the pair were clasped with the strong tenacious hold that is sometimes taken in the agony of violent death.

“ Kill him !” cried the Senor.

“ Forbear !” commanded a voice of thunder, as the Guerilla strode into the room. “ Forbear ! He is your nephew, and I am your elder brother.”

The Guerilla—if such we may call him—had in his youth fallen desperately in love with the daughter of a noble family. She was destined to take the veil. She returned his passion, and during her noviciate eloped with him from her convent. He carried her into the mountains, and buried himself with her there. They were excommunicated. She bore him a son, and died shortly afterwards. To secure to that son restoration to his patrimonial possessions, the father had stolen the Senor’s daughter, whose sex, for various reasons, was carefully concealed till the last. The death of the Senor’s son, whom the Guerilla had in vain attempted to rescue, and who revealed his name to the Guerilla, and pained with his dying hand, for his father, a relation of what had happened, presented an opportunity for carrying into effect the plan which the Guerilla had long in contemplation. He repaired to Burgos, confident of security in the double hold which he had upon the Senor ; when the events which we have narrated in the commencement took place. Encouraged by the paper which the youth, upon arriving at Burgos, presented to him, he had repaired to Madrid, obtained complete enfranchisement from the disabilities under which he lay, and returned in time to succour his son and his niece, who that very morning were united.

THE MAN WITH MANY NAMESAKES ;

BY MAURICE HARCOURT.

SHAKSPEARE asks, "What's in a name?" and before any one can find breath to satisfy his query, he answers it himself, and in a manner which shows that he only propounded it for the sake of disparaging the unfortunate term, in the absence of which we should find it no easy task to define aught that partook of the material or immaterial. However, I am not inclined to cavil too much on this point, as in another play, he makes the *amende honorable* to the respectable noun in question, and seems fully impressed with its importance :

" Good name, in man or woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls."

But whatever opinion Shakspeare might have had of "a name," in common parlance, had he lived in these days, and written songs for the "Mirror," stanzas for the "Literary Gazette," stories for "Blackwood," sonnets for the "Keepsake," and contributed to the periodicals generally, he would have had a due sense of the weight of a name, when called into office as a signature to articles in the aforesaid publications. He would have felt the propriety of adopting some signature, to distinguish himself from the common herd of poetasters. He would not have chosen initials, or one of the signs of the zodiac, or "Alphonso," or "Amoroso," to attach to his papers, inasmuch as that species of signature being public property, he would have incurred the danger of being bereft of his laurels, or, at least, of sharing them with those on whose prescriptive prerogative he had encroached. Certainly *his* works divide him from the grovelling scribblers of earth; in them his true distinction rests. But there *are* writers whose main strength lies in their signatures, not in their works—as, in French perfumes, the pretty fancifully coloured bottle is more admired than the paltry essence it contains. Let them, too, drop the plain Christian names which they received at the baptismal font, and their twaddle will be irresistible. For William, Thomas, Henry, James, Charles, and the ordinary nomenclature, let Michael Angelo, Sidney Beauchamp, Frampton, Percival, and Fitzfoxville, be substituted, and, by dint of a little preliminary puffing, the public may be

gulled to a certain extent : nay, those out-and-out Radicals, who are ever yelping their puerile anathemas against the aristocracy, who are so unpolite as not to relinquish to these gentry their possessions, are the first gudgeons whom the bait of a high-sounding name entraps. It might appear invidious to mention the name of any particular writer, but allow me to ask who would read—and go so far as to admire—the lyrics of a gentleman who improvises on the cambric handkerchiefs and broken hearts of semi-fashionable life, if those affecting records were signed “John Jones,” or “Peter Brown,” instead of the genteel “———, Esq.,” which is attached to them? But I forget myself. I have a tale to unfold. Listen, gentle reader!—and if you have any sympathy to spare, please to summon it, for I am sure you will need it before you have heard half the griefs of “OMEGA.”

When I commenced paying my addresses to the Muse, as rhyme, adulterated with nonsense, is called by courtesy, I ranked among the “bashful tribe of initialists;” but as the facilities increased for appearing in print, I became ambitious of a more palpable signature, and, in an evil hour, dubbed myself “Omega.”

I delicately hinted my literary transformation to my friends, and they thenceforth, particularly the female branches, were on the alert to read my effusions. For a time all went on very smoothly, indeed beyond my most sanguine expectations; since not only was credit given to me for my own productions, but for the superior and very profound writings of sundry other Omegas, who gave a tone to the most influential publications of the day. I not only was esteemed an elegant poet, but got the character of a first-rate politician among my acquaintance, who, while they complimented my talent, would sometimes remark on the inequality of my style. They might well do so, for they would not allow me to undeceive them; whenever I repudiated the authorship of a clever article to which “Omega” was subscribed, I was not believed, my disavowal being attributed to excessive modesty. This was all pleasant enough, and I felt satisfied that my ascent to Fame would be any thing rather than perilous, as, instead of a ladder, my kind patrons had supplied me with a broad, well-carpeted staircase, to reach the pinnacle so few attain. How could I help feeling gratified when some pungent letters which appeared in the “Times,” and some exquisite poetry in the “New Monthly,” were reported to have emanated from my prolific pen? But this was too good to last for ever. Mutability, alas! is the curse of existence.

Affairs were proceeding swimmingly with me, when I was informed that an annual, called the “Star,” would shortly appear, published by an individual, rejoicing in the questionable name of Tallent. I volunteered some stanzas, charitably wish-

ing the work talented writers, as well as a *Talented* publisher. My communications were thankfully received, and as I did not divulge my name, whenever I called, I was announced as Mr. O'Maigre, my beautifully classic cognomen being converted to a wild Irish name. I must own that the blood of "Omega" rose at this vile perversion, but this was only the commencement of my troubles. The "Star" remained stationary, and not going off, soon "hid its diminished head," and I looked out for other nurseries to which I might send my offspring. A threepenny work, promising great things, started, and, wishing to give it a fillip, I forwarded one of my best articles. I purchased the number in which I expected to find my verses:—not only had the ruthless Vandals omitted to insert them, but in the "Notice to Correspondents" they absolutely made this abominable pun on my chaste signature:—"To 'Omega' we must say, Oh meagre!" My brains were on fire—my pulse beat one hundred and seventy in a minute—my heart knocked louder than a luckless wight who has been rat-tatting for half-an-hour in a drenching shower—I was inspired with all the fury of Cain, and, had I been able, would have blown into a thousand atoms, that type of corruption—the caitiff Editor. But the Fates avenged my cause—three weeks afterwards the miserable periodical was swamped for want of a sale.

Soon was I destined again to suffer. In a penny compilation of trash, published on the Sunday, several low, ungrammatical, and blasphemous articles appeared in succession, purporting to be written by "Omega." They were attributed to me, and I was not only charged with being a renegade from my former principles, but an infidel. In vain did I protest that the stuff was none of mine—I was not credited, and I fancied my acquaintance seemed more resolute to disbelieve me now, than they had been when I disowned those admirable papers which would really have reflected honour on me. I thought of changing my signature, but felt some reluctance, as it had given me a little importance among the scribbling race. While thus wavering, a most annoying circumstance occurred which at once determined me.

Looking over the advertisements in a morning paper, one attracted my notice, headed "Fate of Genius." It described, pathetically enough, the fate of a hapless rhymester in want of bread, and besought the compassion of the humane, whom it directed to inquire for "Omega," at some obscure court in Fleet Street. I was thunderstruck, and unsettled for the rest of the day. I walked out, and met two or three friends who looked extremely shy at me, deigned a slight nod, and passed on. I, at length, was accosted by an old gentleman, once a most enthusiastic admirer of mine, who lived a few miles out of town. He congratulated me on being able to walk out, and, with a

compassionate air, gave me five shillings. I was about to ask what he meant, when he anticipated me, and, shaking his head, said:—"I thought it would come to this when you so suddenly turned round, and espoused infidel principles—nay, do not attempt to defend them—I wish you well, and hope you may live to see your error." He passed on, leaving me more involved in mystery than ever. I looked at my apparel—it was certainly shabby, but then it was a rainy day. I called on several intimates—they were out—that is, they denied themselves. The unkindness of my friends did not, however, affect my appetite—that I could still call my own, and as I felt its claims rather urgent, I entered a coffee-house to liquidate them. I listlessly looked over the journals, and in all of them I saw the advertisement of the half-starved "Omega." Then the idea struck me—that I had been confounded with this unhappy individual by my acquaintance. I instantly resolved to sacrifice my fame to my peace of mind, and, throwing "Omega" to the dogs, altered my name without the expense of letters patent, but months elapsed before I could rectify the mistakes into which my connexions had fallen.

Thus have I narrated the Alpha and "Omega" of my sorrows, and that all who launch their bark on the ocean of literature, may select for her a happier name than he did, is the heartfelt wish of the *ci-devant* "Omega."

THE PLEASURE-PARTY.

BY EDWARD MAYHEW.

"How do you spend your Sunday?" said Graham to me.

Graham's question startled me a little. I am not quick even at a white lie, and my conscience made me hesitate about speaking the truth; I felt ashamed that I had not given so many shillings to attentive pew-openers, as is consistent with a sincere sense of "*the highest respectability*." Graham probably saw my embarrassment, for without waiting for my answer, he continued:—

"I and Snats, and another fellow named Layers, intend devoting the day to a ramble: if you have no objection to join the party, we shall be glad of your company." I accepted my friend's invitation, and agreed to meet him on the morrow at the Elephant and Castle at the hour of twelve.

Graham was from the North; I had been introduced to him many years ago by my old friend Willie Gordon, who told me

I should find my then new acquaintance a true Scot. If the reader is acquainted with the world, I need hardly tell him Mr. Graham proved the very reverse. In body he was apoplectic, and possessed a heart buoyant as a balloon, and open as an oyster in the dog days; he had (excepting a slight accent) but one thing Scotch about him, and that was a short dirty pipe, which he would stick into the left corner of his mouth, his nose almost sheathed in the bowl, and puff with the serenity of a bashaw, enviably unconscious of the looks and remarks bestowed on him by a host of genteel youths, who were making themselves poorly with "*real Havannahs!*" He was blessed with a peculiar equanimity of temper: I have consumed hours racking my invention for terms of abuse to heap on modern Athens and the Land of Cakes; Graham smoked his pipe, occasionally nodded to signify he was listening, but never once appeared hurt, or even roused by my remarks; I have compared Primrose Hill to Ben Lomond with no better effect; nay, I once went so far as to assert that Sir Walter Scott was not a much greater dramatic writer than Shakspeare; but *even this* was received with the same complacent attention. The Scotchman seemed to hold the presence or opinions of others so lightly when his own convenience or comfort was concerned, that, if it were not for the many kindnesses he was repeatedly doing, he might have been thought wholly indifferent, or indeed, unacquainted with the existence of the rest of his species. In moral principles, Graham resembled the most of mankind; he always lamented the dissipation of the lower orders over his sixth glass of whisky-punch, and invariably wound up an eloquent harangue about "propriety in married people," and "monsters in the shape of men," with a romp with the bar-maid, and a row with the landlady.

Hitherto my acquaintance with Graham had been within doors: I was anxious to see him abroad.

I had often wondered what it could be which caused the outlets of the metropolis to be thronged every Sunday;—What was to be seen—what was to be obtained—that men packed up their families and toiled with so much labour along dusty roads, in the broiling sun, to the neglect of their serious duties? I did not know then, that to a creature crimped and confined in the unwholesome oven of a large town, fresh air and green fields were as simple, but as great a luxury, as a draught of cold water in a desert.

On the following day, on leaving my lodgings, I found that, walk as fast as I could, I must be just half an hour behind the appointed time for meeting Mr. Graham. I saw a coach-stand in the distance, headed by a crazy yellow cab, between the shafts of which stood the living skeleton of a horse. The hay-

day of that horse's youth had long since passed; its leathern suit was worn in holes; its pride was gone; it was inured to suffering; all day the shaft was at its side, and at night it stood knee-deep in litter—the halter round its neck—the rack before its eyes! What a life! no wonder such a beast was anxious that its course should be run, for even now, when at a *stand*, it was perceptibly on the *move*. This untimely forwardness did not meet the approbation of "the master of the horse," who, not drunk, "*just comfortable*," was picturesquely reclining outside a neighbouring public-house, on a heap of inverted water-buckets. "Whoy!" I heard him cry;—the horse paused but for a moment, the next it was in motion. "Stand still!" cried the driver. It obeyed and disobeyed by turns, till at length it was clearly out of even a sleepy cabman's idea of "the line;" the master was compelled to put off his nap, like Parson Drowsy's sermons, "to a more fitting opportunity," and, to his great personal discomfort, arise and do his duty.

"D—n the whole world!" cried the cabman, in a rage.

The grandiloquence of the man's language made me pause. Vastness of idea always captivates; and never had I met with a man of such capacious expression, of such loftiness of genius! What a naturally magnificent soul he must have possessed! Nero wished to behead Rome with a blow—this was sublime,—but the idea of sacrificing a whole universe to everlasting perdition, because one of its brute inhabitants displeased him, was a gorgeous aspiration that set praise at defiance!

I was aroused from the reverie into which I had fallen by a voice crying, "Now, sir!" and looking up, I perceived the cab was drawn to the pavement; the reason of my pausing had been misunderstood, nor had I time afforded me for explanation; I was seized under the arms by a couple of fellows, and with much adroitness literally chucked into the vehicle: up jumped the driver, and off we set, describing in our course more angles than mathematicians wot of.

"Ugh! "Take care of that woman!" I shrieked in agony. "Come out of that! you ——!" shouted the driver, enforcing his command with his whip, after which he thrust his head into my compartment, and added, "Bless you, sir! It arn't nothing *in our way* to run over any one, but people can't expect a horse is to be jerked up every time he's just a warming! I say wot, sir! I'm a thinking some on 'em gets in the way o' parpus to knock up trade."

I had now been carried as far as the top of Holborn Hill: down went the cab at a rate that was perfectly fearful—chased all the way by a couple of enormous omnibuses, that seemed to be racing for the honour of running over us; to think of stopping was madness, to go on appeared certain death; but, as there

was no alternative, I closed my eyes, clenched my teeth, and grasping either side of the vehicle with my utmost strength, awaited the decrees of fate in a cold perspiration. How I escaped I cannot conceive; it was miraculous; but at length, to my unspeakable gratification, we turned into Farringdon Street.

The amount of courage required in a *man* to sit at ease in a cab, naturally made me speculate on what one of the other sex would suffer if placed in such a trying situation, and I involuntarily cried, "*can ladies* ever venture into these conveyances?"

"I believe so, zur," said the driver with a leer, imagining, no doubt, my exclamation was addressed to him, "they're particularly partial to the sort o' thing: had a fare a day agone that was a *slap-up lady*, and no mistake about her."

The man's words astonished me; could those delicate creatures entrust their fragile forms to the perils of so rude a guidance? Then it occurred to me that the man might be mistaken as to the claims possessed by the individual in question, to the title he bestowed on her, and I asked if he was *certain she was*, and *how he knew she was a lady*?

"Does yuo think to shave me snoozing?" enquired he. "How does I know she vas a lady? Vy, 'caze she behaved as sich. Ven ve had gone no more nor a bob's length, she turns to me in the most lady-like manner and says, 'Vell, you cripple, vot's yur drink?' I tucked the hint and pulled up at the waults of the Royal Princess Wictoria. Vell, she vos none o' yur genteel glasses of porter, but says she to me, quite familiar, no pride in her, 'Give it a name, like a trump!' I guv the call, and arterwards drived her to Vitechappel, and she *tipped up like a lady*."

We passed over Blackfriars Bridge in silence; but when we had fairly entered the road, the driver poked his head round the corner and looked me full in the face.

"What's the matter now?"

"I'm a Tory!" said the man, with an expression of countenance that bespoke how much he thought I was honoured by his confidence.

The declaration, however, much as it surprised me, was not such an one as I felt disposed to reply to; my silence however was not well received, for the driver again shewed his face, which wore, this time, an expression of determined defiance, while nodding his head, he repeated, "I'm a Tory!" thinking no doubt, that I was opposed to his political opinions, and consequently his enemy.

Any interference with the politics, such as they are, of the lower orders, always appeared to me indiscreet, and I felt no inclination to do violence to my sentiments on the present occasion, by

venturing on such a sensitive subject with a person who held human life in the opposite extreme to myself. I continued silent, but the man, nothing daunted, added, "I vas a Vig, but the Vigs has taken the bread out of my mouth. Them Vigs are ruinating all old England!" and being by this time in a passion, he frowned horribly and dealt a "*violent slice*" upon the halting horse.

"Indeed!" said I, terrified lest my remaining longer silent should irritate too much a person in whose power I felt myself to be.

"Yes! I vos a Vig, but I'm a true old Tory now: them Vigs are a hunwholesome set, take my vord, sir; the fourpenny bits are a disgrace to this blessed country. I should never ha' been a Tory if it var'nt for them fourpenny bits."

"Indeed!" said I, perceiving that my speaking soothed the fellow.

"No, never vile I'd lived. Before the Vigs passed them fourpenny bits, a man did get the odd tuppence on the two miles, 'case," added he, looking me full in the face, "*no gentleman* carries coppers; but since these fourpenny bits, trade's a-going to the dogs—come up, Lazy! I'll tell you, sir, it's no more nor spite in the Vigs, 'case my master didn't vote for Hobhouse at last Marrebone; ve're up to it! Ve've all turned true old Tories!"

I was at length set down near the Surrey Theatre, where, having paid him to his satisfaction, I made a low bow, and parted from his company.

"Holloa!" cried some one.

I turned my head, and there saw Graham, with what appeared very like a small bed-post in his hand.

"For heaven's sake, what is that?" said I, pointing to the thing Graham carried.

"This?" said he, proudly flourishing the unsightly club; "never see one of these? It looks like a walking-stick now.

"Does it?" said I.

"But it makes a chair."

"There seems enough of it," I replied, "to make half a dozen."

Graham laughed; and then, with excessive good-nature, insisted on displaying the mysteries of his walking-stick in the middle of the London Road. It was in vain I requested him not to trouble himself, for I had not the slightest curiosity; he began unscrewing one part, untwisting another, wrenching a third—till, at the expiration of ten minutes, during which a tolerable crowd had collected around us, he had convinced me how any

person might, for two guineas, purchase a log of wood, which, with a great deal of labour, might be manufactured into a very uncomfortable seat. Nor was this all; wholly unmindful of the people assembled, he would not be satisfied till I had exhibited by seating myself thereon, in complying with which last request I narrowly escaped being slaughtered by a Greenwich Safety.

When we resumed our walk, I ventured to inquire concerning Mr. Snats and the other gentleman whom, at Graham's invitation, I was about to meet. Reader, I will not give you Graham's version of his friend's character; such things are never intended to be correct, except in plays and novels; but I will you tell what I afterwards found them.

Mr. Snats was a litterateur:---that is, he was one of the numerous nurslings of the Paternoster Apollo. He could make a book on any subject from Indus to the Pole; it was all even ground to him. Give him the order, he'd hunt up the authorities, compress a certain quantity of the latest information into a certain number of grammatical sentences, and, having finished his task, rise from his labours as oblivious, as to the nature of what he had been doing, as any of the equally well-paid manufacturers of articles not legible; such were Snats's pretensions, of which he was not a little proud. In his real character, he was kind but constitutionally nervous; in his assumed one, for all men have two---what they are, and what they wish to be---he was a man of resolution, who acted upon principle, and a hearty fellow.

Mr. Layers was an artist of some ability, but unfortunately possessing one of those lofty geniuses, which was far above my understanding, and its owner's daily bread. In his real character, he was sensual and goodnatured---in his assumed, philosophical, sensitive, and gentlemanly in the extreme.

"There's Snats," said Graham, pointing to a lean individual, habited in pea-green trousers and a naval-cut coat, who was standing before the Elephant and Castle, in an attitude which seemed to say, "I stand here on my right," and who kept staring into the faces of the quiet passengers, as though he thought each came there on purpose to question it. On being introduced, he held out his *arm*, and shook me vigorously by the hand.

Wheres' Layers? "asked Graham.

"Oh, a fool!" replied Snats, "he won't be here; every man ought to be ten minutes before time; you were mad to ask him; I shall give him ten minutes;" saying which, he pulled from his waistcoat an apparently gold watch, fastened to a weighty chain, seemingly of the same metal, and having marked the hour, I saw him glance at me, to observe what effect the display had produced. While waiting the allotted time, we were pestered

by the different cads attached to the numerous stages, and we should certainly have been soon mobbed by the whole body of them, had not Layers luckily made his appearance, and thus given us an excuse for retreating.

Mr. Layers was of middle age, and inclined to corpulency. His face was naturally handsome and expressive, but he contrived with much ability to render it the most perfect blank I ever beheld; his intellect seemed to have lost itself in a Scotch mist. When he arrived, it was plain he had run the greater part of the way, for his breath was short, and his face covered with perspiration—though he was careful to approach us in so languid a manner, as rendered his crossing the crowded road almost deliberate suicide.

“See that fool, how he saunters, when he knows we are waiting,” cried Snats.

Layers was received with much abuse, Snats not failing to tell him that we had “nearly been murdered by the black-guard coachmen, *wholly on his account* ;” to all which Layers could reply nothing, inasmuch as he pretended not to hear it. I was introduced to the artist; he acknowledged my presence by a slight inclination of his head, and in about ten minutes afterwards said to me, in a studied and deliberate tone, “I lament, sir, if *I* have been the cause of *your* being detained; I assure you, sir, I lament it exceedingly; only—this weather prevents a *gentleman* from walking fast as though he was running an errand.”

We had not gone far before Graham stopped and pulled something from his coat pocket, which I perceived, to my horror, was the dirty short pipe. This he stuck into its customary corner, and walked on, unconscious that the following his inclination could really be less agreeable to others than it was to himself; however, Snats no longer walked by his side, but kept skipping and jumping a tolerable distance in advance; and, I am inclined to think, it was only by doing considerable violence to his feelings that he prevented himself from running away.

Two sweeps appeared in the distance; they had been cleansing chimneys in the suburbs, and now, bending beneath their well-filled bags, were shuffling home. The footpath in this part was narrow; and the poor sweeps, who walked abreast, occupied the whole of it, so that any one desirous of passing would be compelled to step into the road—which was no great inconvenience, as it was perfectly dry; but Snats, who headed our party, saw the circumstance in a different light. He always acted on principle, and it appeared to him degrading to a gentleman to turn out of the path, and make room for fellows following their filthy avocation. He forgot their sooty garments; he forgot that contact with such was likely to defile; he forgot all, save his

resolution to make those "fellows" give up the path to him. He no longer skipped, but marched in a firm, regular manner, and with a body as erect as the monument. The poor sweeps, crouching beneath their loads, came slowly forward, heedless of the looks Snats was bestowing upon them—of whose vicinity, indeed, they were not conscious, till one of them was sent to the wall, and another into the road, and the pea-green trousers converted into half-mourning.

"Vere are you shoving to, puppy?" cried the elder of the chummies, as they resumed their way, leaving Snats, whose spirit, touchy as detonating powder, went off as quickly, standing the living semblance of despair.

Graham laughed heartily at the adventure, but Layers, with a dignified air, began explaining to Snats how very ungentlemanly such conduct was, mingling in his discourse a great deal about the utility of sweeps to society, and the chemical properties of soot, to all of which Snats replied with a peevish coarseness that rendered his present lamentable condition the more diverting; he could not conceal his discomfiture, and would have returned to town, had not Graham prevented him by asserting that the soot would wipe off; to prove which, he confidently walked up to a gentleman's house, and having knocked, requested the servant to *clean* his friend. The family were gone to church, and the maidservant (who was newly hired) imagining, from Graham's easy manner, that he must be acquainted with her master, begged him to bring his friend in, when she would render him every assistance in her power. This she did by getting a quantity of greasy cloths, with which she began to rub down Mr. Snats; in consequence of which operation, the moisture from the rags soon blended with the soot, and the pea-green trousers, and naval-cut coat, were striped all over with a species of black paint. Having rewarded the girl, Snats was prevailed on by Graham's assertions, to believe that the damage was barely discernible. We proceeded—the unfortunate author labouring hard to persuade us that he viewed the affair as a joke, though he could not refrain from making repeated efforts to maintain seriously the *principle* on which he had acted.

Graham and Snats led the way, and I paired off with Layers, who commenced a demi-philosophical strain, the subject being — *Whether or no all animals were professed physiognomists?*—which he maintained, was to be answered only in the affirmative: this opinion he supported with much ingenuity, instancing the sagacity with which dogs would select from large companies such persons as were fond of them, and many other things of the same sort, which he said could only be accounted for by believing, that quadrupeds were deeply read in the mysteries of Lavater: gradually I became interested in

the question, and the earnestness of our manner induced the others to join us.

“Humbug! folly! stupidity!” shouted Snats to whatever was uttered by Layers, while Graham, on the other hand, attempted to support that gentleman’s speculations. At length Layers, whose conviction of the truth of his position seemed to grow stronger as its folly became more apparent, in the heat of argument, asserted, “*that he would undertake to approach any animal in a friendly spirit, and the creature should meet his advances with indisputable reciprocity.*” This assertion Graham was desirous of inducing the artist to prove, as it promised some practical joke; but his flattery did not deceive Layers, who would probably have avoided the following adventure, had not Snats’ coarseness goaded him beyond prudence. He was in one of those predicaments which leave a man only two unpleasant alternatives—either to be thought a fool, or to prove himself one. Like most men in similar situations, he chose the latter; and there being some bullocks feeding in a field that was parted from the road by a wooden paling, he volunteered to convert Snats to his theory, by an encounter with the animals.

He accordingly climbed the paling, and we soon found convenient peep-holes, through which we could obtain a fair view of the interesting essay.

The oxen, four in number, were huge, large-boned, leather-necked, Lancashire-bred creatures, with horns that described a semicircle of at least three feet in diameter. From their appearance, they had been used for draught; this was easily seen, both by their condition, and the manner in which the yoke had galled their necks. Such animals are ordinarily as peaceably disposed as the militia. There is but one thing, that I know of, which disturbs an ox’s deep enjoyment of repose, and that is, compelling it to wear shoes. It abominates luxuries of this kind with the sincerity of the Scotch, and the blacksmith who fits them is always remembered with hatred. It is not safe for him to shew himself, where a child might play in security: this operation had been newly performed on the beasts, whose horny toes were yet far from easy.

Layers, having scaled the fence, advanced boldly to where the brutes were chewing something, which from their countenances possess have been opium. We saw him, at every step he took, distorting his visage with admirable dexterity into a vast variety of expressions, to either of which the animal must have possessed superhuman intelligence to have attached a meaning: they were wholly different from anything I have seen since, and far from what the artist intended them to be—pleasant, and inviting to look upon:—nevertheless, on he went, pausing at every

third step, and placing himself in unmeaning postures, resembling those fashionable among elocutionary urchins, in their break-up recitations. I could not help laughing; Graham roared, till pleasure must have pained him; Snats was smiling and complaining by turns, at one time enjoying the folly, at another abusing Layers, or entreating him to return. When Layers had advanced about a hundred yards, the most reverend and sinewy of the oxen, who had honoured the ceremony by its undeviating attention, left its companions, and with a slow but serious step advanced towards him. This completely puzzled the philosopher. Such speedy success was beyond his hopes, and he could scarce hope the animal had so quickly appreciated his motives. Still it came to meet him, and Layers stood to receive it. I observed, as the animal neared him, his action became more vigorous and decisive; from the friendly it merged into the amatory. He held out both his arms—placed his fingers upon his heart—or with clasped hands shrugged up his shoulders. When within about three yards of the artist, the animal stopped, and to my horror I saw it begin to paw the earth.

“He was right,” cried Snats. “Who’d have thought it?—animals do understand more than one would credit. It’s devilish odd!”

The last exclamation was all that Layers appeared to sympathize in; for he commenced a retreat, talking to the animal in a low whining tone as he went, but the brute was not desirous of parting company with one that had proved himself so anxious to make its acquaintance. It followed him to the palings, where Layers (probably owing to our vicinity) grew more courageous, and ventured upon a vigorous bit of pantomime, which he doubtless intended should decide the merits of his theory. It answered the purpose admirably. The animal made a bound. I shut my eyes, feeling no doubt but the fate of Layers was decided—a spectacle I was not anxious to witness. When I again looked up, Graham was mounted on the top of the fence, and Snats was making multifarious hurried, but fruitless, attempts to follow his example.

It appeared that the ox, when it butted at Layers, had not, fortunately, thrown him down, but merely chucked him against the wooden paling, where, following up its attack, its horns had passed on either side of his body—no very comfortable kind of waistband!—and fixed him without doing any bodily injury. The listless nature of the animal made it unwilling to exert itself; for, though it might, by raising its head, have tossed Layers over the palings, it remained quiet—only, occasionally endeavouring to master the power which resisted it, it would punch its poll into Layers’ stomach, and cause him to ejaculate like a paviour.



What was to be done? This was a question more easily asked than answered; for Layers' present position, though far from comfortable, was very preferable to any for which there was the slightest chance of changing it; and in my fears of the next moment, I could not help fervently praying that the ox might detain him where he was to all eternity!

A butcher who was passing, mounted the paling close to where the artist was held prisoner (we were at a short distance lower down); and he commenced rapping Layers on the hat with a thick stick which he held in his hand; but that gentleman was particularly engaged—his attention was wholly taken up—he paid no regard to the call from above, which, increasing each time in force, soon beat in the crown of his hat, and promised to do as much for the crown of the head that was below it.

"Look there!" cried Snats. "He's the master:" for in his nervous delirium, it occurred to the author that the butcher was the owner of the oxen, and was about to sacrifice the poor artist in revenge for his having committed a trespass.

"What are you about?" shouted Graham to the man, whose club descended upon Layers' skull with a force that would have drawn an acknowledgment from a bar of iron. Layers looked up inquiringly, as though he doubted if anybody had touched him, and the butcher shouted out, "Take him *by the nose*, sir! Take him *by the nose*! You'll make him quiet enough."

Though dead to one sense, the captive was perfectly alive to another. I saw by his countenance he distinctly heard and comprehended what was said to him, and, poor fellow, he endeavoured to do as he was bid.

The manner in which men hold, or, more properly speaking, *pin* bullocks by the nose, is, to seize the animal by the horn with one hand, and, thrusting the fingers of the other *up the nostrils* of the beast, to grasp and squeeze hard the tender membrane which divides them—the pain arising from the operation being so excessive, as usually to render the most powerful brute helpless. To the butcher, this was an easy, every-day business; but to Layers, altogether mysterious.

He comprehended no other method of handling noses than that sometimes practised upon the human face, which he vainly endeavoured to adapt on the present occasion. His finger and thumb slid about the slimy muzzle of the ox. There was nothing he could hold, much less pull; it seemed to him as though the animal, with a foreknowledge of his intention, had taken the vulgar but politic precaution of soaping its nasal promontory; unable to speak, he looked piteously towards the butcher.

"Take him with your fist, sir! Squeeze him hard!"

Layers tried again, but he found the muzzle too broad to

grasp ; strain and stretch his fingers as he would, he could not get a firm hold of it, and the idea of putting his fingers *up* the nostrils he never dreamt of.

“ Not that ere way ! ” bellowed the butcher.

Layers “ tried the other way ; ” from breadth he went to depth, and the animals mouth being open, naturally enough thrust his fingers into it, and would have had a great part of them broken, had not the butcher leant over and gave the ox a blow between the ears that took away all inclination for eating. At that instant a true bred English bull-dog appeared in the field, a creature that in its person carried two things to extremes without the remotest chance of their meeting, the thickest nose and the thinnest tail ; without growl or bark it made for the scene of action, and jumping up pushed its leg into the bullock’s eye, while it hung ornamentally attached by its teeth to an ear.

This set Layers at liberty, who at first bewildered by the unexpected change, seemed to forget where he was ; then suddenly recollecting himself, he ran a considerable way by the side of the fence before he could so far regain self-possession as to climb the paling ; having gained the top of which, he remained for a moment, till something tickling him in the ribs, made him look into the road, and there he saw a fat maternal out for an airing, with her last half dozen, who was peeping from under a most ostentatious hat and feathers, and poking at Layers with her parasol. “ Sir, Sir, ” simpered the mother, “ I beg your pardon, but, *once you’re over there* would you look for baby’s ball ? ”

“ Confound the ball ! ” shouted Layers, with an indignant burst of nature that made him leap from the paling into the road, and the lady having collected her family, hurried away declaring, “ All Englishmen were brutes ! ”

We soon joined Layers : Graham did nothing but laugh ; Snats, however, was as a conqueror newly returned from battle. He saw the whole affair in the most extraordinary light. In his view of the event, nothing of failure or danger was perceptible— all was triumph ! He lauded Layers’ presence of mind for not getting away when the ox held him fast to the paling, and praised his own prudence for not interfering, when the reader knows he was unable to get over the fence ; the butcher who owned the dog was given money to drink, Layers at the same time informing him, “ *Gentlemen* did not *like* to have their hats destroyed six miles from home.”

At Snats’ suggestion we determined to celebrate this adventure, with due extravagance, at the next place of public entertainment we came to. We were not long in search of an inn ; on coming to a part of the road adorned with one, we crossed over to it, and pushing open a pair of ostentatious red baize doors followed Layers into a chilly unfrequented hall. This

was a new house, of more promise than performance. A waiter, redolent of yellow soap and rose oil, greeted our entrance by calling out in the confident insolence of a fresh concern, "Well! what do you want?"

"What do *we* want!" responded Snats, with befitting indignation: "Dinner for four, and no impertinence"—

"And a private room," added Layers.

The man stared—our words did not harmonise with our soiled and disreputable appearance. He bowed his head and approached us. Laeyrs drew himself up so as to endanger his strap bustons; he was determined to receive the waiter's deference with the stiffest gentility, but the man passed by him, and approaching Graham, said,

"Beg pardon, we never allow no smoking here;" then he vanished through a corresponding pair of baize doors, at the opposite end of the hall to that we had entered by.

Graham's pipe was extinguished. I proposed adjourning to an humbler but more comfortable-looking tavern a little further on. Snats seconded the motion with eloquent resolution. Had the fate of empires depended on the measure, he could not have been more energetic. But Layers was inflexible—nothing could turn him out of the house. It was so in unison with his ideas of gentility!

After we had waited a long ten minutes, the waiter again made his appearance, followed by a tall ladies'-maid-looking female.

"You wish dinner?" said this latter personage, shuffling affectedly towards us. Snats pirouetted on his heel, muttered something very ungallant between his teeth, and settled himself with his back towards the lady. Layers took on himself to answer.

"Yes, if you please, madam," replied he, simpering, and endeavouring to keep his hat out of sight; "we have, for our pleasure, walked all the way from the West End."

"Can we have any dinner?" interrupted Snats, in a voice that seemed to threaten and command.

Snats' violence decided the question: the landlady was one of those, who imagine any thing approaching to impudence, an incontestible sign of something bordering upon nobility at least: she became confused—there was something about us too deep for her philosophy, yet she was certain Snats must be *somebody*; so curtesying, she said with a smile, "Yes, gentlemen, you can have anything you please;" then catching a glimpse of Layers' hat and the deflowered pea-greens, her countenance underwent a change, and she hurried from the place, saying with a toss of the head "Shew them into the *blue*."

When we had been, according to orders, ushered into the blue, Snats enquired, what there was for dinner?

“You can have anything you please, gentlemen.”

“What have you in the house?” asked Graham.

“We never keep much in the house, but you may have anything you like *that can be got on a Sunday*,” replied the waiter.

“What do you mean by any thing we like?” cried Snats in warlike accents.

“Why---a chop---or---a steak---or---”

Layers, who, having brought us into the house, felt his honour concerned to maintain its character—to prevent any further discussion as to its limited capabilities, hastily ordered a beef-steak.

“A *Rump* steak! cut thick! not too much done!” interrupted Snats. Of all that Snats said that day, and his sayings were neither mild nor few, none appeared to hurt Layers save this: it had touched him in his tenderest part—it cast an imputation on his liberal gentility. I saw him change colour; then, with a desperate effort to conceal his chagrin and restore his tarnished honour, he said with a drawl, “And let there be a few onions.”

“Onions, sir?” enquired the waiter.

“Yes, yes, a rump steak and onions!”

The waiter bowed, and was about to quit the room, when Snats recalled him.

“A small glass of brandy for me!” cried the author in a voice of decision.

The waiter retired, we saw him no more, the rump steak and onions party was given over to the chambermaid, a flashy girl with large chapped hands---all smiles and colours---who, to judge, from her looks, knew the value of a good character, and would defy the world to say an ill word of her.

When this young woman brought in the “small glass of brandy,” she was greeted by a simultaneous gaze, which she permitted without a blush. Snats, as he tossed off the liquor, said “Your health, my dear!” and before he returned the glass, looked so insinuatingly in the girl’s face that she laughed, when he threw himself back in his chair and wriggled about in ecstasy at this proof of his prowess.

“That’s a devilish fine girl,” cried Snats, before the woman had half closed the door.

Layers coincided in the opinion, but could not help reproving Snats for want of delicacy towards an unprotected female. He talked much and feelingly about the exposed condition young and beautiful creatures were placed in, when, perfectly virtuous, they became chambermaids at inns; and he contrived, before he

ended this appeal to our sympathies, to half offend all present, by supposing the sister of each reduced to such a situation. Snats answered all this with a sneer, and a broad assertion, that no servant in England *could* have any virtue---calling upon Graham to support his declaration. The Scotchman could not go "the whole hog" with the author; but as to the artist's appeal, he was certain no *really* virtuous woman was endangered by being assailed, and he moreover thought that *single* men were at liberty to make as many assaults as they had opportunities.

Dinner ended this discussion. I tried to eat the steak till my teeth ached, and in an endeavour to finish my meal with the cheese, I gave myself the heart-burn; then, the wine was milk-warm; we had it changed, and got a bottle of such astringent Port as promised to mingle all tastes into a lasting one of roughness. This was voted bad, and grog called for by acclamation. Hebe obeyed our commands, and took not the part of the cellar: she smiled as perceptibly, perhaps more so, when she brought the glasses and hot water, as when she first burst upon us in the unrimpled lustre of her Sunday's clean.

Evening closed in and night found us sitting: Graham became generous to self-denial; he laid down his pipe and consoled himself with a cigar. Snats and Layers had left off quarrelling, because they were seldom in the room at the same moment; the entrance of the one seemed the signal for the other's exit; like buckets in a well they were scarcely to be seen together, when this was down t'other was up: this behaviour did not escape remark; Graham kept winking at me and putting questions to his companions about the female waiter, which received only laughter for answers.

The kitchen clock had entered on the tenth hour, when Snats' prolonged stay out, suggested our departure: even Layers seemed no longer to anticipate his rival's return, and a calm despair settled upon his features: the bill was called for; Layers, holding a bit of crumpled paper, solicited our permission to pay: remonstrance gave him pain, and from pure tenderness we forbore; the chambermaid laid a bit of paper on the table, without looking at it, Layers imitated her example, telling her to change *that*. The maid took up the note, looked at it once, then again, coloured, and appeared confused, then said, "Perhaps the gentleman would wish to inspect the bill."

"No, no, no!" said Layers coldly, "I make no doubt it's correct," and by way of suiting the action to the word, he raised the paper to his eyes. The amount was 2*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.*, to pay which, the girl, though no great arithmetician, did not see the necessity of *changing* a one pound note. Layers having obtained

our permission, had every inclination to pay, but finding his cash unequal to the demand, to overcome the difficulty he essayed to make the demand equal to his cash; he noticed that two bottles of Port were charged, intimating that certainly not more than three parts of the last had been consumed, that the dinners were all at equal sums to each, whereas he had eaten no bread;—then, perceiving that the task was too hard for the nicest calculation, he threw the bill over to Graham, saying, with affected ease, “Graham, my boy, got any change?”

The bill being paid, and having taken our beavers, we made enquiries about Snats. At the mention of his name, the girl’s face, which, when she last entered, I had remarked to be less pleasant than heretofore, turned to a dun colour, and hastening away, she said with trepidation,

“I know nothing about him; you had better ask master.”

Now, when Snats last parted from us, it was after his fourth glass of brandy and water, which, added to his usual vigour, converted him into a second Juan in his designs upon the chambermaid, nor had he any fear as to the young woman’s receiving his advances, to check his rashness: no sooner had he left the room, than he perceived a light glimmer through baize doors at the further end of the hall, and the elevated Snats, rushing forward, soon clasped the smiling woman in his arms.

“Where are you going to, my dear?” said he, while he insinuated a small donation into her hand.

“Up stairs, sir;” replied she, and with a twirl, she broke from his embrace.

“Stop, stop, I want to speak to you;” cried Snats, in a vehement whisper.

“Wait awhile,” answered the chambermaid, with a chuckle, as, depositing the money in her bosom, she ran up the stairs and disappeared.

“Wait awhile,” repeated Snats to himself, “she means to return, then!”

How could he doubt the fact, knowing, as he did, what *all* servants are, and having seen his present accepted and lovingly deposited—he did wait: ten, twenty minutes passed, and yet the lady came not; but he was certain she would come, and he kept repeating this certainty to himself, to drive away doubt.

At last a foot was heard upon the stairs, and a light shone from above. The gallant Snats smiled in admiration of his own acuteness, and gave each of his limbs a preliminary stretch, resolved to enforce his desires this time with irresistible exuberance; then it occurred to him that, as the damsel seemed a coquet, it would be a good plan to conceal himself, lest she, seeing him below, should, through pure feminine perverseness, tantalise him too long at a distance. This thought was so good,

that he instantly acted upon it; and, full of delightful anticipations, crouched himself behind a brazen half-naked statue of Modesty, and there impatiently awaited the signal to spring upon his prey.

Now, the chambermaid walked with the hostler, who meant honourably by her, and she, like a prudent young woman, never admitted of any liberties that might come to her lover's ears; therefore, when she said to Snats, Wait awhile, she was ironical, and intended him to understand, that he was to wait a considerable time if he stayed there till her return. The person who was descending the stairs proved to be the landlady. This female had but recently returned home; she had obtained her husband's permission to visit a friend for a week; but having, during the time, been seen two nights running flirting with a juvenile customer in the saloon of the Haymarket theatre, her lord and master—albeit not one of those who encouraged such affectations—in deference to public opinion, gave way to jealousy, and declared himself a heart-broken wretch. Poor creature, he was inconsolable; thought distracted him; so, to divert his mind, he adulterated every liquor in the cellar, and to shew how much he felt, took warm gruel when in bed for three nights running. Just as he had made up his mind that his peace had fled for ever, his wife returned. The husband was receiving money and consolation from a choice party of tippling, inquisitive neighbours in the bar. As there were so many present, it was impossible to pass her conduct over in silence; a row was unavoidable, decency required that something should be said, and, of course, a great deal more was said than decency allows me to record. The injured husband boldly declared his suspicions and his neighbours' certainties. The insulted wife cared for neither one nor the other, she was rendered invulnerable by a clear conscience,—to prove which, she fainted thrice, broke two of the best tumblers, and was carried off to bed in company with a smelling-bottle. The husband, in pity for his wife's distress, forgot his own; he followed the dictates of humanity, and went after her. The next morning his confidence was restored: could he suspect such a wife?—A woman who had always kept the money since their marriage, and invariably made his penny go the farthest. No! he could not! and persons ought to know better than to try and breed quarrels between married people! The landlady vowed everlasting prudence for the future. It was only because she laughed and was free-hearted, that bad-disposed beings judge her wicked. She was resolved to be more circumspect, and was full of the most virtuous ill-nature when she descended towards Snats's hiding place.

The vigorous author, fearful to look up lest he should prematurely discover himself, heard the foot descend the stairs; and

when the sound told him it had reach'd the floor, buoyant with laughing love, he leaped from his concealment, and, before he could discover his mistake, with amorous arms made the landlady prisoner by the waist. How brave, how strong is chastity! how fierce in its resolves! One little hand seized the hasty assailer by the neckerchief, the other dashed the candle on the ground, and then, with its nails, ploughed the delicate skin of the bewildered Snats, who struggled in vain, to escape! She held him fast, nor stay'd her bloody hand, till her lord—he so late suspicious of her honour—became a witness how well she could repulse, how well she could repay, the base designs of man.

“There! there!” cried the landlady to the landlord, “this is the consequence of your countenancing reports against my character; every villain thinks he has a right to insult me; but you’re no man; I won’t live with you; I’ll leave the house, if you don’t make him smart for it, and shew people I’m not to be treated in this manner every night of my life. Why don’t you move?”

Thus urged, the husband sent for a constable; and, in a loud voice, made many inquiries of Snats, as, “If he thought ladies was to be insulted for nothing at all? Who was he, with his rump-steaks and onions? What did he mean, by disgracing *his* house in this unheard-of manner?” To all of which Snats could answer nothing; his vigour had evaporated, and in his nervous reaction, when he apologised, he seemed to intentionally insult; when he explained, he appeared desirous of aggravating his offence. “With such a monster,” the landlord said, “he could not condescend to argue;” and having ordered the waiter to stand at the door and see “the man” did not escape, he proudly departed, supporting his trembling wife, whose alarm seemed to increase as the cause for it diminished—so that when all was quiet, it was feared the lady must go into hysterics.

Now the landlord of this inn was in his own affairs a great diplomatist. It was not to his interest that there should be any law about this matter, nor was it to his comfort that the people opposite should talk of the “disturbance over the way.” He knew the offender to have friends full of strength and liquor, with whom, when he placed the waiter at the door, he left the communication perfectly free, and retired with a pleasurable certainty, that no one could say he had not done all in his power to punish the villain who had insulted Mrs. —, though he hoped that the next news he should hear of Snats would be, that he had escaped.

Snats, in this emergency, from want of imagination, was obliged to purloin those means of escape he was unable to invent.

In the first place, he saw himself about to be sent to prison (for how long, or with what prospect he never stopt to inquire—prison was enough), and, cut off from all hope unless such as desperation alone suggests:—he knew a man was guarding a door, but whether that between him and us, or that between us and the road, he paused not to ascertain:—he knew he was a prisoner, and, of course, took it for granted all communication between him and others had been cut off. In the next place, not being able to suit his romance to the circumstances, he adopted the more common practice of endeavouring to suit the circumstances to his romance. He called to his mind all that he had read or heard about “hair-breadth ’scapes,” and found precedents to predominate in favour of disguise in female apparel; this Snats resolved to adopt, if he could procure the garments; he looked around, not an apron even was there—and he fell to lamenting his inability to procure what he had no reason to expect, as if the only trouble he had in this world was the want of means to render himself ridiculous.

As Snats was thus perplexing himself, Colonel and Mrs. Gubbins drove to the door of the inn.

The Colonel was a tall iron-framed man with sandy mustachios—his lady a thin, diminutive creature, with nerves sensitive even to the extremest gentility. Mrs. Gubbins was afraid to remain in a gig by herself; and the Colonel having business to transact with a gentleman above stairs, obeyed her desire, and brought her into the place where Snats was standing, saying he should be down in a moment.

Thus left alone, the lady threw her large veil over her little bonnet, and drawing her crimson satin cloak more closely round her, began humming to herself Dos Santos’s last sentimental.

When Snats saw Mrs. Gubbins, her bonnet and cloak made an instant impression on him. He could not help saying “Those are the very things for me!” but how was he to induce their present possessor to relinquish them. He referred to his memory, which told him, the most delicate of women were always the most generous to heroes in distress, often parting with their garments with more sympathy than modesty, when the emergency was pressing. Snats saw in Mrs. Gubbins a heroine of the highest order, and, certain as to the result of his application if properly made, he resolved to request the gift of that cloak, veil and bonnet. He approached the lady with rudeness intended for chivalrous deportment, and said abruptly, “Madam, I beg your pardon, but are you good-natured?”

“La!” said Mrs. Gubbins starting, and for the first time perceiving that there was any one in the hall besides herself; and then looking at Snats, whose bleeding agitated countenance and parti-coloured habiliments, gave her an indistinct idea of some-

thing very terrible, she gave utterance to a plaintive—"Oh dear!"

"My dearest madam," continued Snats, "Have you a heart?"

"I don't know any thing about it," replied the lady with increasing alarm: "Do get away."

"You see me in the greatest distress; 'tis in your power alone to relieve me."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Mrs. Gubbins, who now imagined she comprehended Snats' business with her, and mistook him for one of those impudent beggars, who leave it to the option of the public whether they will be robbed with a show of charity, or without it; "Bless me! I have no money about me."

"Money!" cried Snats, in surprise, "I want no money;" and then gallantly advancing to urge his solicitation with more effect, he added, "Only lend me your bonnet and cloak, most lovely woman!"

"What!" almost screamed the lady, doubting the evidence of her senses. "Had it arrived to 'that pass,' when ladies were to be robbed and stripped in the passages, as it were, of their own houses?" She would have called for help, but was afraid to provoke to violence a wretch of such desperate purpose, and her scream, half-suppressed as it was, escaped from her in the first moment of her terror.

"Don't scream, I beseech you! for the life of you!" said Snats, in agony.

"My life!" repeated Mrs. Gubbins, who saw in the writhing of the poor author's face, an expression of the most diabolical depravity, with which it would be death to trifle; she therefore placed her reticule in the supposed robber's hands, exclaiming hurriedly, "Here! here! take this, and go!"

"Take *this*, and go!" repeated Snats, looking at the little bag with a dreamy, half-drunken amazement; "does she think I can disguise myself in this?"

"Is not that sufficient?" inquired the lady, piteously imagining that Snats was not content with the booty he had obtained; "Is not that sufficient?"

"Certainly not," answered Snats, whose ideas were a perfect unit on this affair of his escape; "only lend me your bonnet and cloak!"

"Strip the clothes off my back!"

Had Mrs. Gubbins' whole property been at her disposal at that moment, it is probable she would have joyfully given it all to have been free from Snats' presence; but to part with a new crimson satin cloak was a very different kind of thing; it required more philosophy than even Mrs. Gubbins' distress could teach her; she twisted it tightly round her slender form, resolved to die with decency, and then gave vent to her feelings by shouting for "Mr. Gubbins!"

“Don't betray me!” entreated Snats, “you'll ruin me!”

“Ruin you!” shrieked she, finding new vigour in the hope of doing it; “Thieves! thieves!—Colonel Gubbins! Mr. Gubbins!—thieves!”

Horrified by this new turn in his affairs, Snats pursued, and endeavoured to pacify the lady, who, mad with fear, mistook the harmless nature of his intentions, flung herself about with desperate violence to avoid him, and made the house re-echo with her cries; then hearing the sound of approaching aid, her energy deserted her, and she resigned herself helpless into the arms of Snats, who, trembling and sharing her alarm, was scarce able to support himself.

It was at this moment that we left the room, and, in common with many others, beheld the author tottering under the weight of the insensible Mrs. Gubbins. Among the rest came the Colonel, who, with eyes of fire, read the guilt that was discernible in Snats' countenance, and cried out,

“Sir! whoever you may be, you'll let that lady go.”

Exceeding distress is ever heedless of consequences—incapable of calculating even the most glaring *sequiturs*; so was Snats, who, when he heard some one command him to “let that lady go,” in his singleness of understanding comprehended not that it was desirable somebody else should be ready to receive his burden before he obeyed: he *instantly* unloosed his hold, and Mrs. Gubbins' body fell with a heavy sound upon the floor.

Every person present gave vent to their indignation at this “deliberate atrocity.” The colonel stared at Snats with the most unlimited indignation; the landlord told every one twice that Snats had insulted *his* wife just before; the hostler declared that the chambermaid had complained to him that Snats “wanted her;” the landlady explained how this was “all in consequence of her husband's base suspicions;” and the waiter, looking upon all of us who had dined on rump-steaks and onions as parties concerned, ran off for a reinforcement of constables, leaving the hall-door wide open, and without a guard.

The causer of all this commotion was speechless; his soul flickered in his body—his senses came and went. At one time he was lost to the greatest things, at another painfully alive to the smallest. In one of these latter flushes of sensibility, his eyes rested upon us, and with a cry of joy he sprang to where we were standing. This recognition was by no means pleasing to Layers, who was not inclined to claim acquaintance with a man who could insult a *real* lady; and, to avoid being thought connected with the culprit, he walked out of the house. His want of good faith was deservedly rewarded, for the action made him appear the ringleader of an intended rescue; Snats lost no time in following him; and Graham brought up the rear in fine

order. A mere spectator would have imagined the Scotchman perfectly unconcerned; nothing about him betrayed the slightest excitement, if I except the walking-stick, which did seem a little agitated as it rang upon the floor.

"Stop the ruffian," shouted the colonel, who was engaged with his lady.

"John, shut the door!" cried the landlord.

And we left the house amidst a confusion of orders.

When fairly out, Graham suggested our making the best use of our legs. I jumped at so natural a proposal, but Layers would in no way entertain it. What! he make a blackguard of himself, and run away? No! He had done nothing; he defied all the constables in England; and Snats, who fluttered full twenty paces in our advance, for the only time that day, agreed with the artist, shouting out, "No! hang it! we won't run," though I cannot so far deceive my readers as to say he was walking when he said it.

At full trot, however, we travelled a mile or so without interruption, and began to give up all idea of being pursued, when we heard the sound of a number of people hastening after us. Again it was proposed we should *run*, and again the proposition was opposed by Layers, though Snats gave proof, this time, that he was in favour of the motion. Layers, however, would not listen to it; but he volunteered to go back and reason with the men, who he was confident would be soon satisfied, if spoken to in a gentlemanly manner. It was to no purpose we endeavoured to change this determination; he left us full of confidence, encountered the men, was recognized as one of Snats' party, and by some mistaken for Snats himself—though the two persons were widely different—and given into charge of a constable before he had uttered a word. Having taken some one, the men returned; as the noise of their receding steps grew faint in the distance, we distinctly heard the voice of the artist, murmuring the most gentlemanly expostulation, which drew from the constable this oft-repeated sentence, "Well, then, but *only* come to the watchhouse!" though others called him a "*Sunday* swell," which term of abuse was the only thing I had heard to remind me it was the Sabbath.

We reached our homes in safety; Snats saying to me, as I parted from him that night:

"If, you know, it had been any other man than Layers, I should think myself bound in honour to go and release him, by acknowledging myself to be the real offender; but—when he, the fool! would go and meet the men, I'm no longer answerable; so I shall leave him to fate."

And never did fate behave more unkindly! Layers was carried to the watchhouse, locked up for the night, brought next

morning before the magistrates, fined for being drunk (which he was not), and lectured for his crimes (which he had not committed), though, as a favour, the colonel, with great show of generosity, forewent his desire for punishment, on Layers sending to all the morning papers a formal apology, expressing his deep sorrow, and unfeigned gratitude that he had been forgiven, after "having, in a moment of intoxication, conducted himself with unmanly rudeness towards Mrs. Gubbins." On his release, I asked him how he came to acknowledge himself guilty of an act in which he had no part? his answer was characteristic of the man: he replied, that, as a gentleman, having aided Snats to escape, he became, in honour, a participator in Snats' deeds; and consequently, how could he refuse a just acknowledgment to a lady who, among her numberless virtues, wore a crimson satin cloak!

And what did I say, when I reviewed in my own mind, the transactions of that ill-spent Sabbath? Why, did I not say that, after all, the fourth commandment *might* be right, and that it was not only a duty, but a comfort, to attend to it, notwithstanding it was so very old, unreasonable, and unfashionable; and did I not, in conclusion, make this remark, the full benefit of which I liberally bestow upon my gentle readers—That before people venture into a clique, it is as well, "to prevent disappointments," first to obtain a slight knowledge of the characters and inclinations of the component parts.

THE VICTIM.

(Extracted from Notes in the Diary of a Surgeon.)

ONE morning, whilst ruminating which way the balance of my fortune might turn, a sister of mine came in and disturbed these ruminations. I had not seen her since my marriage, as she had been visiting Sir Charles and Lady Eltoun at their country seat in Surrey, which she had left only for a day, from her anxiety to ask my opinion respecting Lady Eltoun, who had been gradually declining in health for many weeks. As she persisted in refusing direct medical advice, my sister thought that I might return with her for a few days, when I should have frequent opportunities of seeing her ladyship, by whom, having been known when a boy, I should be received rather as a private friend than a medical man. Not being indisposed to break the chain of my moody reflections, I accompanied my sister next day in Sir Charles Eltoun's carriage. Autumn, with her yellow leaf, her fields of golden corn, her cool and freshening air, rendered our drive through the fertile vale of Middlesex delightful. It was only fifteen miles to Copeland Hall, the only approach to which beautiful place is through the village so called. After passing the old parish church, the Hall bursts unexpectedly upon the view.

We alighted at the Hall door, and I followed my sister to the library, where Miss Shepherd, her ladyship's sister, was sitting. To her I required no introduction, as we had often met before. Lady Eltoun was walking, I recognized her figure in a distant part of the park, and we left the house to join her. In so doing, I had more leisure to notice the house and grounds. The edifice was Elizabethan, and in perfect repair: immediately before it spread a velvety lawn, here and there varied with flower-beds; and the whole faced a very extensive park, crowded with the most luxuriant trees, under which small herds of deer were sleeping or feeding. From the extremity of the lawn, extending into the distance, lay a sheet of transparent water, on each side of which was a walk. We followed one of these, and found Lady Eltoun sitting under the shade of a chestnut

tree, with a beautiful spaniel in her lap. Nothing could be more gratifying than her reception of me: she offered me her hand, and as I held it, it felt cold and clammy. I did not venture to inquire after Sir Charles, having been strictly cautioned to be silent on that score; but her ladyship must have been thinking of him, for there were the stains of a tear still on her cheek, which looked also pale and sickly. Knowing she was an invalid, I hinted at the coolness of the air, for the evening was fast closing in, and there was a mist rising from the lake. This first part of my advice was at least followed, and we returned to the house.†

At the dinner-table Sir Charles's chair was vacant. His lady's eyes were for some time fixed on it, and fancying we noticed her, she apologized for his absence. Of course the subject was not further alluded to; nevertheless it threw a gloom over every thing. It was so late before dinner was over, that the evening had past by the time we had taken coffee. Lady Eltoun retired early: poor young woman! I fear her night was destined to be any thing but a quiet one. The other ladies, and I, remained in the library for some time afterwards. I hesitated to inquire about my fair patient in Miss Shepherd's presence, but my reserve was soon set aside by my sister at once alluding to her state of health.

The symptoms her ladyship was said to labour under I could understand readily enough, but not so the cause of them. Men of greater experience than myself, might perhaps have been aware of it, but I was left only to suspicions. It is true, Lady Eltoun and I were frequently in company; but it seemed so foreign to her inclination to allude to her illness, that I hesitated, day after day, to accomplish the object of my visit. I had already been a week at Copeland Hall, and could not protract my stay much further.

On the last of these days, I was turning over some of the rare volumes in the library, in expectation of Lady Eltoun's coming there, when my beautiful patient entered the room by the library window which opened on the lawn. The freshness of the morning had slightly tinged her cheeks, but the hue of sickness was there, and her look altogether was that of suppressed anguish. The canker-worm was somewhere lurking in her frame, and all her efforts to conceal it were vain.

After the usual salutations of the morning, for she had breakfasted in her room, Lady Eltoun seated herself, apparently fatigued, at a work-table in the recess, and at once busied herself in making artificial flowers from wafers. These she managed so prettily, that I could not help admiring them; observing, at the same time, I would rather see her busy with nature's flowers,

which were growing so luxuriantly on the parterres under the windows.

“Oh! Mr. ——, I am indeed fond of them, and could spend all my time in watching and tending them; but it tires me to be out, and the air feels so chilly, that I am ill and feverish for the rest of the day, and yet fly to the fire for warmth.”

“Then your ladyship *is* at times feverish?”

“Oh! I burn with it, especially towards night; and I cannot sleep for restlessness.”

“But do you suffer pain at any time, my lady?” Perhaps I had been too hasty with my question, for her face grew paler, and she was evidently agitated.

“Oh, no! Why do you ask me? do I look ill?”

“Your ladyship must pardon me, but I fear, from your not sleeping well (her sister, indeed, had told me that for several nights she had been walking about her room, apparently in great anguish), you are not quite free from pain. Pray be candid with me; what is the part affected?”

“I scarcely know;—I think that in my arm---yes, here—I felt last night a little numbness; my hand seemed very heavy, and I could not dress my hair.”

I took that hand, and the purple veins beneath her fair skin seemed fuller than usual. She withdrew it, smilingly—

“Oh! Mr. ——, my hand, there is nothing the matter with *it*. I rode a new horse, and the reins perhaps have strained it.”

I pressed gently on her arm, and on her elbow; the touch did not pain her, but the mere weight of my hand nearer the shoulder, made the colour leave her cheek.

“Ah! there,” cried she, “I cannot bear it!” and she sank senseless in her chair.

In fainting, her dress fell partly back, and as I, with becoming delicacy, replaced it, my fears were all confirmed. There was the blight, there the disease; and what could check it?

I opened the window wide; the air immediately revived her; and, begging her to remain tranquil on the sofa till her servant came, I left the room, and sought to quiet my own anxiety by a walk through the park. I had occasion to pass the entrance-gate, a circumstance I scarcely should have noticed, but for that of a genteelly-dressed young man stopping me at it, and enquiring to whom the seat belonged; a question I had no hesitation in answering. As I returned, this youth was still there, in company with another person much older-looking than himself. But I hurried by, in order to pay my poor patient another visit. In her presence I carefully concealed my suspicions; and, before I left her for the night, prescribed a mild

opiate, the effects of which I could not, however, stay to see in the morning. In Sir Charles's letter-bag there was a note requiring my presence in London, whither I immediately returned. I think it was about ten days afterwards, that I paid, according to promise, a second visit to Copeland Hall. I fully expected, this time, to see Sir Charles somewhere about the grounds, and had framed my speech for the occasion; but, instead of him, sauntering by the fish-pond, was the genteel young man in black, whom I last parted with outside the gates, and in the hall was his shabbier companion.

I enquired of my sister respecting Lady Eltoun; her manner was very embarrassed, and her answer merely that her ladyship was dressing; with which reply she left me. I now heard the sound of wheels; and as I stood at an open window, the britchska drove up to the hall door, and at the same moment I saw the footman hand Lady Eltoun into it: a female servant sat behind, and the carriage drove hastily through the gates.—I was at a loss to account for her leaving the house without seeing me, especially, as I had come down to Copeland Hall by appointment; it was, however, probable that she was gone to Sir Charles, in town, and would return perhaps with him to a late dinner: but when the dinner-bell rang, my sister and I were the sole persons summoned. The footman, an old and faithful servant, who waited, looked confused, and the dinner was hurried on and off, in the most comfortless manner. That something had occurred to throw the house into disorder I had no doubt, for every one seemed either hurrying or idling.

The next morning brought my sister a letter, which stated that Lady Eltoun would be prevented, by particular circumstances, from returning for some time into Surry; and in this state of things, I once more quitted the hall.

In explanation of these matters, I subsequently learnt that Sir Charles, whose property was about 8,000*l.* a-year, had been living at the rate of near 18,000*l.*; his creditors had consequently become enraged and determined to imprison or outlaw him, and officers had been directed to take possession of his house.

To protect himself from arrest he had repaired to the continent, where Lady Eltoun joined him, and they proceeded to S——, a French town of some importance, where my sister was to rejoin them. These circumstances were to me of but little consequence, but there hung an interest over my titled patient, which rendered me very solicitous about her. Calling one morning on my mother to inquire if any thing had been heard from my sister, there was a letter of hers for me upon the table. Without alluding either to the town or country she was visiting for the first time, she merely wrote to tell

me, that not another moment must be lost to Lady Eltoun; a French surgeon of some eminence having seen her, had pronounced an operation necessary to save her life, and prepared at once to perform it. But his patient dared not submit to it there, and she was resolved to return to England for the purpose, if that sad alternative must be resorted to; nay more, she was to start on the morning following the date of her letter.

This news surprised me not—and I called on Mr. C——, my eminent friend, and talked the matter over. A very few days brought her to town. I saw her first. Lodgings of the most comfortable condition had been provided for her in Sloane Street, and every care and even indulgence was lavished on her which her sad case required. Mr. C—— and I saw her together, but we kept our opinions secret till the next day. When her fears were confirmed, her feelings were overpowered and she burst into tears. After this temporary solace her woman's fortitude by slow degrees returned.

* * * * *

The cancer extirpated, in a few more minutes we had left her, and the room was darkened. An opiate seemed to tranquillize her till night, when I saw her again:—Sir Charles's letter and a rose were on her pillow; I stepped so lightly, that she could not hear me come to her bedside: her large and dark eyes were wide open, and bent on me;—they spoke a silent resignation, but I did not speak to her. Her first night was a favourable one; and though the second was ushered in with fever and a slight delirium, on the following day all her symptoms were promising, and she was soon sitting in her drawing-room, and receiving calls from several friends, who manifested a sympathy in her case. Amongst these, the most constant and kind in her attention was the Dowager, her husband's mother. The old lady, from their marriage, had cherished both pride and prejudice against Lady Eltoun; hence they had scarcely ever met, till the chamber of sickness had brought the former to her senses, by enriching her with some touches of pity and condolence, which feelings, I suppose, moving as she did through the highest ranks of society, she had not found leisure to entertain before.

I wrote daily bulletins to Sir Charles, who throughout all his letters, I must do him the justice to say, manifested a proper anxiety. He desired Lady Eltoun might leave England the very day we pronounced it safe for her so to do; and with this wish she was far too ready to comply. Poor confiding creature! could she but have imagined those trials which still awaited her, an early grave in the land of her birth would have been a far happier lot.

But the wheels of her destiny were already on the move; and within six weeks of her arrival in London, she was leaving it by

easy stages for Dovor, whence she would hasten to rejoin her husband at S——. The journey renovated both her health and spirits, and she soon rose with the freshness of the morning, and mixed once more in the gaieties of S——. Their house was ever open to both English and French, and their table was spread with every luxury for those who only knocked at the door and introduced themselves ! Sir Charles was still too indolent to live and dress himself without an Italian valet ; and Lady Eltoun, restored to all her beauty, required two females for her toilet. And how was this life of extravagance and wantonness kept up ? solely by courting the old dowager, who allowed her son a very liberal income from her private purse, which was paid to him quarterly ; but it was quite inadequate to Sir Charles's mode of life, and always condemned long before it was received. He was a man of so little courage, that he dared not know absolutely what his income was ; the payments of the day were protracted till the morrow, and by this procrastination, he again became so involved, that his tradesmen refused to supply his house any longer, and became unceasing, even insulting, in their applications. Notwithstanding, by some means or other, the same style was maintained, and their expenses, if any thing, increased ; and it is impossible to tell where it would all have ended, but from the interference of a higher Power, which in one sad and fatal visitation, checked them in their thoughtless career, and changed in a few short days the scene of pleasure, if so it may be termed, into one of sickness and sorrow. Lady Eltoun in dress, to gratify her husband, perhaps herself, thought nothing too expensive, and even the fashions, as they came out, were not numerous enough.

She returned one afternoon, after shopping the greatest part of the morning, with some costly bijouterie, which she was displaying to her husband, when she complained of feeling sick and tired. These trifling symptoms would have been disregarded, had not others of a more serious nature followed. Towards night she had become so fervid, that the head was slightly affected ; Sir Charles was alarmed, and a surgeon sent for, who in a very short time informed him, that the disease had returned with increased violence ; and the old proverb was verified, that evils never happen singly. The term for their house, which was merely rented, had expired, and the landlord would not, although informed of Lady Eltoun's danger, permit them to remain beyond the next day. Their money was so nearly exhausted, (even part of their plate had been sacrificed, to gratify mere whims,) that another house was out of the question, and they were glad to move into an obscure street, where they could live unnoticed. A friend called there to say farewell. The sole inmates of the house were Sir Charles, his wife, a female friend, (who had attached herself lately to them,) and

Lady Eltoun's maid, who had accompanied her from England. Poor Lady Eltoun was a martyr to constant sufferings. Yes, it was evident, this withering flower would shortly droop and die. A second voyage to England was impossible, although the poor creature, in her ravings from pain, begged to be taken home. All that the faculty there could recommend were poisonous doses of opium, to quiet her; and the quantity taken was such that she seemed to live on it.

Throughout this, her last trial, she was nursed day and night, by the friend who consented to share their miserable lot. She had known them in apparent affluence, and showing herself mindful of the past, was ready to sacrifice the time, that would have been devoted to pleasure, to her beloved friend. She watched with a sister's anxiety over her last hours—she exposed herself to the noxious and sickening breath of disease, which had now so scathed and wasted its young, and once beautiful victim, that ere another month had passed, she was snatched from her earthly struggles, and consigned, at the age of twenty-four, to a cold and foreign grave—and few were present to hallow it.

The grass had not yet grown over that unlamented and unheeded spot in the burial ground of St. Agnes's chapel, without the town of S——, when a lady and gentleman, gaily dressed, passed up the pavement, and ascending the steps leading to the chapel, entered it—the door was closed, and they stood where but a short time since, the prayers for the departed Lady Eltoun had been heard—and uttered by themselves.

In the few minutes spent within that sacred building, what had transpired? How soon it may be told; and what conviction does it carry with it. From the church they returned arm-in-arm, and in the most earnest conversation. They walked thus lightly on to the gate, where a carriage was waiting. The gentleman handed his fair companion into the vehicle, and ere he stepped into it himself, his eye turned towards the church, and then it fell, and seemed for a moment fixed, upon a small mound, under a low wall in the corner of the burial-ground. It was *her* grave, and with their earthly ties scarce severed, here the heart that, at least, was faithful towards him, lay cold and pulseless. Sir Charles, with the mockery of mourning about him, had turned his last look towards Emilia's grave, and was now seeking happiness with another.

MIDSHIPMAN'S EXPEDIENTS; OR, THE DEPUTY CLEAN SHIRT.

A TALE OF THE SEA.

BY E. HOWARD, ESQ.

Author of "RATTLIN THE REEFER," &c. &c.

A CLEAN shirt and a shilling—a light heart and a thin pair of—of—of refinements—these, as the old song says, "will go through the world, my brave boys." The remark is profound, and, at the same time, eminently practical. We shall not stop here to enquire what is "going through the world," for, as all that are in, will go out of it sooner perhaps than they expect, sooner certainly than they desire, we will not follow up a subject that leads us on so rapidly, and to where it is so doleful to be led.

A clean shirt and a light heart. Blessed, and thrice blessed appendages to mortality! But, alas! they are not always the attendants on the deserving; for, had such been the case, our worthy friend, Horace Elmsford, would not have awaked one blustering Sunday morning in October, without either. At half-past seven o'clock on that memorable day he was situated on this earth's surface, or rather on a portion of the waters that cover this earth, sixteen miles south and by west three quarters west from Cape Ceci.

Already was his hammockman importunately standing by the youth so unwilling to turn out, already had it been notified to him that seven bells had been struck, and that the officer of the watch was impatient that the stowing of the hammocks should be completed; and that, for his, Mr. Horace Elmsford's particular hammock, they were only waiting to cover in with the white Sunday-fine hammock clothes. He turned listlessly from side to side; though he could find no pleasure in his bed, he had no inducement to rise—he had neither a clean shirt nor a light heart.

It will be sufficient, in this place, to tell my friends that Mr. Horace Elmsford was a passed midshipman, a proud and a poor man, the son of a man about as poor and a great deal

prouder. Horace's father was a barrister, with infinitely more integrity than practice, and having a contempt of every thing mean, and base, and pettifogging, he was shunned by the attorneys as a walking libel upon the law—or, more properly speaking, the practice of it.

Men of such stern and unbending principles should be quietly dispatched, and no coroner's inquests permitted to be held upon the bodies if they should happen to be found; for such monsters of virtue entirely destroy the general-felicity principle—the fashionable one of the day—the greatest happiness to the greatest number; for is it not evident, when the majority are content to be little better than rogues, that the annoyance occasioned by one thoroughly just man among the community must be tremendous. Though Barrister Elmsford was not dead in nature he was dead in law. He was neither brow-beaten by the judge, cut by his seniors, or elbowed by his juniors, or pestered by hungry solicitors—he never had a cause. However, he had something better—a small patrimony. Upon this he lived, if without ostentation, without debt, endeavouring, to the extent of his limited means, to right the wronged, and to extend everywhere that circle of proud content in which he lived—a neglected, but honest man.

Horace was his only son. His father had well educated him on shore, and, at the age of fourteen, had sent him to serve his country in his majesty's navy. The youth had done so with honour to himself and advantage to the profession. He had now some months served his time, and had passed his examination for the rank of lieutenant, and was, at present, waiting for that promotion that was to be effected by an interest—that he had yet to acquire.

We have before acquainted our friends where the hero of this, our short tale, was exactly to be found at its opening. If any person is at all curious about the matter, he or she may take a pair of compasses, and a parallel ruler, and identify the very spot. But Horace was not in the angry waves buffeting them for his life, nor yet in a cradle of wicker-work, built after the fashion of our progenitors; he was in his hammock, in a large tub of an oblongated shape called an old 98-gun ship—a first rate in the books of the Admiralty and the Navy List, and no where else. However, she carried in her dark recesses a very decent quantity of that human aliment for powder, of which kings and conquerors are so lavish. Horace himself was a delicate morsel that war had not yet snapped up, though the bloody-fanged monster had often made a few shrewd gripes at him.

Who does not know, who knows anything, the slovenly, blundering, leewardly three decker, the Old Harfleur. A ship that never went to windward excepting when she was towed. Every

body who ever belonged to her was always trying to get out of her, and nobody ever got into her that could help it. It is not pleasant to belong to a vessel that never could get into action in time, if things were going on well, or out of it at all if it were necessary to run away. Thanks to the gallantry of the British navy, the last predicament never occurred; for, if it had, the old drogher would have been belaboured into a mummy, and gone down a well filled slaughterhouse; for I don't think that the ship that had been victorious in every general action for a century, *could have struck*.

After all, the old Harfleur, though going to pieces, was not a crack ship. She was, therefore, a sort of refuge for the destitute, a floating prison for supernumerary midshipmen and supererogatory pursers and marine officers. Her ship's company was, also, the worst in the fleet. A great part of them were the elected of the jails. It was a happy thing for the gallant baronet who commanded them, that the chances were but small that he should ever be required to march through Coventry with them; though no one knew better how to lead them into action; after all, they would, and did cut a better figure there than at Coventry.

How Horace Elmsford came in this wise, (to use a good old phrase) to be a supernumerary passed midshipman on board of H. M. S., Harfleur. He had very recently belonged to the 18-gun brig, the Bulfinch, but this vessel feeling too strong an inclination to "warble her native wood-notes wild" through her thirty-two pound carronades, had got too close in-shore with the French batteries, and whilst they struck her, she struck the ground. When night came, the officers and crew abandoned the vessel, and taking to their boats, set fire to her. The ship's company and officers, however, saved their personal effects, and they, with them, were distributed among the ships of the Toulon fleet.

Now, a year, or perhaps a year and a half before Horace was beaten out of his ship, he was completely cheated of his affections, but by a person who ought to have known better. He had, for a very short space of time, moved in a remarkably high and select circle, among the stars of the aristocracy. Being a decidedly handsome young fellow, he had been much petted. All the young ladies, yes, all who were not actually engaged, had made love to him. They did not mean any thing by it, sweet innocent souls!—how could they?—he was only a boy and a midshipman. How could the Ladies Louisa and Amelia, and the Honourable Misses Montalbert and Fontaineblanque, suppose that the son of a poor lawyer, though in the prettiest naval uniform imaginable, could, for a moment, ever think of forming an alliance with persons so exclusive as themselves? Their

supposed immunity from such presumption was the cause of blinding poor Horace with many sweet but dangerous immunities to himself. They fondled this untamed midshipman like a tame monkey. The consequences were very natural—he fell deeply in love with one of them.

She was a sweet, blue-eyed young creature, that would have loved Horace to distraction if it had been at all proper. Midshipmen's leave of absence are not so durable as the long vacations. Horace had declared himself in a week, and the young lady had declared it all very foolish every day after; but what was not either very wise or very humane on her part, she gave him the opportunity of repeating the declaration twenty times a day.

One day, the pet midshipman had behaved very ill to the lady; he had either taken, or refused when he might have taken, some little innocent endearment, and the young lady, in her anger, had at last consented that he should speak to the Earl, her papa. She was very sorry for it afterwards, as they were to have been partners, at least in six sets, in that evening's dance. Half an hour after the fatal permission had been granted, the young officer rushed into the presence of his lady-love little better than a maniac.

"O! Bella, Bella!" he exclaimed, dashing about frantically his clustering curls, "I am the most miserable of wretches!"

"What has happened, Horace?"

"Your father has actually turned me out of the house."

"Why then were you so rude to me this morning?" said the lady, with half a tear in each eye, and a whole pout upon her lip.—

"Heavens and earth! what has that to do with the question; my peace of mind is wrecked—my heart seared—all my future prospects blighted."—

"How could you be so foolish as to go to my father?"

"Did you not consent? are you as false as fair? are you?"—

"Dear Horace, don't fret yourself so much; how you do go on; pray, sir, do you think no one suffers but yourself? who is to console me for the loss of a partner in at least six dances at the ball this evening? and here we have been practising the figure for four mornings together;—and no other person in uniform."

"Do you love me? Did you ever love me?" said the impassioned youth.

"Yes, yes; as much as a very young person like myself, and a very dutiful daughter, ought—perhaps, Horace, a little more.—Mercy, me! That's papa's bell! How furiously he is ringing! do go, Horace, I should never be able to support a scene"—

“ One word ! ”—

“ No, no. ”—

“ A token. ”—

“ Impossible. ”—

“ My heart is broken ! ”—

“ My father's bell again ! I declare I hear him on the stairs. ”

“ Farewell, for ever ! ”—He wrung her hand for an instant, and, in doing so, he plucked from it, quite unconsciously on both parts, I presume, her embroidered white cambric pocket handkerchief ; he thrust it in his bosom, flew down the stairs, overturned the gouty old porter in the hall, hurried to Portsmouth, and, before his furlough was expired, was walking the deck a disconsolate lover.

Now, any young man of nineteen, who has not a virtuous and heroic passion, confessed or unconfessed, providing that he had a fair opportunity of falling in love, must be endued with a heart that ought to rank but one degree above a frost-bitten turnip. A chaste aspiration of this description, at once elevates the mind and purifies the taste. The passion not only burns in the youthful bosom with a generous warmth, but throws also a pure light round the mind, that shows at once the hideousness of vice, and makes us abhor what else we might eventually have been tempted even to embrace.

This lone relic, this cambric handkerchief, Horace treasured with a care almost pious ; but—for is there not always a vein of earth running through every thing mortal?—this treasure, through much fondling and handling, at last became a most unfit subject for the laundress. True it is, Horace might have washed it with his tears, and dried it either with his sighs, or in his bosom, but he did not, he only got it nicely cleansed and ironed ; and then wrapping it carefully up in some of the finest silver paper that he could procure, he deposited it in leaves of lavender in the sanctum sanctorum of his sea-chest. In my opinion he did as much as a devoted lover could have been reasonably required to do. He cared for it more than the person who once owned it, appeared to care for him.

Now we come to the crisis of our tale. When Horace Elmsford was drafted into H. M. S. Harfleur, he was in absolute possession of a very indifferent kit of clothes—a *grande passion* a little the worse for wear, and a beautiful, clean, cambric handkerchief, with a coronet delicately worked in the middle of it.

When Horace came on board, the midshipman of the brig was contemptuously looked down upon by the magnates of the first-rate. Being utterly unknown he was consequently friendless ; being friendless, he was grievously oppressed. He could be nobody.—The lieutenants affected to forget his name, and sent for the “ Brig's Midshipman. ” The captain's steward

forgot to ask him to dine with his master. He had not yet hob-and-nobbed in the ward-room. Mr. Midshipman Tomkins had astonished him by a description of the splendors of his father's one-horse *shay*; and Mr. master's mate Mucksallow had assured him that his mother kept two maids besides a boy. The lover of Lady Isabella Montescue was surrounded by a set of somebodies.

Would that it were permitted to me to make a digression upon shirts. Out of England, they are the most ill-used article in existence. All else over the world how villanously are they assassinated under the shallow pretence of washing them. In America they Europe them, that is, a bevy of coal-black nymphs get them into a running stream, and with a bat in one hand, they pound them, and bethwack them on a piece of rock, crying, "Europe, Europe!" at every blow. When this operation is over they look white enough, certainly, but the little that remains of them would make excellent lint for the dressings of gun-shot wounds. If these friends, whom we cherish next to our bodies, are thus scurvily treated in the west, they are still worse off in the East Indies. But I cannot dilate on this subject; neither my time or my temper will permit it. But I must shake out a drop of indignation from the vial of my wrath on the *blancissuses* of the paltry third-rate towns of the Mediterranean.

Immediately that a man of war arrived in one of these receptacles for sin, the ship was besieged by applicants, some in full dress, with swords by their sides, each with a long certificate, soliciting for the honour of washing the stockings and shirts of the English lords. Of course some of the applicants got them, and the day after, all the respectable part of the township appeared in clean linen. When every third man, not actually a pauper, confessed himself a noble, this accession of linen was a public benefit,—a little certainly to the exasperation of the benefactors. Yet it ought to have been considered only as an act of national courtesy, to lend the aristocracy of our allies a change of linen! and had it not involved a very serious mischief, I should never have complained of it; but, unfortunately, these articles were never brought on board until the fore-topsail was sheeted home, and then only half washed, and entirely damp; and, after a Sicilian dandy has worn your shirt for a week, it were as well, not only that it had been well washed, but well ironed also.

This episode is not altogether irrelevant to the subject; for, considering the dangers to which an officer's stock was exposed about a quarter of a century ago, who can be surprised that a midshipman was often forced, for want of a clean shirt, to have recourse to all manner of shifts?

On the Sunday morning in October, in which our *conte*

veredique opens, the scarcity of clean shirts in the cockpit of his Majesty's ship *Harfleur* was alarming, and quite as annoying as that of bullion at present in our money-market. Including the captain's clerk and the master's mates, with the midshipmen, there were just thirty cockpitionians, and they were enabled to muster only five clean shirts and a half among them. At that time of honesty and single-mindedness, false collars were not, and dickeys, but newly invented, were mentioned with horror. The uniform coat and waistcoat were both single-breasted, thus, there was no buttoning up to the chin, and covering a deficiency with a military air; and there was also a proverb at that time rife in the navy—"not to have a collar to one's shirt, was tantamount to being a scoundrel." There was no room for disguise, or rather too much room to practise it successfully, excepting by the deeply initiated.

On the previous Sunday, much amusement had been afforded to the captain and the wardroom officers, by the many subterfuges that had been resorted to, to make the necessary appearance at divisions; and one reefer had actually been discovered ensconcing himself in all the shady places that he could find on the main-deck, who had made to himself a clean collar of writing-paper.

The ship had already been at sea fourteen weeks, during which time the English fleet, under fighting old Sir Edward Pellew, had been using every stratagem to draw the enemy out. We certainly put forth our most winning ways, looking at times so innocent and so sheepish, that we might have tempted anybody but a Frenchman to have come out and played with us. Twice we did get them far enough from the shore to enable us to exchange courtesies, but they quickly made their bow before we had time to give them one fiftieth part of the welcome we had intended,

Is it in *Pelham*, or *Vivian Grey*, or in some other very, very fashionable novel, or in all of them, that the male toilet of the hero is described?—the various brushes, the multiplied and the ingeniously contrived instruments, the vessels of cut glass, and of silver and gold, the fragrant oils, and the volatalized essences of the exquisite on shore, have been described with minuteness, and read with avidity. Shall, then, the sea-going midshipman have no record of his labours at personal embellishment—midshipmen, of whom it may be truly said, when in full blow, that, "they toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon, in all his glory, was not like one of them." We will answer for it he was not.

With more perplexity of thought than ever afflicted mathematician over an insoluble problem, after much unwillingness to quit his hammock, Horace Elmsford joined his assembled

messmates in the midshipmen's berth, and hid the sorrows of his countenance in the steams of his hot bergoo. Coming from a brig, he was of little estimation with his fellows; they insulted him up to that point that did not quite provoke him to knock them down; and that morning, the question of "How are you off for soap?" came with fearful intensity upon his auricular organ. However, something must be done, and the business of Adonizing was at length commenced; yet few dared to hope for any thing like success in that operation so pleasurable to the young, so anxious to persons of a certain standing, and so very distressing to those who have fallen into the "sear and yellow leaf" of ugliness and age.

Shortly, the larboard and starboard berths were deserted, and the cockpit filled. Will you walk in, gentlemen?—you cannot, at first, very well distinguish objects, on account of the misty and yellow light; but you will soon get accustomed to it, and to the close and cloudy atmosphere, relieved by whiffs from the bilge water up the pump-well, and the smothery odour of mud and tar from the cable tiers. All this may strike at first, but it is nothing, absolutely nothing, when you are used to it. However, till our sight becomes a little more clear, let us listen to the sounds: there is noise enough, and merriment prevails; but it is rather too boisterous and *brayante* to be quite real, though it is an excellent counterfeit, truly. There is a sort of auction going on, not very unlike that which takes place of an evening round the newspaper offices, when the little dirty blackguards impede the foot-path, and annoy the ears of the passengers by cries like these,—“Two Globes for a Standard!”—“A Times and a halfpenny for a Sun!”—“A Morning Chronicle for fourpence-farthing!”

But our cockpitonian mart began with the offer. “Two dirty shirts for a clean one,”—no takers; clean linen being that morning at a remarkably high premium. At length, the exorbitant price of three was offered—and accepted by all those who had any of the demand on hand. When this was settled as far as the negotiations could go, and the market being quite drained of its supply, the remainder were forced to inspect the first page of the chapter of expedients. The previously worn shirts were examined most scrupulously, and those that appeared to have been the least soiled, laid aside for a second investigation; and at length with many appeals for advice around, the difficult selection is made, and then commences the arts of coaxing, to rally some strength into the drooping collar, and to give some appearance of firmness to the discomfited frill. Whilst at best one half of them are thus occupied, let us turn our attention to the remainder.

I withdraw the curtain and place the picture before you: to



the extreme left, in sociability of cares, two middies are seated on one chest—one of them is cleaning his teeth, and getting his mouth filled with bristles for his pains, he is not in the best of humours, for hair is not pleasant either to masticate or to swallow, and very difficult to dislodge, and his annoyance is rather increased by being preached at by his brother reefer, who is boasting of his newly discovered faculty of spitting blacking, he expectorates and rubs, and descants, and is really as happy as ***** at being able to discharge so much polishing dirt from his mouth. The standing order being, that no lights shall be used in the cockpit without they be secured in lanterns; the consequence is, that the more battered and broken the lantern, the better, as there is less horn to intercept the saffron rays of the purser's dip, which dip is seldom put inside, but generally stuck on the rim of its enjoined preserver. Let us move forward a little, and we shall see another young gentleman performing his ablutions: author of Pelham! canst thou guess how? Thou canst not—and yet I must relate it—as Bardolph remarks, a worn out serving-man will make a fresh tapster, so our young friend has proved that a used shirt will make an efficient towel, and we are sure that Nelson, and those heroes of our brighter naval days, have well experienced the fact.

Being the decided enemy to the doctrine of expediency, let us hurry on to the next group, and we shall find it consist of the midshipmen's servant, and one of his masters, who endeavour between them to affix to its place on the roast beef uniform coat of the latter, a renegade button. The boy is throwing but a miserable light on the subject, and the reefer is pricking his fingers quite as often as he pierces the unwilling cloth. But we have no room to detail minutely every group of this anxious and attiring thirty; let it suffice to say, that they might be seen in every stage from all but nudity, to the full togg'd midshipman with gold bound skyscraper clapped on his head jauntily athwart ships.

On a Sunday morning the marine who is placed as sentinel over the light that is always burning in the cockpit, has no sinecure office. His arm is generally made stiff for the ensuing week by continuous brushing. Those also who can boast of the shadow of a beard upon their chins, give, at this important crisis, ample employment to the ship's barber.

In a three decker there is generally some feud between the larboard and the starboard berths, and whilst the young gentlemen are engaged on their sedulous and all engrossing occupation of Adonizing, the opportunity is generally seized for making predatory excursions into the deserted berths. An ill guarded case-bottle of rum is generally the reward of a suc-

cessful foray of this sort, a dreadful cobbing the attendant upon a failure. We have altered all these things now, in the navy. Little boys, fresh from school, will talk of their injured honour, and oil their Manton hair-triggers at the breath of insult. The young gentlemen, at present, are very prettily behaved young gentlemen indeed; but let neither us nor them, on that account, despise the rough sailor midshipmen, who settled their disputes with their fists, thought more of their country's honour than their own, and nobly supported it too, with Duncan, Howe, and Nelson.

But in the midst of this bustling, bawling, brushing and sloping, we must now discover how our hero was employed. He was just about half as miserable as a man that is going to be hung that day fortnight. His captain had, as yet, scarcely noticed him; the lieutenants had openly slighted him, and even his messmates, and the petty officers of his own class, had hitherto affected a contempt for him. Now where a man has to bear up against an accumulation of contumely, you may take it as a sound philosophical truth, that he will do it with the more chance of success, the better that he is attired. 'Tis hard, very hard, with soiled linen and a threadbare coat, to attempt to look down on perfumed and well dressed pride. Horace felt this, this Sunday morning, and felt it bitterly. He had performed his lavations with scrupulosity, his clothes were still good and neat, and he had both his hat and boots in the best order; but he had shipped his last clean shirt on the previous Sunday. Though he knew he had but thirteen, he still continued to count them over and over again, as if the art of enumerating them would increase their number.

Mr. Peter Wilkins, the son of a wholesale cheesemonger in Tooley street, and whose father was the deputy of the ward; and Mr. Jacob Filkins, the son of a retail grocer (but still in a large way), ready dressed for muster, stood over poor Horace, insulting him with their pity, and irritating him by their remarks.

"Poor fellow!" said Mr. Peter Wilkins, looking complacently on his own proudly emblazoned frill, and acting the compassionate, "he hayn't got never a clean shirt, what in the world will he do?"

"Sham Ab'ram, skulk, go on the sick list; brig mitchmite, poor, shabby." Mr. Jacob Filkins loved to be sententious, but he did not so much love the looks that his sententiousness had brought upon him from its object. "Yes," said Peter to his friend Jacob, "you come to the point at once. Now you know, Filkins, folks who are nobodies, and the sons of nobodies, may do very well for cutters and brigs, and craft of that sort, and pass for gentlemen there too, but young gentlemen who belong

to line-of-battle ships ought to be the sons of somebodies; now my father allows me forty pounds a year, Filkins, which you know very well; and mother, Mrs. Deputy Wilkins, as the top gentry always call her in our ward, takes care that my rig out never disgraces the ship: why, I have six and thirty linen shirts!"

"I know you have," said his Achates, "and I've got almost as many, and five of them are clean yet; but I could not demean myself, you know," looking significantly upon poor Horace.

"No, you couldn't, Filkins. Must not disguise everybody that is nobody, like a gentleman, or I would lend the poor devil one myself."

"Beggar—on horseback—ride to the devil," said Filkins.

And thus these two city-sprung worthies mutually inflated the pride of each other. Poor innocents! they knew not all this time how near they were to the verge of danger. Still they stood over Elmsford, marking his every article as he plucked them forth separately from his chest. At length the searcher after clean linen had made a very decent pile of clothes upon the deck, for now he had nearly routed to the very bottom of this massive receptacle of his goods and chattels. Still the two youths, Wilkins and Filkins, looked down upon his labours with all variations of superciliousness.

"I'm thinking, Mr. Filkins," said the son of the Deputy, "that they'll beat off to divisions in no time, and this brig's midshipmite will be mast-headed for the rest of the day. I say, come here all of ye—look at Elmsford—he's raving mad. See here, he's flinging his duds all out of his chest—foh! here's a kit for you," continued the orator, giving the pile of garments that lay on the deck a most contemptuous spurn with his foot,

"And a kick for you," said the enraged Horace, starting up, and sent the astonished Wilkins some feet off by the vigour of the application, until he was brought up by falling down into a basin of well used soap and water, that effectually spoiled the frill and collar of his clean shirt for that day.

"My friend," said Filkins, interposing his long nose.

"Hand him that," replied Horace, striking this said interposing nose smartly over its bridge. As the water gushed forth from the rock, when stricken by the wand of Moses, so rushed forth the sanguineous streams from the magnificent organ of Filkins; and thus, in less than one minute, were two clean shirts spoiled.

"I'll have the satisfaction of a gentleman, the moment we get on shore," said Wilkins, putting on another shirt.

"And so will I," said Filkins, pulling off his bloody one.

"Then you'll get more than you are entitled to," said Horace, working away at his chest.

"Low fellow—brig's midshipman—father would astonish him ashore," muttered Wilkins.

"Very low—how he would stare—our villa at Peckham—green verandah—American aloes—in a small sugar-cask—painted and varnished—looks like a vase—had him there—know who's who," replied Filkins.

After all, the petty cares of life are the most annoying—the most subduing. We can meet great misfortunes with firmness, and bear up nobly against terrible reverses. Is our country invaded, our fields plundered, and our lives, and the lives of those who are dear to us threatened, we gird up our loins like strong men; our step becomes more proud; there is even a smile of haughtiness and defiance upon our countenances. In a struggle of this sort we may be destroyed, but the better part of us, the soul, cannot be overcome.

But to appear among our equals mean, ridiculous, sordid, beggarly; those are the stings that enter into and fester the heart of the proud man. Horace Elmsford would much rather have marched up to a well served battery, than have faced the annoyances of that Sunday morning.

But he was not entirely without resource. The genius of love was, all this terrible time of tribulation, watching near him. He was too proud to feign sickness to avoid the muster; he had reached the very bottom of his chest, and in despair. At length he saw embedded in lavender sprigs, and delicately enwrapped in clean writing paper, the well starched and immaculate cambric handkerchief that he had taken from the lady Isabella. He opened it out, and looked upon it wistfully. He threw his whole soul into the rush of recollections, and, for a short space, floated rapturously down the stream of time. In those moments he did the beautiful girl justice; he acquitted her of heartlessness, and pronounced himself guilty of folly the most inexcusable. "I," said he, "to aspire to the hand of the only daughter of an earl, who cannot, on a Sunday, command a clean shirt. Presumption—madness!"

"Yes," continued he, half aloud, "her conduct was the wisest, discreetest. She showed me that she liked me well enough to encourage me to be worthy of her—to win her by my worth; and if there is vigour in this arm, and firmness in this heart, I'll win her yet." After this rhapsody he did not turn his face to the wall, for there was no wall, withal, to turn his face to; but he turned it against the casing of the chain-pumps, and, clapping the cambric to his lips, gave it, with the best good will, half a dozen hearty kisses, after the manner of

lovers. Then, not thinking those endearments sufficient, he placed the love-token against his bosom, and then a new light broke in upon him; it was the inspiration of love. Surely it is no great stretch of the imagination to suppose, that a very small emanation of the soul of his own Isabella was near, and whispered him the brilliant idea.

Despair was no longer on his brow, but pride and cheerfulness mantled over his countenance. Horace was a lad of ingenuity; no one better understood how to rig a jury-mast, contrive a make-shift rudder, or achieve ends with the least possible means. He put on the cleanest shirt that he had; he then divided the pure and precious cambric exactly into halves; as he cut through the worked coronet in the centre, he sighed a little, but considered it altogether as a good omen. "We will divide our honours as well as our hearts," he said. Having made this division, and, taking care that the hemmed corners should be before, he brought two of them up through his black silk handkerchief, and lo! a pair of finer or stiffer shirt collars were not exhibited in the grand fleet that day. Having adjusted this peculiarly to his satisfaction, he brought the remainder of the handkerchief, having first impressed two or three plaits upon it, over his bosom, and, uniting the two parts in front with a handsome diamond pin, behold, he stood forth a naval exquisite of the first water. Of course, a few common pins were put in requisition, in order to keep this splendid invention in its proper situation.

But there is no privacy in a cockpit. The above operation had been watched by many a wondering, many an admiring eye, and two pair of envious and jealous ones. These belonged to the kicked and beaten Wilkins and Filkins. About five minutes before the drum had beaten to divisions, these two gentlemen had repaired to the quarter-deck, and, in a minute and a half precisely, every one there became acquainted with the nature of the ingenious contrivance that was about to be offered to their admiration.

The captain did nothing but rub his chin with delight at the invention; and, so eager was he to have an ocular proof of its perfection, that he ordered them to beat off full two minutes before the accustomed time.

Rub, dub-a-dub. The marines, half smothered with pipe-clay, and their eyes protruding from their sockets, on account of their clubbed pigtailed being tied so tightly behind, are under arms on the poop. Every officer in the ship, in his show clothes, is or ought to be on the quarter-deck, and the seamen come up, not rushing and scrambling as at the boatswain's pipe, but with a decent quiet befitting the sacred day. Every man is scrupu-

lously clean, and they range themselves in a double row entirely round the ship.

Up with the crowds of master's mates and midshipmen came Horace Elmsford, with his division list in his hand. He is the cynosure of all eyes; every officer has something to say to him; and the gallant captain himself, for the first time, condescends to speak to him, and bids him give a detail of the loss of the brig of war to which he had recently belonged.

Poor Horace, he was more than half aware of the cause of all the titterings, and jokings, and scrutinizing glances with which he was honoured; and he was covered with confusion, and his face became of the deepest scarlet, when Sir Hildebrand Capsule asked him, if he had saved from the wreck his whole stock of clean shirts.

"I perceive," said his tormenter, "that your linen is of a peculiar texture and fineness; but I rather wish that you would patronize frills, as you see they are worn by myself and all the other officers of my ship."

After having made Horace pass through this purgatory, the captain turned to the first lieutenant, and said, "I like the young fellow's looks amazingly; he is very handsome, and his features remarkable for intelligence and ingenuosness. I should like to show him some civility; I admire his contrivance exceedingly. Do you know any thing of his connexions?"

"Nothing at all, Sir Hildebrand. No great things, I should suspect, from whence he came. Mr. Wilkins, his messmate, says that he is very low and very poor; that he knows nothing of genteel society. Indeed, from several quarters I have heard reports so unfavourable of him, that, as yet, we have not asked him to dine in the ward-room. There are a sad set of scamps, just now, in the small craft of our navy."

"I am very sorry to hear this, indeed. He certainly has the air of a gentleman, though he seems to be labouring under a deal of confusion and embarrassment. Did he bring no letters of recommendation with him?"

"None at all, Sir Hildebrand."

"Sorry for it. I should like to have had him at my own table; but we must be careful, Mr. Dix—we must be careful. How does he do his duty?"

"Not a fault to find with him, Sir Hildebrand."

"Then, by sheaves and blocks, he shall dine with me to-morrow; tax his ingenuity again; look at him, Dix; he is as handsome as a figure-head, newly painted and gilded from the dock-yard."

In the mean time the divisions had been mustered, the various reports made, and every officer, with the exception of the captain

and his first lieutenant, had lanced his miserable sneer against the gentleman with the simulated clean shirt; every one, with the above exceptions, having pronounced him "low—very low."

But, at this precise moment, Horace Elmsford was not the only object of interest. An hour before, an English frigate had hove in sight of the fleet, and the admiral had made the signal to send boats on board of her, for letters and parcels from dear little England. The six-oared cutter had been absent almost half an hour. The captain was just upon the point of sending the men below, when she pulled alongside, and a bag full of letters were handed up, and two small boxes.

Independently of the letters in the bag, there was a parcel of letters for the captain, immediately from the admiralty. These, of course, were put into the captain's hand where he stood, whilst the bag and boxes were carried into the cabin. The captain breaks the seal of two or three; every eye in the ship is upon him excepting Horace's; he has no interest in the proceedings; he is only anxious to hide himself in the gloomy recesses of the cockpit. There he stands to leeward, and as far from the other groups of officers as the amplitude of the deck will allow.

Sir Hildebrand has read one particular letter slowly through; he seems transfixed with surprise, and in his astonishment he has dropped it upon the deck; before any can assist him he has picked it up again, and reads it through still more slowly; all manner of doubt is seen to vanish from his countenance; it is now lighted up with a rich smile of joyousness, and a little archness is mingled with its expression of happiness. He walks rapidly over to leeward; the clusters of officers make room for him with wonder, he passes them all, to the solitary corner where stands the disconsolate Horace Elmsford, he seizes the wonder-stricken youth by both hands, works them violently, pump-handle fashion, and at length exclaims, "My dear Lord Milntower, I wish you all manner of joy!" Then, leading him forward by the hand, he continues, addressing the assembled officers, "Gentlemen, I am proud to introduce to you the junior lieutenant of this ship, my friend, Lord Milntower."

"Lor-r-r," said Mr. Wilkins to Mr. Filkins.

"My," said Mr. Filkins to Mr. Wilkins. "I wish I had lent him a clean shirt."

"Well, a real lord too; nobody can say I was'nt his messmate, however." There was consolation in the idea, and Mr. Wilkins paced the deck more proudly.

We are not going to occupy three or four pages with the expressions of surprise, and congratulations, and the offers of friendship that ensued. Every one now perceived, at once, the

air aristocratique in my Lord Milontower, that was totally imperceptible in Mr. Midshipman Elmsford. Every one accused himself of being a fool for overlooking so much latent merit. However, the captain soon rescued our friend Horace from the persecutions of politeness by taking his arm and leading him into his cabin. The reader may be sure that no allusion was made to the deputy clean shirt. Sir Hildebrand's valet was sent for, and the whole toilet of his master placed at the service of the young lord.

But, for all these attentions, there was but small occasion; Horace's father, now the Earl of Arrowfield, had thought of the dignity of his son. The two small boxes were for him, and contained the necessary uniform for his advanced rank in the service, and a fresh supply of linen. There were also two letters placed in the hands of Horace.

"Command, my dear lord," said the captain; "the privacy of my after-cabin; you will there be able to read, unmolested, your communications from home." Sir Hildebrand again shook Horace's hand, and our hero found himself alone.

For a few minutes he could only pace the deck of the cabin, so tumultuous were his feelings. Though the news that he had just received were so joyous, yet joy at first was hardly felt. Astonishment seemed to possess one half off the faculties of his mind and tenderness the other. He had his father's letter, sealed with the impression of an immense coronet, in his hand, and yet he was thinking of Lady Elizabeth Mountescue. There too, was the faintest shadow possible of regret amidst his thoughts, when the reflection stole upon him that he had not achieved greatness, but that it had been thrust upon him. "But she will pardon me this, I hope," he thought. He would not have been so well pleased if he had known how easily.

At length, when his perturbation had a little subsided, he broke the seal of his father's letter. It was to the following effect:

"My dear Son,

"You have been a blessing and a pride to me during many years of poverty, and almost a privation, and knowing and feeling this, I am assured that you will be my boast and my honour in our unexpected affluence and advancement. Your uncle, the late Earl of Arrowfield, though he never could love, could not forbear esteeming me. On his death, the horrors of which I trust I have alleviated, he desired to be commended to you, and to express his regrets that he had never been known to you. My poor brother has been severely tried. Two fine youths, his sons, cut off in the short space of seven months,—I marvel not that the blow was too heavy for him. He bowed his head before the infliction and died. There are

three of his daughters living, your cousins, whom you have not only never seen, but perhaps, whose very names are unknown to you. We must be kind to the poor orphans.

“For myself, I felt that I wanted occupation; by the time that you will have received this, most likely I shall have joined the present ministry; it seems that my stern and uncompromising character will be more appreciated in the cabinet than at the bar. I doubt it, but we shall see.

“As to yourself, my dear Horace, I wish you to remain in the service till the conclusion of the war. It is just and honourable that you should do so. After that, of course, as you will have heavy responsible duties as a great landowner and a future statesman to perform, you will retire from the service, and educate yourself carefully for the important office that Providence has called upon you to fulfil.

“The white flag will soon be flying on the batteries of Toulon, for Bonaparte, with his army nearly annihilated, is flying before his enemies. The moment that peace is established, hasten to the arms of your affectionate father, nor leave me till I expire in yours.

“ARROWFIELD AND EASTONVILLE.”

Horace did not read this letter unmoved—he promised a great deal of love to his three cousins; but vowed that it should be strictly brotherly.

There was another coronetted letter to be opened. It was from Lord Mountescue, and ran thus:

“My dear Lord Milontower,

“What was the cause of that little *brouillerie* of ours? You misunderstood me quite. (‘Walk out of my house was plain speaking, however,’” muttered Horace.) “I was quite surprised at not finding you at dinner that evening. We were so disappointed, particularly Bella. She tells me you robbed her of a handkerchief. *Au voleur, au voleur*. I can’t allow that, you know; so immediately you return to England, you must come to us and restore it with your own hand. So I find by the Gazette that that most estimable nobleman, your highly respected father, is one of the cabinet. No one can rejoice at it more than myself. Tell him that he may command my vote and interest in both houses. I shall not say adieu, but merely *au revoir*.

“MOUNTESCUE.”

Contained in this was a little billet, merely containing these words:

“Do not, Horace, lose or spoil my handkerchief. I set a great value upon it.
ISABELLA.”

“I have cut it in halves;” said he, as he kissed the perfumed note.

Hardly had Horace apparelled himself than the admiral signalled to the Harfleur to send Lieutenant Lord Milntower on board the Flag. This was a great annoyance to the Harfleurs. Horace of course went, and was again overwhelmed with all manner of homage and attention. The admiral presented him with his commission, and the young lieutenant came on board his own ship in the commander-in-chief's barge.

The hands were immediately turned up, and the commission read. That day, the midshipmen lost their appetites in astonishment. They were in a state to swallow any thing but their dinners. Not only was it now believed that the dirty brig's midshipman was the son of a cabinet minister, but that that very midshipman was going home to be appointed the First Lord of the Admiralty. However, they resolved to make the most of him whilst they had him. It was not long.

Horace that day dined with the admiral, and the ensuing night slept on board his ship. The next day it was announced to Sir Hildibrande Capsule, that Lord Milntower had exchanged into the Flag. The son of a cabinet minister and a real lord was an article much too good for the Harfleurs.

How Horace bore his change of fortune, and what other advantages befel him are all foreign to our purpose. He had known adversity and borne it like a man. We hardly can suppose that he would act unbecoming one, in his prosperity.

It was a long time before the excitement among the Harfleurs subsided. Cutters' and brigs' midshipmen were treated better among them afterwards. Lord Milntower went over the ship's side for the last time: Mr. Wilkins and his friend Mr. Filkins sided up to him, and asked him hesitatingly to shake hands with them as old messmates, the which his lordship did most heartily, and rather painfully to them in its energy.

When peace was proclaimed, and Mr. Wilkins had it all his own way round the fire-side in Tooley-street, and Mr. Filkins ditto, at the villa at Peckham, both of these half-pay lieutenants would spin most extraordinarily long yarns, among which there was always sure to figure something very remarkable about their intimate friend and messmate, Lord Milntower.

ONE WITNESS.

A TALE OF THE LAW.

THE beautiful pathway leading across the meadows between the villages of Mill Hill and Hendon, was, on a lovely autumnal Sunday afternoon, in the year 1760, somewhat thickly spotted with groups of well-dressed rustics on their way to the church of the latter place. The bells announced that the hour of prayer was drawing nigh, and the chimes from the belfries of Hampstead and Highgate, though in a more subdued tone, formed, as it were, one harmonious choral offering at the shrine of the living God.

Distinguished, as well by the simplicity of her dress as by the beauty of her person, Rose Mathews, leading her father, a venerable man, whose locks were blanched by age, and accommodating her youthful and healthful step to the decrepitude of his, bent her way upon the performance of the same pious duty.

The shades of evening were setting in, when the old man and his daughter closed the wicket gate of their cottage, which stood in the midst of a garden at the top of the village. The thick foliage of a neighbouring plantation intervened between them and the golden tints of the setting sun; but sufficient of its glory struggled through this obstacle at once to light up the pensive features of the father, and to render still more resplendent the clear brunette complexion of his daughter.

They were quickly followed into the cottage by Miles Edwards, a young man of hale and hearty appearance, who was received by Martin Mathews with cordiality, and by Rose with that expression of suppressed pleasure which betokens to all, save one, that the heart and eyes discourse more eloquently than the tongue dares to speak.

“Be seated,” said the old man, “be seated, Miles, I wish to speak with you. It was my intention long ago to open my mind to you about Rose. Both she and you have shown such dutiful attention to my wishes, that I think it would be wrong longer to

object to your marriage. The little share saved by me is just enough for our support, and that little will belong to her at my death, which cannot be far off. Thank God that, however soon it may be, I am prepared to meet it with resignation to His will. Still I should be very sorry that the moment came and Rose remained without the protection of a husband: become that to her as soon as you will, and my blessing be on both.

An announcement so unexpected threw Miles into raptures of joy, and suffused the lovely cheeks of Rose with conscious blushes. The time, however, passed: she became his happy partner, and in the fulness of a good and honoured age, old Mathews slept beneath the greensward, in the same grave that contained the ashes of his wife.

The early years of the marriage of Miles Edwards and Rose were as prosperous as they were happy; three children were born to them, and the prospect of the future seemed to promise as unclouded a view as was afforded by a recollection of the past. The small sum left by his wife's father, Miles laid out in the stock of a little farm he rented of a man of substance in his immediate vicinity; and, for the first few years, his crops were abundant, his cattle thrived, his rent was duly paid, and it was whispered amongst his neighbours, that "Miles Edwards will be one day overseer."

None of those privations and trials which call forth the energy of exertion, the exercise of resignation, or the vigour of resolution, had yet occurred; but all were too soon fated to visit the peaceful home of this affectionate family.

In the early bloom of her youthful beauty, Rose had attracted the notice of Ambrose Coppin, a son of the farmer of whom Miles Edwards rented his land. He was one of those restless and daring spirits that, brooking no controul, rush headlong to the gratification of every evil, reckless of the mischief occasioned by it to themselves or others. Spoiled at home whilst yet a child, he naturally thought that his manhood would have the same freedom from restraint, and that whatever he required would be conceded to him.

No sooner did he behold Rose, than, so far as his nature would permit, he loved her: loved her at least with passion, for of affection he was incapable. The gentleness of her disposition was so totally at variance with the impetuosity of his, that she shrank from his advances, and firmly, though modestly, denied his suit. Enraged at the presumption of the lowly cottager's daughter daring to refuse his hand—for he conceived his station, as the son of a wealthy landowner, placed him far above her—he determined on revenge. A violent brawl, however, in which he became engaged at a village festivity, was followed by such serious consequences, that he quitted the country, and

went aboard a ship having a "pass," as it was then termed, for trading in the way of the Algerine cruisers, and for making reprisals on their ferocious pirates. This event prevented the execution of his threat, at least for a time, and it was not until the period of which we have been recently speaking, that Ambrose found it safe to return home.

It was late in a winter evening when a stranger, in the rough garb of a seaman, made his appearance at the "Green Dragon," and taking his place on the "long settle" beside the fire, endeavoured to enter into conversation with some peasants who were enjoying a quiet pipe and tankard, and amusing themselves, as most persons do who have no business of their own, by talking over and settling, at all events to their own satisfaction, the affairs of their neighbours.

The unusual aspect, swarthy complexion, and uncouth dress of the stranger, attracted the notice of the rustics, and, as is common on such occasions, rendered them mute; but after a few efforts at pleasantry by their new companion, they soon recovered their loquacity; and from them Ambrose Coppin, for it was he, learned that his father had died early the year before, leaving him sole heir to his property, and that his own absence had caused rival claims to be set up to the estates, which were conducted by an attorney residing in London.

Having gained this information without going to his father's house—for he had a misgiving that he might not be alive—he called for the host, whom he questioned as to several matters connected with the little village, and more particularly as to "The Rose of Mill Hill," as Rose Mathews had been named when he was a youth.

"Why, sir," was the reply, "you must indeed have been long a stranger to these parts, not to know that the Rose has bloomed again and again: she is the mother of three children."

"And who is their father?" said Ambrose; "Miles Edwards," was the reply.

"Hell and furies! and has he—he, the cur who worked on my father's farm, obtained that which I would have died to have?—I once swore revenge on her," he muttered in an under tone,—"and now I will have it."

During this short, but violent sally, the rustics stared at each other, and the landlord, leaning forward with both his fists upon the table, and gazing intently in the face of the stranger, said,

"And, sure, by your oath, and by what you say, you can be no other than the long-lost Master Ambrose Coppin himself."

"And who the devil else should I be?" shouted Ambrose; "it is Ambrose Coppin, he who threw his man ten years ago on Canonbury Green, and dared not come back till now. Yes,

I am Ambrose Coppin, ready now to revenge an affront, and hating as I ever have hated."

The landlord, recollecting the altered position of his guest since his father's death, obsequiously suggested that "his honour" had better go into a private room, where he would give every information that was required. This was acceded to, and in a short time Ambrose became acquainted with the courtship, marriage, and prosperity of Miles Edwards and his handsome wife.

"But, landlord, how do they go on now? they rent, you say, the Cross-lane Farm, and hold it still. My father has been dead now more than eighteen months, and there have been disputes about the property. How has this been managed?"

"In short, sir, I think you will find it to be thus; the attorney who has helped those that claim your estates, gave warning to all tenants not to pay any rent; and I fear, from the two last bad crops, and a disorder amongst the cattle, it was lucky for Miles Edwards that he had such a notice."

"What, then," said Ambrose, almost rising from his chair, and grasping the wrist of his astonished listener, "does he owe near two years' rent, and cannot pay it? A murrain on his cattle, and the two years of bad crops—thank God, thank God!" and the blasphemer clasped his hands in delight.

Heart-wearied and dispirited, Miles Edwards had still struggled through the miseries attendant on the failure of his crops, and other misfortunes; but this vast accumulation of rent due to his landlord for ever haunted him. In this state of mind he returned from the fields one evening, and clasping his own true wife to his bosom, exclaimed, "Why, Rose, why did I not follow your advice, and keep the money your father gave as a store for a rainy day?" "You did right," replied Rose, "to do as you thought best. It was best, as has been proved up to now. Your industry, and our thrift, have not been wanting to avoid the misfortune that has fallen upon us. Trust to that God who gave us what we have, that he will not forsake us in the hour of need."

"True, Rose; but you have yet to learn the worst of all—Ambrose Coppin has returned: he is now our landlord. You know he once loved you, so far as he could love any thing but himself: he threatened you when last you parted; and we both know his bad black heart too well, not to fear he will make us feel his vengeance. Our rent is behind two years, and what are we to do?"

The storm that had so long threatened at length burst over them. Ambrose Coppin had no sooner substantiated his claim to his late father's property, than he put a distress into the house of Miles Edwards, sold his furniture, farming stock, and

all that was upon the land—which just, and only just, sufficed to pay his demand and the law expenses, and the unhappy father, his wife, and three children, were turned out of house and home. This was his first effort of revenge; neither his last nor his greatest, as the sequel will show.

Thus forlorn, Miles was beholden to the kindness of his former neighbours for a lodging for himself and family; one affording shelter for himself and wife, and others undertaking the care of his children amongst them; though, indeed, there were few who dared to show the compassion they felt, for Ambrose was the owner of most of the village tenements. With this assistance and his own industry, in a few months Miles was able to rent a cottage, his principal occupation being that of an agricultural day-labourer.

Changed as was his condition, he bore all with fortitude, supported by the devotion and apparent resignation of his wife. Still, however, when he would suddenly return, he could perceive that, though she smiled on him, she had been shedding tears for him and his. She studied to be cheerful and make him so, but it was but too clear to him that all was effort, and that the creature who claimed, and had ever had, his tenderest care, was sinking under the cruel infliction.

The misfortunes that had fallen upon him in his former state, seemed destined to track him in his humbler sphere; work became scarce to him, though others were employed; from place after place he was discarded without any reason assigned. He had ever borne a good character, yet there were whispers abroad that boded him no good; and those who had heretofore assisted him, now refused to do so, on the score that he could get plenty of work, but never remained long in one employ. Things went on thus, until poor Miles and his suffering, patient wife, were reduced to the last stage of destitution.

Since his accession to the estate, Ambrose Coppin had nightly frequented the parlour of the "Green Dragon," nor did he often quit it sober. When in his drunken bouts, he was accustomed to boast of his power, and once declared he would drive that villain, Miles Edwards, from the neighbourhood; "and," added he, with an oath, "if I can manage that, then that fool who took up with him, when she might have shared my means, will be within my reach—and have her I will, if I break her flinty heart, and lose my own life, in the attempt!" Pondering on this scheme, he reeled to bed, and the next day set about its completion.

At night, Miles returned somewhat late to his desolate home, having wandered about in a distant part of the parish, intending to ask for work—but fearing both refusal and insult, he had failed to do so. The unhappy couple, therefore, consumed a

portion of their last remaining loaf, putting by sufficient for their children's morning meal, and sought temporary refuge in that which levels all distinctions—sleep.

The sun had not long risen before a loud knocking was heard at the cottage door, and two persons claimed admittance. Upon the bolts being withdrawn, Ambrose Coppin and his man, Wilson, (a fit instrument in such hands,) rudely thrust themselves in, demanding to search the place for some plate, said to have been stolen from Coppin's house, the night before. Conscious of innocence, Edwards made no demur, but led the way to every place in his homestead, his wife trembling with agony, knowing as she did the wickedness of both intruders.

"Ay, master, what's this?" said Wilson, turning over a sack in a small outbuilding where Miles kept his spade and garden implements, and holding up a silver cream-ewer.

"What's this, indeed!" replied his master, "why, part of the property taken from me, last night;" and turning to Miles, he continued, "Master Edwards, this must be looked into. You have been dismissed from many places, and now we begin to see that the reports about you were true." Miles darted a look of fury at his accuser, and was preparing to strike him down, but his wife sprang forward and seized him by both wrists; "Husband," said she, the tears gushing down her cheeks, "if you are innocent, trust to that God who has never yet forsaken us." A livid hue overspread the features of Miles Edwards, as he spake, or rather screamed—"If, Rose, if I am innocent? and this from your tongue!" and staggering forward a few paces, he fell senseless on the floor.

Regardless of the scene that was passing, Coppin and his man continued their search, and discovered several other articles of plate, and, under some bushes at the bottom of the garden, found two picklock keys.

Scarcely sensible of what was passing, Miles Edwards was conducted before a magistrate, and, upon examination, the evidence appearing clear that he had been from home unusually late the night before—that Coppin's doors had been opened by picklock keys, and property stolen—that the property found in Miles Edwards's outhouse was identified and sworn to, and that the locks could be easily opened by the keys found in his garden,—he was committed to Newgate for trial, for an offence the penalty of which was death.

Removed to a gaol, he had time to ponder upon the wicked scheme that, he believed, had been contrived by Coppin for his ruin. The sympathy of his neighbours was aroused for his mourning wife, who, after his short but emphatic appeal to her, had never once doubted his innocence, strong as the presumptions against him were. They aided her as far as their small

means would allow, and provided such comforts as they could for the unhappy prisoner.

Rose had several interviews with her husband, during his confinement, and strove to assure him that all might yet be well. "He dares not," said she, "no, he dares not peril his immortal soul by swearing to your guilt. Remember, husband, he can only do so upon the blessed book of eternal life. Be comforted with that."

Worn out and exhausted with grief and fatigue, she had returned one night to the cottage, a few days before that appointed for the trial, when she was surprised by a gentle tapping at the door. Upon opening it she was sickened by the sight of Wilson, who, without noticing her emotion, put to the door, and in an under tone, told her he came with good news.

"What good news can you bring to one whom you are so soon to make a widow?—what good news to these three wretched, helpless children, so soon to be fatherless?"

"Do not rave, mistress, but listen;" resumed Wilson;—"you know I am one of the two witnesses against your husband. I have done a thing for which my own life is in danger, and my master knows it. I hate him; I fear him. I am determined to make my escape. To-morrow night I enter on board a ship, and shall be kept so secretly that no one will know where I am till I am safe, far away from England."

"But the robbery? what do you know of that?"

"Every thing; my master put the plate in the outhouse himself, and the keys in the garden. I followed, and saw him do it."

"Then," said Rose, "as you hope to be saved, I entreat you to stay and say as much, and spare the life of an innocent man."

"I dare not!"

"My screams, then, shall bring those to my help who will keep you here, and I will swear to all you have said."

"Fool, would you have two witnesses against your husband instead of one? Do you not know that a wife cannot be a witness for or against her husband? And if you could, who would believe that I should tell you this, after swearing as I did before the justice? Use your senses, and you may yet have to thank me for my friendly news. Good night." Thus saying, he gently closed the door after him, and Rose only recovered her self-possession as his retiring footsteps died away upon the ear.

The longer she reflected on the fact so strangely disclosed to her, the more she was bewildered how to act. Were she to accuse Coppin at once of the crime, she would not be believed, and would most likely be deprived of her liberty, and thus rendered unable to assist her husband. Were she to offer her-

self as a witness, she could not be received ; for Wilson had truly told her so. Summoning, therefore, all her remaining courage, she awaited the day when she would have her last interview with her husband before his trial.

Admitted within the walls of the prison, she found her husband in the midst of a reckless, wretched set of men, expecting, like him, the issues of life and death. Their coarse talk prevented her for some time from communicating with him ; and at length a ribald jest, uttered by one ruffian, incensed Miles to such a degree, that with his fettered hands he felled him to the ground. A general uproar ensued, and the turnkeys interfering, Miles and his wife were led into a small cell, apart from the other prisoners, and there allowed an interview.

Rose having pacified her husband, told him that Wilson would not appear against him. "What," replied he, "will that matter? There will still be that wretch Coppin, and his evidence will be enough."

"What! one witness, and such a one? No, no; it cannot be that twelve honest men will kill another on the word of such as he. But are you sure, Miles, quite sure, that one witness is enough?"

"There cannot be a doubt of it."

"Even then, Miles, you may yet be saved; he may repent, or he may not appear; and if he says nothing, you are free."

The husband mournfully shook his head, but made no reply. Rose, until now, had worn a countenance of intense sorrow, which she vainly endeavoured to conceal from him; but when he again looked in her face, it was the very image of calmness. Her eyes no longer darted glances from place to place, as if she saw some object of terror; their lids were partially drooping. Her voice ceased to own the tremulous intonation it had hitherto borne; and her hand, as she placed it upon that of her husband, grasped him with a nerve and firmness that amazed him. Suddenly rising from the little bench on which she had been sitting, she paced the cell for a few moments, and then returning, stood opposite Miles Edwards, and thus addressed him:

"You know, Miles, I never yet offended you through all our marriage days;—yes, once I did, when I doubted of your guilt;—it was but for a moment, and you have forgiven that. I never asked a favour of you, for you were always too kind and good to let me want any thing you could afford. I now do ask a favour of you, and you must not refuse me. Do not speak, I must be heard:—promise that if, by any chance, you should escape from death, you will work for our children, and be as both a father and a mother to them, whether I am alive or not!"

“ Wife, wife !” cried the agonized Miles, “ do not talk of chance ; there is none. I must die, and am prepared for it : you must live, and watch over our poor children. But what dreadful thing do you mean—whether you are alive or not ? But I promise all you ask.” His wife, no longer able to command her emotion, burst into tears, and flung her arms round his neck.

“ Miles,” said she, “ I feel that I cannot, that I shall not, long outlive your trial. I feel it in my heart’s core. But I will be near you as you stand before your judges, and help you, if there be need. Depend upon the faith of a wife who never deceived you : she will not fail you in your danger.”

The time was now arrived for strangers to quit the prison, and Rose bade her husband good-by, telling him to remember all she had promised.

The doors of the “ Justice Hall” were early crowded by persons of the lower orders, anxious for admission into the body of the court. Some, from their downcast eyes, appeared to be but too deeply interested in the fate of those about to appear at the bar ; whilst others seemed bent on enjoyment of the melancholy scene, as a matter of holiday recreation. Amongst the former was an elderly-looking woman, wearing a scarlet cloak, and black bonnet, tied close down over the ears, and supporting herself with a cane. She was supposed to be the mother of a young prisoner, whose trial stood first on the list, and whose punishment, if his crime were proved, admitted of no mitigation. She was allowed to pass through the crowd, and take her place upon a form immediately under the dock, the spot where the prisoners stand during their trial ; having seated herself, she bent her head forward upon her hands, which were crossed over the head of her cane. From this position she never stirred, excepting only when a slight shudder, or a long-drawn sigh, escaped her.

At the appointed hour, with due solemnity, the king’s judges entered the court, preceded by the sheriffs in their lavender silk robes, and attended by the lord mayor, and the aldermen of the rota, in their state attire. The sword of justice having been placed over the chair of the chief magistrate, the judges took their seats upon the bench, and the business of the session proceeded.

Several prisoners, amongst whom was Miles Edwards, having pleaded, the youthful offender before alluded to, was put upon his trial. The counsel for the prosecution moved the court that he should be detained until the following sessions, on the ground that, through inadvertence, he had been indicted upon a statute requiring two witnesses to the proof of the offence, whereas, on the present charge, there was but one witness.

At this moment a voice was heard, but from whence it proceeded none had observed, echoing the words, "one witness!" The counsel proceeded with his address, his motion in due course was granted, and the prisoner was removed from the bar.

By this time the old woman in the red cloak had ceased to attract notice. Those interested in the fate of friends, had other thoughts than the miseries of strangers; and those who came from thoughtlessness, could not be expected to sympathize overmuch with a desolate mourner.

The order having been given to put up the prisoner Miles Edwards, he made his appearance at the bar. As the noise of his cumbrous fetters struck on the ear, a thrill of horror ran through a party of his early friends and neighbours, who had placed themselves near the dock to witness to his character, if called upon to do so. Near them, also, stood the prosecutor, Ambrose Coppin, on whose brow was not visible any of that malignant hate which so truly characterized his disposition.

During the reading of the indictment, and other preliminaries, the prisoner cast an anxious gaze into every part of the court, as if in search of some one. The one for whom he sought met not his eyes, and he wrung his hands in an agony of despair. In a few moments he became more composed, and nodded to such friends as he saw around. His eye fell upon Coppin, but the latter shrank back amidst the crowd.

At length the prosecutor's counsel rose, and after stating the circumstances as before rehearsed, observed that there were but two witnesses for examination against the prisoner. Much notice was excited in the court, by another repetition of the words uttered by counsel: "two witnesses!" was repeated in a tone of hysteric laughter, which seemed to come from the place directly under the dock. Order was, however, soon restored; the judges having intimated, that, upon another interruption, they should direct the court to be cleared.

The learned advocate proceeded in his address, intimating an intention to call the witness Thomas Wilson before he examined the prosecutor, the only other witness, for reasons which, he said, would obviously appear in the course of examination.

The crier having thrice required Thomas Wilson to come forward, and no answer being returned, a manifestation of satisfaction burst from the prisoners' friends. This irregularity was soon subdued, and they were duly admonished by the judge. His lordship, leaning forward, enquired of the counsel if he thought he had sufficient evidence without Wilson; and having been answered in the affirmative, he desired Ambrose Coppin to be called.

"Ambrose Coppin, come forward to be sworn," cried the officer of the court.

“ Here,” exclaimed a voice at the rear of the prisoner’s witnesses; and presently the prosecutor was seen elbowing his way amongst them. He had nearly arrived at the foot of the witness-box, and was stretching out his hand to grasp the Gospels, when at that moment the woman in the red cloak rose from her seat, let fall her stick, and stepping forward a few paces, exclaimed with a frantic shriek, “ Do not touch that blessed book, and lose your soul for ever !”

Amazement was depicted on every countenance; when, in another second, a loud explosion was heard, and Ambrose Coppin, the “ one witness” against Miles Edwards, tumbled on his face a mangled corpse.

Flinging away the pistol with which she had done the deed, and throwing aside the bonnet and cloak that had hitherto concealed her, the woman sprang forward, and clambering up the dock, disclosed, to the astounded gaze of the prisoner, the features of his wife. She threw her arms round his neck, crying, “ I said I would be near you;—I said I would help you.—You are saved; you are saved !” Her grasp became relaxed, and she fell back, in a swoon, into the arms of an attendant turnkey.

Needless were it to state the confusion that prevailed in court at this appalling tragedy: nor will it be difficult to guess the sequel of the tale. Miles Edwards was acquitted, there being no living testimony against him. The notoriety of the offence committed by his wife rendered her guilt easy of proof; and the court being then sitting, the due process of law was prepared—she was the next day tried and convicted—and within four-and-twenty hours afterwards, being still as she had remained, excepting only during her trial, in a state of utter insensibility, she died a felon’s death. Miles Edwards was liberated from gaol, but his mind was upset:—his reason had fled. He roamed the earth a few years, a wandering beggar and a babbling maniac.

The remarkable fact at the close of this tale, actually occurred at Justice Hall in the Old Bailey. The heroine, however, in that case, was the paramour, not the wife, of the prisoner.

THE PREACHER PARROT; OR, THE TRIALS OF TRUTH.

BY DOUGLAS JERROLD.

CHAPTER I.

“TRUTH” says John Milton, “is rarely born, but, like a bastard, to the shame of him who begets it.” Let not the veracious reader start at this dreary faith; for the same author goes on to declare, that time at length legitimizes the base-born, and removes the odium from its father. Thus, though the living martyr may be burned to cinders, it may so happen that the greatest veneration shall be paid to his ashes. Now—as we are given to understand from gentlemen of the learned profession, members of parliament, party politicians, and other consumers of the precious manna—though truth be an inestimable treasure, still for that reason it is not to be produced on every light occasion. In the first place, a too great familiarity with it begets indifference. To be always speaking the truth, what is it but to wear a court-suit every day—to go shopping in hoop, stomacher and diamonds? We shall never forget the apothegm of a late lamented attorney, whose only son—how he acquired the antipathy yet remains a mystery—had an invincible aversion to a lie. “Joseph,” said the father, with something like tears in his eyes, “Joseph, Heaven knows how soon I may be taken from you, and therefore I cannot too frequently check your preposterous extravagance. Truth, Joseph, truth is like gold; a really wise man makes a little of it go a great way.” To our mind, nothing can be finer, nothing more profound than this axiom. Truth is like gold; for how often does a reckless use of it bring its utterer to beggary! Let the fate of our hero be taken as an example.

“One pound one—the bird is yours, sir, cage and all.” Thus spoke Mr. Brown, the auctioneer, declaring a parrot, one of a dozen that had been twenty times put up without a purchaser, to be the property of the guinea bidder. The owner of the bird knew not the dangerous treasure he possessed. The

parrot was a very Solomon in feathers; and, though its possessor failed to appreciate the virtue, like true wisdom, it was sparing of speech. Its master, mistaking silence for inability, disposed of the bird as a blockhead, though, if it liked, it could, fifty times a day have called itself a clever fellow. However, there was this besetting sin in the bird; it never opened its mouth, but it uttered an awkward truth, blurted out a sentence turned with satire, reproach, or contempt. What it said would, at times, fall with a fatal crash upon the cogitations of its hearers, making them doubt if Beelzebub spoke not through a parrot. Unfortunately for its future quiet, its long sojourn in the room of the auctioneer had enabled it to store its memory with the choicest scraps of the orator; which undigested exclamations, interrogatories, opinions, and appeals, it would too frequently utter to the confusion of its owners.

Our martyr to truth—the parrot—became the property of the lady of Mr. Phocion, a gentleman who had struggled through many difficulties to become a member of Parliament, some of his difficulties being considerably lessened by the attainment of the dignity: yes; he was a senator, to the confusion of his tailor. He was a man of considerable powers of address, being heard at any part of Copenhagen-fields, whenever he there condescended to deliver his sentiments. As his opinions were not fixed, he was in the happiest condition for improvement. If he had not read a great deal of history, he had attended and spoken at many public dinners. If he had cared to shine that way, he could have argued in the style of Fox or Burke; but the days were gone for rhetorical speeches: no, the spirit of the times demanded brevity, and it was much easier to call names. Indeed, Mr. Phocion successfully exercised that great art of life—the art of gracefully concealing our ignorance. He was a man with a face of undaunted metal, and with nerves of equally strong, if not of the same material. Sublimely unconscious of the ridiculous, he soared above his own deficiencies, and was never so elevated as when utterly incomprehensible. Though not quite sufficiently skilled in the graces of literature to become a professor of poetry, he never made a speech without the support of the muse. No, never did he speak of the “poor man,” and never did he speak that he did not, with an eloquent smiting of the heart, allude to that unfortunate individual, but the oration was decked with that fringe of untarnished gold—

“Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,
A breath can make them as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their nation’s pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied!”

On what he would call the philosophy of society, he had his

own recondite opinions, for the adoption of which, as he would often lament, the world was not yet sufficiently prepared. That, however, all the generations of man had been begotten and educated on a wrong principle, was his unconquerable faith. With a severe disregard of the ornaments and what are called refinements of life, he would have looked on the statue of the Medicean Venus, and asked—*cui bono?* Or in his own downright nervous English—“What’s the use of it?” He would have resigned the Elgin marbles to the hammers of MacAdam, and covered a polling-booth with the canvasses of Raphael. In a word, he was a mushroom patriot, a thing produced by the corruption of the times. Yet, let it not be thought that Mr. Phocion would recant his faith in the hour of danger. Not so; he rather courted persecution. Often would he declare his readiness to lay his head upon the block; and so entirely was his wife influenced by some of his patriotic sentiments, that she would hear him with more than Roman serenity. As for the King’s Bench prison, it was the vestibule to the house of fame; and Newgate itself might, to a public man, become little less than the Mint. And this was the exalted creed of Mr. Phocion, until a full week after his admission to the House of Commons. We know not whether such a happy change comes upon all young members, but certainly, Mr. Phocion talked less, and at least appeared more thoughtful. And this serious mood took a deeper shadow from a sermon, which the senator accidentally heard, on the miracle of the loaves and the fishes. Mrs. Phocion remarked it, and ventured to observe, that nowhere could we get such true consolation as at church. Mr. Phocion looked pale and severely calm as the bust of Brutus—but replied not.

It was an evening, on which there was “no house,” and Mr. and Mrs. Phocion sat with the only thing that ought ever to divide man and wife—namely, a book, between them. The book was *Malthus on Population*. Our statesman had no children, and Mrs. Phocion, who had merely looked at the title-page of the volume, contemplated her husband at his new studies with singular complacency. She would look meekly at her mate, and, in the pride of her heart, feel certain that some public or private good must come of such hard reading. Mr. Phocion put aside the book, and leaned his head on his hand.

“’Tis now two months since you’ve taken your seat, my dear; pray when do you think you’ll get anything?”

“Get anything?” responded Mr. Phocion; “what should I get, but the proud satisfaction of—of—I desire, madam, that you never again allude to so base a sentiment. Get anything! I should despise myself could I be induced to take office.”

“Well, but a salary,” observed Mrs. Phocion—“or—a

something that"—Mr. Phocion frowned very darkly, and his wife was silent. Weeks went on, and Mr. Phocion gradually lost that serenity of temper, which, up to his return to Parliament, had made his house a dove-cot. Mrs. Phocion, in the simplicity of her soul, thought that law-making could not be so very respectable an employment, if it kept husbands out until four and five in the morning; and then sent them home more like ogres than rational, considerate helpmates. To do Mr. Phocion justice, no member was more regular in his attendance, more sedulous in his indirect attentions to the minister, more watchful of the public money. Still, it was but too evident that the dearest wish of his heart was unsatisfied. His merits and his zeal were alike undiscerned. He had, it is true, a vote in the house, but for what it brought him, he might as well have had a voice in the great pyramid. Again and again, Mrs. Phocion touched upon the probability of fallen manna; and again and again Mr. Phocion, with grimmer looks and more passionate voice, declared that he should feel himself a wretch for ever could he be won to accept any thing. "No! to him, place was little better than the pillory. He would maintain his independence—he would return to his constituents with white hands."

Mrs. Phocion marvelled at the obstinacy of the man; and, one morning, after a late debate, resolved to speak out. "What! was he mad enough to refuse a salary, for—if it pleased Providence—doing nothing? Was he—"

"Mrs. Phocion, I have seen too many sad examples of political tergiversation, to add to the black number. I have seen the patriot of to-day, the pensioner of to-morrow." Mrs. Phocion seemed to smile approval of the promotion. "But no; be it my glory to prove that there is still some public virtue left. And know, if I hold off from golden temptation—if I refuse, with inexpressible scorn to sell myself to the minister—it is for this proud reason, that I have had—"

"*No bidders!*"

"Good God! who's that?" cried the patriot, turning as pale as though called by the accusing angel.

"*No bidders! no bidders! no bidders!*" replied the parrot from its auction vocabulary.

Mr. Phocion stared and gasped at the bird, as if a demon spoke in it—a malignant spirit that had possessed itself of the heart of the statesman's mystery—of the secret that had lain like an ulcer in his heart, tormenting him with scheming days and anxious nights. There was something awful—appalling—supernatural in the words; or rather, there was a terrible humanity in them, that, as the patriot glared upon the bird, suggested to him the probability of a metempsychosis. "Had a Sir Robert Walpole been transmigrated into a parrot?"

"In the name of heaven! Mrs. Phocion," said her husband, taking breath from his astonishment, "where did you get that plague?"

"*No bidders!*" said the irritating parrot. Unhappily, there lay upon the table a copy of the report of the Law Commission. It will give the reader a very favourable idea of Mr. Phocion's strength, when we state that he seized the tome with one hand, and flung it at the speaker. The corner of the book caught the right eye of the bird, and extinguished its light. We ardently trust the only case of blindness effected by the "commission."

"Nay, I'm sure, my dear"—it was all in vain; Mrs. Phocion, with all her eloquence, failed to convince the member of the many little amiable ways of her loquacious treasure; and well she might, for every morning after a long and heavy debate, Mr. Phocion jaded, drowsy, bilious, was accosted by the parrot with a loud protracted chuckle, and "no bidders!"

In a very short time the parrot was thrust, with curses on its head, from the hearth of the senator.

Mr. Phocion, we regret to say, in due season illustrated the instability of human genius; for he accepted a place, which he held until his speedy death; a fact commemorated on a tombstone in that extensive churchyard, Sierra Leone.

CHAPTER II.

LAURENCE MARVEDI was a man of gold. His boyish practices and shifts had been those of a miser. He was now upwards of sixty, of an infirm constitution, but of immense worldly possessions. As he grew older, his passion for wealth absorbed every feeling, every sentiment, every hope, every fear, save one, the fear of death; and this dread he ever sought to escape from, by retreating to the contemplation of his hoards. He would almost persuade himself of the impossibility of death striking him amidst his treasures. Poor wretch! he had, through life, seen nothing beyond a guinea, and could not now look forward. He had had no sympathy with men; with his money-bags he had made a wall between his heart and them; and he shuddered, and could hardly suppress a howl, as he thought of the common doom that would involve him, naked, shivering, stripped of his privilege, with his kind. It was this horror of the grave, that made him anxiously avoid the sight of all types of mortality; that made him forbid his niece and housekeeper to breathe a word of death. His apothecary, taking his cue, showed no more knowledge of death than if he had been to him the greatest stranger. Now and then, his niece, gathering her information from the newspaper, would speak of a Russian peasant—it must be the paternal softness of the government

that induces people to live so long in Russia—who had just died at a hundred and ninety. On this, a slimy smile would streak the face of Marvedi, who, however, would soon relapse into melancholy, pathetically declaring that, “Russia was not England!”

“There!—that bell—there again—new churches! ugh!” cried the man of wealth, and he clasped his hands, and set his teeth, and his back was bowed like a hoop, and he rocked from side to side in his arm-chair, as the passing-bell told the tale of death. Mr. Marvedi had, for thirty years, dwelt in a house far removed from

“—the sound of the church-going bell;”

when it pleased the functionaries, vested with that solemn power, to build within a few furlongs of his residence a sacred temple. Marvedi, rarely stirring from his house, was altogether ignorant of the goodly work, until the bell assured him it was done. The miser was immediately resolved; he would flee from the spot; he would bury himself where his ears should not receive the horrid warning. Some preparation was, however, necessary; and, in the mean time, he was tortured almost daily by the knell of death. He would sit and gasp in silence; and, with his bony hands, clutch the arms of the chair; and his eyes would wander round the room, as if watching something; and then he would try to smile, when the bell would seem to strike upon his heart, and he would shrink, like a slave from the uplifted scourge. It was a frightful sight to see the old man thus, with his sinful soul bare in his face. He would sit, and, until the bell ceased, howl and mutter—“Another!—and rich, they say,—with half a million, perhaps, and to die—Lord! Lord! to lose all—to be no longer prayed to—to enjoy no more law, but to be nailed up—thrust in a hole—and then the judgment!”—and here his locked hands would shake as with a palsy, and his speechless lips would move, and he would sit possessed by his conscience.

It was little more than an hour after one of these fits of Marvedi, that Mr. Hopely, the doctor, made his morning-call. We must, however, premise, that his visits were ostensibly paid to Miss Fanny, the rich man’s niece, Marvedi never consenting to believe that he himself was in want of medical advice, though every day he indirectly obtained it from his professional visiter. In this delusion he obstinately remained to the last; dying, in the end, with only the most delicate hint, on the part of Hopely, of his probable indisposition. When Marvedi was *in articulo mortis*, Hopely allowed that he might be a little poorly.

“Good morning, Mr. Marvedi; good morning, sir; ha! ha! never saw you looking better,” said the courageous Mr. Hopely,

staring in the slate-coloured face of the miser, and then pursing his mouth and raising his eye-brows, as he caught the eye of Fanny.

“Do you think so, Mr. Hopely? Do you really think so?” cried Marvedi whiningly, wishing to be cheated.

“Think so! why, you’re like an oak, Mr. Marvedi: a handful of winters is nothing to you. And your pulse”—Marvedi was about to twitch his wrist from the hand of the lecturer—“delightful!” Marvedi held his wrist still; “so regular—so sound—the music of robust health. I have no doubt, at your age, Nestor had exactly the same pulse.”

“Who was he?” asked the unlettered Plutus.

“Who? Oh, an extraordinary man—lived a long time ago—but didn’t die till he was six hundred,” said Hopely, at a venture.

“Ha! the world has sadly changed, Mr. Hopely. Life was something in the time of Methusaleh,” sighed Marvedi.

“The truth is, Mr. Marvedi, men insist upon killing themselves; otherwise, and I am religiously persuaded of the fact, any man, beginning with a fine constitution—a constitution like your own, for instance”—Marvedi cleared his throat, and tried to straiten his back—“might live to a thousand. All depends upon a wise temperance.”

“I was never a glutton,” interrupted Marvedi, folding his hands upon his breast.

“A wise temperance and a skilful doctor; not, understand me, to debilitate with drugs, but to sweeten the juices—to comfort with cordials. By the way, I have given the Arabian elixir to Fanny—three times a day, as before. There is nothing like temperance for long life. Look at Thomas Parr; bless me! it’s very odd—I never remarked it before—you bear a great resemblance to the pictures of Parr.”

“What! old Parr?” asked Marvedi, with a grim smile.

“The same; the man who lived to upwards of a hundred and fifty-two. Let me consider; yes, he saw out ten kings and queens.”

“I have seen out three,” said Marvedi.

“Then you have seven more to come,” said the precise and encouraging apothecary. “Very singular! that I should not remark it before. Yes; the general expression of the head—the ample forehead—and the great power indicated in the jaw. I have no doubt, were a comparison possible, that you and he would be found—”

“What have you there, Fanny?” suddenly asked the counter-part of Thomas Parr.

“Oh! a present from Mr. Hopely,” said the niece, fondling a parrot, which, we may as well inform the reader, was the bird

of ill omen, banished, for its untimely truths, from the house of the law-maker. Mr. Hopely purchased it of a Jew, with whom Mrs. Phocion had exchanged it for a figure in Nankin china.

“Parrots!” exclaimed Marvedi, leering discontent.

“Oh! a charming bird, uncle: sings all sorts of lively tunes”—such ran the warranty of the Jew---“and whistles ‘Life let us cherish’ like a Christian.” The cheerfulness of the parrot’s taste was not lost upon the man of wealth, who tacitly admitted the bird to his hospitality.

“It’s not a squaling, shrieking, noisy wretch, with nothing to say for itself, but, as I am assured, a bird of capital education. You’ll find it quite a companion to you; and as it is very young, and parrots live to a great age, I’m sure,” and here Mr. Hopely took his hat, and shook Marvedi’s hand; “I’m sure, you’ll—extraordinary pulse—admirable pulse—you’ll be fast friends for the next fifty years.” Saying which, Mr. Hopely and Fanny quitted the room, to enjoy a conversation in which, doubtless, the health of Mr. Marvedi formed the principal subject.

Days passed on, and not a word was spoken, not a note whistled by the parrot; like a prudent alderman, it filled its belly without saying anything. It was a cold, blustering night in December, when Mr. Marvedi sat in his room---a room not to be approached by the profane of his household under the heaviest penalty. The apartment was almost filled with chests, bronzes, and pictures. There was an antique cabinet, studded and clasped with finely-wrought brass, containing a vast treasure in *virtù* and jewels. From this Marvedi had taken several cases of diamonds, and now sat, gloating over their light, made more piercingly brilliant by the gloom of the muckthrift’s den. He sat and passed his fingers over the gems, and, as if communing with sensible objects, in the imbecility of his soul chuckled and prattled to them. “What! leave you! no—no—no! never---never! my darlings! my pretty ones!” and the miser pressed the diamonds to his blue lips. “Ha! ha! let kings keep their fighting men. Are not these the best of guards, the surest defenders, which no treason can corrupt, no rebellion debase; which, banished from one land, lose nothing by their exile? Ha! ha!” and Marvedi clapt his hands at the jewels and the heaps of gold before him; “these, these are the old man’s valiant body-guard, his truest soldiers! I feel stronger as I look at ’em. Hopely was right; I have many, many years to come; tut! I am but sixty-five; many, many years---”

“*Going!*” rang a high, passionless voice through the room.

“Ha!” cried the man of gold; and his fingers, like the claws of a vulture, instinctively pounced upon the jewels.

"*Going at sixty-five!*" was uttered, in the same high, measured tones.

Marvedi could not speak. He lay with his breast on the table, and his arms stretched around his treasure. Years seemed to fall upon him in moments; his whole frame was shrunk together, and his heart beat as it would beat through. As he lay thus, sprawling and fixed with horror, his eyes burned and dilated like the eyes of a maimed tiger, and his rigid mouth gaped as with the last breath. In truth, there was something in the voice and words of the unseen speaker to make the boldest start. Marvedi lay and listened for the voice, though ready to yield up the ghost, should it speak again. How long he really listened, he knew not; though but a few minutes, it seemed to him a long, long night of horror. The place, gloomy before, to his imagination became darker and darker, and fantastic shadows seemed to creep about the wall. The arms of his chair appeared to grow close to his sides, and he sat fixed as in a trap. All was silent. Marvedi, casting his eyes around, ventured to move a hand—then, hardly breathing, lifted his head—drew up a leg—---and thus, by fearful degrees, again gathered himself upright in his chair, and dared to move his head from side to side. He saw nothing; listened with new courage: heard nothing. He wiped the sweat from his forehead, and uttered a deep groan.

The next morning Mr. Marvedi, with him an unusual occurrence, took his breakfast in bed. Nay, he had not risen, when Hopely called to see Fanny. "Excuse me, but couldn't leave the house without saying good morning," said the daily comforter, as he put aside the curtain. "Ha! humph!--I'm glad to see you looking so well," added Hopely, with unconscious hesitation.

"Well!" cried Marvedi; "do you really think I look well, Mr. Hopely?" There was death in every line of his face.

"A little, little paler; but, perhaps, you hav'n't had so much sleep to-night."

"Not a wink—not a wink!" rattled from the throat of the man of money.

"Ha! that accounts for it. Yes—yes; well, a nap after dinner and—" and here Hopely looked at Fanny.

"You mean well, Mr. Hopely—but oh, Lord!—oh, Lord!—last night, oh, I fear I'm—yes—I'm certainly—"

"*Going!*" cried the warning voice of the previous night.

"There—there—there—again—again!"—shrieked Marvedi, and the bed shook beneath him.

"*For the last time, going!*" cried the parrot, perched on the tester of the bed; for the bird being extremely tame, had the free run

of the house, which may account for its having, the night before, hopped unseen into the sanctum of the miser.

Marvedi raved "don't you hear it? I'm called—a spirit calls me!"

"Compose yourself, my dear sir—pray compose yourself—why, ha! ha!—it's only Fanny's parrot," said Hopely, in the softest tones.

Life seemed to return again to the features of the sick man, the mystery of the previous warning being so clearly made out. "Oh! ha! the bird you gave to Fanny—the parrot, to be my companion—thank you, Mr. Hopely—thank you," said Marvedi, with a grim, malicious smile. "But away with it—kill it—wring its neck—out of doors with it!"

"To be sure, sir—to be sure," said Hopely, in vain attempting to secure the parrot, that flew from place to place, exclaiming, and always in a shriller tone—"Going---going at sixty-five---ha! ha!---decidedly going---going---going!" whilst Marvedi roared and raved for the death or expulsion of the truth-teller. At length, Hopely irritated by the successful movements of the bird, and urged by the cries of the sick man, flung his walking-cane at the parrot, and brought it to the floor; though, we are pained to say, with a broken leg. The martyr to truth was again banished for its folly.

It was the midnight of the third day after the above-named occurrence, and Hopely, Fanny, and the housekeeper stood about the bed of Laurence Marvedi. His doom was fixed; despite the flatteries of the apothecary, death stood sentinel at the sick man's door. "I---think I'm getting ill," said the dying man.

"Possibly—possibly, you may think so; but you're going on admirably," pronounced the equivocating Hopely.

"I should like to turn upon this side," said the patient, feebly.

"There, sir—there,"—said Hopely who, with the housekeeper, assisted the sick man. "There—now, I'm sure you'll be better."

He *was* better---he was dead.

The apothecary found himself down in the will of the miser for a handsome legacy. Our truth-teller had a broken leg.

CHAPTER III.

A very select party was congregated at the house of Mrs. Limetwig to celebrate the birth-day of her daughter, the youngest of four, the fair Belinda; who, at the time we write had entered into her nineteenth year, and although she had no fortune—at least, what is vulgarly understood by the mercenary-young men of our day as fortune; she had the nobler kind

of wealth in great abundance---she was accomplished to the verge of perfection. Her pine apples painted on white satin, were equal, if not superior, to any in Covent-garden. And then her portraits of dear and particular friends, they lived and looked! It was only known to a few, but she had contributed some of the fancy heads, to either the Bloomsbury or the Bagnigge Wells Beauties, we forget which. Her modesty withheld her name, but they who had seen one of her faces, could easily point out the whole gallery. They had all the same sweet small mouth; in which the artist finely indicated the ethereal nature of the heroine, showing that with such a mouth it was impossible to eat. A mouth---if we may dare even to approach a masculine simile---almost the size of a shirt-button hole; indeed, when any of the teeth were seen, it might almost be doubted if they were not the pearl button itself. And then the Dian-like purity illustrated in such little lips! they might, with difficulty, compass a whistle, but could never be brought to perpetrate a kiss. The eyes were worthy of the lips---nice little beads, looking up in one head and down in another, as, in obedience to a wire, we see the different orbs of different dolls. And then the flesh and the general expression of the face---so soft, so very sweet, so unlike the flesh that, on this dull earth, is wooed and won and taken before a parson: no, it is clear such beauties live upon honey-dew like humming-birds; on conserves of roses, and jessamine paste. They are a great improvement on the ideal woman of Wordsworth, and are

“ ---much too good
For human nature's daily food.”

It may be thought that we have lingered too long on the one ability of Belinda, seeing that she has so many; but we could not for the life of us let the reader pass in ignorance of the fair hand so successfully helping the advancement of high British art. We have paused---many a time have we paused---before these heads, contemplating them with the same profound sense of the beautiful, that in our school-boy days we have lavished upon sugar plums; nay, it may be wrong to own the weakness, but, perhaps, with the self-same wish. To return to the birthday party.

We never see a young lady, surrounded by eight or ten bachelors, take off her gloves, and seat herself at the piano, but we shudder from an association of ideas;---yes, we instantly think of the infernal machine. Who knows how many men may be killed dead on the spot by the first crash! Belinda played divinely. Edgar Flimsy, the younger son of a country banker, looked very serious as the music proceeded. Mrs.

Limetwig observed the gravity of the young gentleman, and, doubtless to divert it, desired Belinda to sing. Belinda obeyed, and sang in the finest possible taste. Had she been wound up for the occasion like a musical snuff-box, she could not have acquitted herself with more precision, and with less vulgar impulse: every note fell from her lips as if it were chiselled; and then her execution! Poor Edgar Flimsy!—his heart was dragged up and down the gamut until exhausted, when, at the last three-minute shake of the songstress, it fell into a thousand little pieces. Indeed, we would not own the heart that could stand that shake. There was a general burst of applause, followed for a moment by a profound silence. Mrs. Limetwig looked proudly at the young bachelors, but favoured the younger son of the banker with a look entirely for himself.

In this pause, a voice cried out, and it seemed as if accompanying the glances of Mrs. Limetwig—“*Does nobody offer?*”

A titter, deepening into a laugh, went round the room, and Mrs. Limetwig and Belinda turned to scarlet. “Oh—ha! ha!” observed the mamma, evidently restraining excessive laughter, “that teasing bird, which William’s godfather brought him—how came it here?” and the servant was immediately ordered to secure the intruder: but the parrot was a social parrot, and resolved not to leave the party; hence, after many ineffectual attempts to catch it, for its leg, though weak, had been set by some Samaritan, the bird was suffered to remain.

“It was downright cruelty to ask, but would,”—thus spoke the banker’s younger son,—“would Miss Limetwig sing his favourite song—the——”

“Certainly,” answered Mrs. Limetwig for her daughter; and the favourite song—we forget its title and words, but its being very popular may account for that—was executed with incomparable power.

“Your only unmarried daughter?” observed the banker’s son, in a low voice, to Mrs. Limetwig.

“All married, except my dear Belinda; and it would break my heart, I believe, to part with her. Yes, sir,” said the mother, affected even by the probability of a separation, “Belinda, sir, is—is—”

“*The last lot, gentlemen,—the last lot!*” cried the parrot; and the guests burst into uncontrolled laughter. Belinda, with fine presence of mind, immediately struck the keys of the piano, as though quite unconscious of the interruption, and in a minute or two was in the midst of a furious battle piece.

“If I might aspire to the notice of Miss Limetwig,” said the banker’s son to the mother, “I hope that—”

“*Going for a song, gentlemen!*” cried the parrot; and again its words were greeted with a shout. “It was too much; the

creature—where could it have learned such words?—should be sent from the house.” Such was the sentence pronounced by Mrs. Limetwig, and after some little difficulty, carried into execution. But the charm of the night was broken: Mrs. Limetwig was irritated, Belinda languid, and the banker’s son—whether the last declaration of the bird had “given him pause,” we know not—not once, for the remainder of the evening, ventured to speak of Belinda. She died a maid, a victim to the intrusion of truth.

What would become of the world, if truth interfered in every marriage?

CHAPTER IV.

THE parrot was now doomed to feel, in disgrace and poverty, the imprudence of the past. It had suffered for too much truth. Untoward accidents had placed it in situations, where its foible told with fatal effect on the sensibility of its patrons. It was now, however, housed where truth might be spoken; at least, so it will be thought, when we make known the next lodging of our martyr. In smoky, squalid huts, surely truth may show its nakedness, and utter its rough but wholesome sayings.

Jerry Noggin was kept a cobbler by the bottle: could he have withstood its witcheries, he might, whenever he pleased, have asserted the full dignity of shoemaker; yes, he might have made, where he mended; he might have been the author of boots, instead of the ignoble translator. For twenty years had his wife rated him for his prostituted genius, for suffering “any vamer to get above his head,” when, if he liked, he might have made shoes for the king. Jerry, in his serious moments—that is, when he had no money,—allowed the justice of the reproach, and as constantly promised no longer to deserve it.

“Ha! Lord help me! I was well put to it to marry you!” exclaimed Mrs. Noggin, in the course of one of those little disputes, that give a zest and flavour to matrimony.

“To be sure you were,” said Jerry, and his words smacked of the bar at the corner; “to be sure; all the parish knew that.”

“What! I might have married a gentleman,” retorted Mrs. Noggin.

“And so you have,” said Jerry, with a smug look of dignity.

“A gentleman! A fellow that does nothing but sot upon gin and—”

“That’s not my fault, but my misfortune,” cried Noggin, somewhat affected. “Don’t reproach me, Nelly, if---if---” and the maudlin cobbler began to weep, “if I can’t get brandy! Don’t talk to me; what matter how a man gets at happiness, so he does but have it?”

“Happiness! and have you the impudence to call yourself happy?” exclaimed the wife; and, considering that she was his wife, his avowal of felicity betokened great moral courage.

Noggin evidently felt the absurdity of the bravado; for, looking up in his wife’s face, and puffing out his cheeks like the cheeks of an ape, he hiccupped—“sometimes, in the skittle-ground.”

“And there you find happiness?” cried Mrs. Noggin, with supreme contempt.

“Yes,” said Jerry; qualifying his assertion, “when you’ve the rheumatiz.”

“And I have wasted the bloom of my youth---”

“Bloom! tan,” said Jerry, “tan.”

“How many women would have left you, you villain?” shouted Mrs. Noggin, stung by the sneer at her beauty.

“Ha! I’ve often thought that,” said Jerry; “if I had but known how to go to work.”

“What! you want to get rid of me?” and the shame-stricken husband did not venture to deny the enormity. “Of me? who could have picked and chosen where I liked? of me---”

“Now, I say, Nell, let’s have no more of this. Pick and choose! I say nothing; you’re my wife, and I hope God will forgive me; but you know, Nell, as for picking and choosing,” and here Mr. Noggin, with the end of his thumb placed at the end of his nose, indicated some deep, mystic meaning.

Mrs. Noggin, enraged at the gesture, screamed in treble, “Why, you pitiful, dirty villain! you miserable rascal, that I have kept from being naked; you ungrateful fellow, that I nursed with a broken arm”---Mrs. Noggin did not pause to say how it had been broken---“do you dare to mean to say that I couldn’t have married the miller---and the---”

“Why, Nell, you know it,” and Noggin could sometimes be stern in his liquor; “you know that when I married you, you know that you were going a-begging!”

“Going a begging!” roared Mrs. Noggin, placing her hands at her sides.

“Yes---going a begging; you were---”

“*Cheap as dirt!*” cried the parrot, from the top of a wicker cage, the residence of a late magpie; “*cheap as dirt!*” repeated the bird.

Mrs. Noggin was for an instant struck dumb by the untimely truth of such a speaker. Jerry, recovering his astonishment, slapt his thigh, shouted a laugh, and said, “that’s a bit of truth.”

“*Cheap as dirt—cheap as dirt—cheap as dirt!*” iterated the parrot, as though proud of the praise of the husband.

“ And it isn't enough that you, a villain and a coward as you are, wear out my life, but you must teach a parrot to—”

“ *Cheap as dirt!*” cried the bird. It spoke no more; for Mrs. Noggin, seizing a last, with amazing force and dexterity flung it at the speaker, and the parrot fell dead upon the floor.

Even in the garret of a cobbler there was no retreat for truth.

Silly, silly bird! had it lived a life of self-glorification, how differently had its life been passed. “ I cannot think,” said the parrot, one day, to a fine macaw in a gold burnished cage, “ I cannot think,” said our sufferer, the spirit of Æsop for a brief minute descending on the birds, “ how it is that I meet with nothing but persecution and misfortune. I talk whole sentences, and might reasonably expect great admiration for my sagacity; and yet look at me; see, what a poor, plucked, maimed vagrant I am! How is it, my dear macaw, that you have for so many years enjoyed uninterrupted luxury? Surely, you must have an extraordinary gift of words. Tell me, how is this? are you continually letting fall rich truths—for ever dealing in deep wisdom?”

“ Not I,” said the macaw; “ I have lived here these ten years, and have been pampered on the best; and yet, until this hour, I have never said anything from morn till night, except ‘ *pretty Poll!* ’”

CHAPTER V.

THIS will be a very short chapter; but to the admirers of martyred worth, we trust a very grateful one. Lord Shaftesbury assures us, that no man of genius starves unknown; his starvation, probably, helping to make him notorious. Even truth has, at last, its enduring reward.

Lady —— had the most splendid collection of all that was “ rich and rare.” Happy were they admitted to the wonders of her museum! “ And, pray, what have we here?” asked a foreign countess, pausing before our stuffed parrot—a parrot, with its every feather composed, its eye replaced, set up in an erect and self-asserting posture, standing beneath a dome of glass, and supported by a pillar of most exquisite marble, whereon were inscribed in letters of gold the history, acts, and death of our martyr.

The parrot had, in its life, been blinded, maimed; had been hunted from place to place with hate and curses following it, and had at last been brained by a shrew for the truth in a cobbler's garret. But dead, its fame began to live; and now, it stands in a palace upon marble, and is sheltered from the smallest mote by a case of crystal!

What are the trials of truth, when we think of its monuments?

THE RIVAL COLOURS.

BY ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

In a certain sea-port town of Scotland not above a thousand miles, certainly, from the capital of that kingdom, there lived two brothers of the name of Linn—James, and Andrew.

Both of these persons had at one time been in a respectable way; but had succeeded, by dint of a steady course of drinking, in getting gradually down in the world, step by step, until there was not an inch of descent left below them. They could go no further. They had, in short, got upon what may be called the dead level of fortune, where there is neither an up nor down, and where, if there is nothing to hope, there is just as little to fear, which is certainly so far comfortable.

It was nothing to the Linns who became bankrupt, they could not be taken in. They would not have lost the tenth part of a farthing, although the whole trading population of the United Kingdom were in the gazette. A rise in the price of bread, or in any other article or articles of provision, affected not them in the least, simply because they never paid for any, and this, simply again, because they had nothing wherewith to pay for them. They lived on the community; not, however, in a dishonest way by any means, but in that certain mysterious manner in which all destitute persons live on the community, and which we can explain no further than by saying, that they do continue to live, and that, long after they have ceased to have anything of their own to live upon; ergo, they do live upon the community;—a fact this in natural history which cannot be gainsayed.

It must be confessed, however, that this same community treated the Messrs. Linns—as indeed it does, after all, every one who quarters on it—very scurvily; for their outward persons were in a state of most deplorable dishabille.

They both sported surtouts, or at least we believe they would have so called the articles in question had they been asked,—and we have no doubt that they really had been surtouts once on a day, and that too within the memory of man, at any

rate within the memory of one man, namely their tailor, who, we presume, would have reasons of his own for recollecting the fact.

However this may be, the particular garments in question were really not such as any gentleman of correct taste would choose to take the sunny-side of a fashionable street with on a bright summer forenoon.

One of them, viz. the surtout of the younger brother, (button and button-holes having peremptorily refused to do duty any longer), was secured by an invisible cincture of some kind or other. We say of some kind or other; not having been able to ascertain of what kind it really was; for it was so ingeniously contrived, and, we may add, so ingeniously worn, that you were made aware of its existence only by a sudden and singular attenuation of the wearer round the middle. This was indeed so great, that he appeared to be half cut through—you could not tell how, or by what.

We certainly do not think misery, under any circumstances, a fit subject for mirth, and we imagine we can feel for the distresses of others as much and as sincerely as our neighbours; yet there was a something in the appearance and manner of the particular pair of whom we are speaking that really defied "all power of face"---something irresistibly ludicrous.

They were both staid, grave, sagacious men, with long intelligent faces; and perhaps in this latter personality lay, partly at any rate, that portion of the comic which it was not possible to help associating with them; for their long intelligent faces were most deplorably dismal—most lachrymose—most lugubrious. If they had not been so very dismal they would, we verily believe, have been heart-rending, but as it was, they looked marvellously like a pair of elderly owls; not very musical, but certainly most melancholy. Solitary and forlorn looking men they were: but the poor fellows were borne down by poverty—squeezed to death by it. It lay upon them with the pressure of a cart-load of bricks.

The age of the eldest Linn might be, perhaps, about forty, that of his junior about thirty; and, although sufficiently well known by their own proper patronymics, their friends preferred distinguishing them by the classical names of Pliny the elder and younger.

It is very well known that poverty, like drink, renders people quarrelsome. While a family, or any other small community—perhaps the remark would apply to a large one too—continue in comfortable circumstances, they get on remarkably well. They are all good-humour and good nature, and are as kind and friendly to each other as possible; but the moment that adversity comes upon them, that instant they fall to worrying one another

with the most savage ferocity ; each revenging on his neighbour his own particular share of the common suffering.

Such, however, was not the case with the Linns. In adversity, as in prosperity, they continued on the most friendly footing, and conducted themselves towards each other on all occasions with becoming tenderness and regard.

Their common sufferings, indeed, instead of weakening their affection for each other, seemed to have drawn them closer together, and to have increased, in place of having diminished, the intensity of their fraternal love ; and truly there was great need it should ; for they were two only against the whole world, and if they did not condole with and encourage each other, who would ?

Their sufferings, however, were great. They had no regular employment : indeed scarcely any employment at all ; and this being the case, it will readily be believed that they had no use whatever for Meg Dodds's cookery book, nor were in the least interested in the changes of fashion. In truth, they were almost literally starving. They occasionally got jobs, indeed, of various kinds, but these were trifling and afforded them only a temporary relief. Out of the fourteen days they fasted fully thirteen.

One consequence of this severe regimen on the brothers was an extraordinary thinness of person. They wasted away in their surtouts till the latter could have gone twice round them, and buttoned behind with greater ease than they could have buttoned in front when they first got them. In truth, they could at last have both got into one and the same surtout at one and the same time, without much incommoding each other. Under this process of decomposition their faces, too, became daily more and more collapsed, and more dismal and forlorn, till they were at length truly piteous to behold.

It is said that the fortunes of men, when they have got to the lowest possible ebb, are almost sure to take a favourable turn, when they, themselves, give fair play to the good luck that is willing to befriend them. Whether this be a general truth or not we do not know, but certainly the doctrine held good, in one instance at any rate, in the case of the Plinys.

At one period of their career things had come to a crisis. That is, no shift of any kind was left them by which to procure even a mouthful of bread, and all the horrors of absolute starvation stared them in the face ; for, although they had been ill enough off before, they had always contrived to keep soul and body together ; there being several persons who, out of consideration for their former respectability, were in the habit of throwing some little thing in their way occasionally ; but even this precarious resource had at length failed them. Friends had grown shy, and employment there was none. At

this most dismal period of their career then, we say — just when they had reached the lowest depth of misery and destitution---one of those lucky hits to which we have already alluded, befel them. A job presented itself, a capital job, and they obtained it. This was to measure a cargo of wood which had just arrived from the Baltic,---a species of employment in which the Linns had been frequently engaged, and at which they were deemed very expert; for they were very clever fellows---this was allowed on all hands.

The job, however, was not obtained without some difficulty; for there were many competitors for it: but, after a great deal of running and entreating, and calling and re-calling, and boring and beseeching, they did obtain it. It was given them, in fact, out of charity; the importer knew of their former respectability and of their present destitution, and on these accounts preferred them to the job---on the express condition, however, that they should have the whole measured off by nine o'clock in the next morning, as it was all to be dispatched to the country in various lots, and the purchasers were impatient for possession.

With this condition, it will at once be believed, the starving brothers readily promised compliance. It was one of very easy performance.

This job was the first they had had for three months, and was besides an excellent one; yielding, at the very lowest calculation, a couple of guineas to each---a mighty matter to men in their circumstances, who did not know where to get their breakfast, and who had not been better informed regarding this and similar particulars for many a day before.

But the Linns were perfectly aware of this. They were by no means insensible to it. On the morning on which the work was to be done, they got up betimes, provided themselves with the necessary measuring apparatus, and joyously and lovingly proceeded together to the scene of their impending labours.

Having reached the ground, the brothers eyed the extensive piles of log that lay before them, for a few seconds, with looks of great satisfaction. Always friendly before, they were now ten times more so. Every better and tenderer feeling of their natures was consonantly acted upon by the very magnificent appearance of the *job*. They smiled sweetly in each other's faces, and murmured their happiness to one another, in accents as tender as those of a couple of turtle doves. But the work must be begun. They felt this, and commenced operations with such spirit that in a twinkling the first log was measured off---its dimensions taken, the younger Linn pulled a large red mass of something or other out of his pocket.

“What's that, Andrew?” said the elder Linn, eyeing the strange substance.



“ A piece of red cauk to mark the logs wi’,” replied Andrew, carelessly.

“ Red cauk to mark the logs wi’ ?” said the elder, in a tone of slight displeasure, very slight however, scarce perceptible ; “ red cauk’s no richt, man, ye canna see’t a yard off. We’ll tak’ white, Andrew,” and he pulled a large piece of the substance he alluded to out of *his* pocket.

“ We’ll do nae such thing man,” replied Andrew, a little impatiently, “ white has nae grip. It rubbs off wi’ the least touch. We’ll tak’ the red, Jamie ; it’ll haud the langest.”

“ The red canna be seen a yard off, man, I tell ye, and ’ll never do !” said the elder Linn sharply, and with pointed emphasis.

“ The white has nae haud !” exclaimed Andrew, with increasing testiness of manner.

“ It’ll do better than the red for a’ that,” said the elder brother, now really angry at the pertinacity of his junior.

“ It’ll do nae such thing,” replied the latter, no less vexed at the obstinacy of the former. “ I tell ye again, that the red hauds best. It’ll staun baith wet and dry, and a gude rubbin to the bargain. I’m sure common sense micht show ye that.”

“ But it’s no seen !” roared out the elder brother, now in a tremendous passion, “ and what’s the use o’ a mark if it’s no seen ?”

“ Ye’re an ass, a d—d ass !” shouted Andrew, proceeding without further words to mark the log with the red chalk which he held in his hand, when he was collared by his brother.

“ An ass !—you infernal idiot, you insolent rascal ! Do you call me an ass ? It’s *you* that’s the ass !” exclaimed the elder Pliny, shaking his brother violently while he spoke. “ Let me see that piece o’ red cauk oot o’ your hands this instant,” he added, making at the same time a desperate effort to obtain possession of the detested substance.

“ I’ll see you hanged first !” exclaimed Andrew, resisting stoutly, and in turn grasping his brother by the throat.

“ But I *will* hae’t,” roared out Jamie ; increasing his efforts to get hold of the piece of red chalk.

“ But ye sha’ na hae’t !” bellowed out Andrew, still more and more fiercely resisting.

The consequence of these opposing sentiments and interests was a long and deadly struggle, in the course of which both got several severe falls ; sometimes one being undermost, and sometimes the other. At length, the elder brother proved himself decidedly the superior in physical strength, by getting Andrew on his back right across the measured but still unmarked log, where he held him by the throat !—his heels touching the ground

on one side and the crown of his head touching it on the other. The position was a complete locker. Andrew could not budge an inch, and Pliny the elder perceiving his advantage, held him there with the most determined gripe.

Aware of the utter helplessness of his situation, Andrew made no attempt to regain his perpendicular, but lay quietly where he was. Under this seeming passiveness, however, there was a deep design. This design was neither more nor less than to take advantage of the smallest remissness on the part of the superincumbent—for Pliny the elder was reposing with his whole weight on Pliny the younger, as he lay doubled backwards across the log—and to extricate himself from his hold by one sudden and desperate jerk; a proceeding in which he eventually succeeded at the expense only of one of the skirts of his coat, which remained in the hands of the elder Linn, after a vain attempt to counteract the vigorous and successful twist with which he conveyed his entire body to one side of the log, and the subsequent spring which restored him to his perpendicular.

On regaining his legs, Linn the younger made a ferocious leap at the throat of Linn the elder, and succeeded in canting *him* over the log, making his spine crack like the report of a pistol. With this feat, however, personal hostilities terminated between the belligerents—but it was only to renew the war in a new shape. Satisfied with having thrown his brother, Linn the younger did not follow up his advantage by keeping him down, but allowed him to get up again. On doing so, the elder Linn, appreciating the courtesy, did not again attack, but affecting an air of calm magnanimity, and assuming a corresponding attitude, said at intervals, as his excited condition and disturbed respiration would admit:

“ Sir,—you’ll—repent—this infamous—conduct of yours. I’ll go directly, sir, to Mr. Beveridge (the importer and proprietor of the timber) and tell him, sir, of your rascally and unnatural conduct, and we’ll then see, sir, whether he’ll have his logs marked with red chalk or with white;” and he shook the fist in which he still held the substance of which he spoke, although it was now merely a handful of white powder, having been crushed into dust in the struggle.

“ Whenever you choose, sir,” said his brother, trying to imitate the elder’s coolness and dignity of manner; “ whenever you choose, sir,” he said, shaking the lump of red chalk which he also still held in his hand, in his brother’s face; “ but when you go, I go along with you. Mark that. I’ll not allow you an opportunity of misrepresenting facts. I’m as willing as you can be to refer the matter to Mr. Beveridge; but if he chooses white chalk to mark his timber wi,’ I can tell ye it’s what he never did before:—I ken that.”

“Go to the deil wi’ ye,” said the elder brother, and he hurried away to put his threat of stating the case to Mr. Beveridge in execution.

Andrew, equally determined, followed him with his skirtless coat.

Mr. Beveridge was not within, but they were told where they would be likely to find him. It was a considerable distance, but they were resolved on seeing Mr. Beveridge, and to the place named they went. He had left just five minutes or so before they arrived. The person whom they saw, however, informed them that he had spoken of going to a certain other quarter of the town, and he had no doubt, if they went there, they would find him.

They did so, but Mr. Beveridge was *not* there.

The Linns now returned to Mr. Beveridge’s house:—the elder Linn going before, and the younger behind; both as sulky as bears, and neither speaking a word to the other.

On arriving at Mr. Beveridge’s house, they were told that that gentleman had gone down about an hour before to the timber-yard. He was now secure, and to the timber-yard the Linns immediately repaired. Be it observed, however, before we bring on the crisis of our tale, that the Linns had spent upwards of an hour in searching for Mr. Beveridge, which, with fully another consumed in the conflict we have recorded, had exhausted a “pretty considerable” portion of the morning, and yet not a single log had been marked off!

Oh, passion! thou blinder of reason! that steppest in between man and his purposes, and crossest the latter with thy arbitrary and bootless influence! what deep cause had these unfortunate North Britons to rue thy interposition! Why did it not occur, both to Pliny the elder and Pliny the younger, that, while they were debating the relative merits of white and red, the job itself which demanded the instrumentality of the “rival colours” was slipping through their fingers? Time and tide, it is proverbial, stay for no one; why should an exception be made in the instance of two pugnacious Scotchmen?

On reaching the timber-yard, the Messrs. Linn found—found what? Why, Mr. Beveridge with two assistants busily employed in doing the work they should have done. Here was a denouement! Shortly did the full facts of the case burst upon the luckless brothers, and effectually cool their irritation. Adieu to the delicious prospect of a relishing breakfast, and still more savoury dinner! Adieu to the anticipation of an evening glass of whiskey-toddy, enjoyed over a retrospect of the labours of the morning! Instead of these creature-comforts, enhanced as they would have been by all the force of a painful

contrast, our heroes were doomed, again, both to dine and sup with *Duke Humphrey*!

It was eventually ascertained that some rival applicant for the measuring-work, instigated by combined feelings of jealousy and envy, had flitted, on that eventful morning, round the scene of action; had witnessed—no doubt with infinite *goût*—the growing quarrel between the owners of the two chalks—watching minutely its progress, from the first insinuated dissent to the ultimate open brawl; on the commencement of which the spectator had quietly decamped, and carried intelligence thereof to the proprietor of the timber.

Our readers will guess the sequel. It was in vain that the Messrs. Linn endeavoured to explain the reason of their dilatoriness, and the nature of their dispute to the matter-of-fact and business. Like the principal with whom they had to deal, both indeed spoke at once, as if seeking to make up by clamour for the want of common sense; but Mr. Beveridge cut short recrimination and appeal, by telling the incensed disputants to get clear of the ground, and not further interrupt the progress of that work which they were originally intended to expedite.

Jamie and Andrew, perceiving that the game was up, slunk off, hungry and discomfited, to reflect at leisure on the virtue of unanimity. The affair meanwhile got wind; it was related by some as a sad, by others as a merry story; but by one and all, ever after, the Linns were distinguished by the rather inharmonious *sobriquet* of the TWO CHALKS.

THE COQUETTE :

A TALE OF FASHIONABLE LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ZEAL AND EXPERIENCE," &c. &c.

LADY CECILIA SELBORNE was seated at her toilet in a wrapping-gown, whilst her maid was labouring, not very successfully, to satisfy her fastidious taste in the arrangement of her long and luxuriant auburn tresses.

"My dear Cecilia," exclaimed Elinor, her cousin, as she entered the room, "are you aware that the carriage has been waiting this half hour, and that your father is out of all patience?"

"Of the latter circumstance I can have no doubt," returned Lady Cecilia, "whatever I might of the former. I had no idea it was so late. Ay, that's better, Smithson," she added, addressing her attendant; "a little more this way, and that side, I think, may do."

"Why, Cecy, have you really been all this time adorning for a B—— assize ball? You, who almost quarrel with me for bestowing a sprig of jessamine upon the natives!"

"And I will quarrel with you again for that, and for your ball-dress, Nelly. You will actually make the natives think that an assize-ball is as great an affair to you as to them. Oh! Smithson, Smithson, now you are spoiling all again!"

"Nay, trust me, Coz, your hair looks as negligently arranged as your utmost contempt for B—— can desire."

"Yes, Nelly, and as unbecomingly; which is *more* than I desire."

"Will there be any one in the party for whom you think that signifies?" asked Elinor.

"Do you not know the troops that have just succeeded to that odious —— regiment afford some who would no tbe discreditable dangles?"

"I was quite ignorant of that important circumstance. But I really think Smithson's last touch was perfection, and you look quite beautiful enough to kill all the not-discreditable portion of the regiment."

Lady Cecilia laughed reprovingly, as she said, "Nelly, Nelly, I shall never make any thing of you. But I believe it will do now;" and she rose from her seat and proceeded to complete her attire.

"And who *are* these not-discreditable danglers, whom you think worth so much trouble, Cecy?" asked Elinor, as she assisted the maid in settling her cousin's dress.

"The colonel is one of the Ernewolds," was the answer.

"One of the Ernewolds?" repeated Elinor, "I thought old Lord Treswick had only the son who has been so long abroad."

"And you thought right, dear; but an Ernewold may do well enough to dance with, though he is only an earl's nephew. And this man is, moreover, a very distinguished officer, as I have heard."

By this time Lady Cecilia was ready, and the two cousins descended to the library, where the earl scolded his daughter, both for her want of punctuality, and her not being full-dressed after all.

"It would be so very late, papa, if I staid to improve my appearance," observed the young lady.

The remark produced the intended effect, and the trio immediately set out for B——; but during the greater part of the drive, the peer harangued his daughter upon the duty of treating country neighbours with proper respect, and of acquiring country popularity.

No artifice of dress, or lateness of arrival, was requisite to give effect to the entrance of the Selborne Abbey party into the B—— ball-room; but Lady Cecilia had judged well how to heighten that effect to the utmost. Miss Selborne might perhaps have only been remarked as the most elegant and fashionable girl in the room. But the decided half-dress of Lady Cecilia, for which she condescendingly apologised as having forgotten the hour and been unwilling to detain her father, combining with and enhancing her air of high fashion, necessarily caught every eye. Amongst others, it naturally attracted his for whom it had been principally designed. Colonel Ernewold requested an introduction, and solicited her hand for the first quadrille.

Without losing sight for an instant of that negligent superiority to the place and company, which her dress was intended to enforce, Lady Cecilia exerted herself to charm her partner, and when she did thus exert herself, it was seldom indeed that she failed of success. Ernewold was completely fascinated; and when he, next, sought the hand of Elinor, who—if inferior in beauty to her cousin, which might be a question, was certainly second to no other—he sought her merely as something belonging to Lady Cecilia. In fact, the two cousins strongly resembled

each other; both were true English beauties, with brilliant complexions, blue eyes, a profusion of silky auburn hair, and finely formed persons. Both had also that indescribable air of high fashion, which those only depreciate who despair of acquiring it. In Lady Cecilia this air was enhanced by perfect self-confidence, and a considerable degree of levity. In Miss Selborne it was tempered by a slight shade of timidity, which would possibly have amounted to shyness, had not an early familiarity with the best society prevented the growth of so obsolete a feeling. Perhaps this difference between the fair cousins may be best explained by saying, that Lady Cecilia's education had been wholly committed to a fashionable French governess, and the best masters London could afford; whilst Elinor had received hers chiefly from her parents, with the occasional assistance of expensive instructors in the lighter accomplishments of her sex.

Colonel Ernewold's conversation with his new partner consisted principally of the praises of her predecessor; and the cordial warmth with which Elinor concurred in them, seemed too natural to excite a remark. At length his eulogiums embraced the elegant simplicity of her appearance, the unaffected good-nature that had induced her to sacrifice the care of her dress to the fear of detaining her father and cousin,—and Elinor's utmost efforts failed wholly to suppress the arch smile that dimpled about the corners of her pretty mouth, as she quietly observed, "Few persons have so little occasion to think of dress as Cecilia."

Ernewold fixed a scrutinizing look upon the lurking smile, and thought of the trite maxim, that admiration of one woman is seldom agreeable to another; whilst, in Elinor's mind, as she noticed that look, arose the painful idea, "He thinks me envious of Cecilia;" and the smile was supplanted by an involuntary but equally irrepressible sigh.

The evolutions of the quadrille now interrupted the conversation. These Elinor performed, as she always did, gracefully and correctly, but without display; and the Colonel, as he handed her to her place again, remarked, "You are fonder of dancing than Lady Cecilia." Her ladyship, it should be observed, merely walked the figure, occasionally executing a few difficult steps with transcendent skill and precision.

"For its own sake, perhaps I may be," she answered; and as he made no immediate rejoinder, added, with another irrepressible smile, "but I fancy I need not tell you, that my cousin is a beautiful dancer."

From this evening Colonel Ernewold was a constant visiter at Selborne Abbey; and, although Lady Cecilia was evidently the magnet that attracted him, she did not so completely monopolize his attentions, but that he became a welcome guest to the whole

family. He was a man of education, and a soldier who had seen much service. His conversation was diversified, entertaining, and instructive. In the pleasures it afforded, Lady Cecilia seemed generously willing to permit her father and cousin to share,—as, whilst her deepening colour, and now sparkling, now swimming eye, spoke all her tongue denied, and she exerted her various powers of pleasing to secure her hold of her conquest,—she appeared in no haste to receive any more explicit acknowledgment of her victory than that with which the silent eloquence of passion gratified her heart or her vanity.

The share usually taken in the conversation by Elinor shewed, without the slightest degree of pretension, a high tone of feeling, a playful fancy, a strong intellect, and a mind stored with information; and it often attracted Ernwood's attention to her, though it could not for an instant balance or weaken Lady Cecilia's superior powers of fascination. Sometimes, too, he fancied that Elinor's colour deepened as much as her cousin's at his approach; but of this it was difficult to judge; and her eyes, always fixed upon her book, her work, or her drawing, were veiled from observation by their long lashes, until raised to receive and return his greeting with a sweet and cordial smile.

One morning, the cousins being alone, Elinor, after a long silence, looked up from her drawing to ask "Cecilia, what do you mean to do with this not-disagreeable dangler, as you call him?"

"Do with him, child? Why, just what you have allowed that he is fittest for;—dangle him *au possible*," was the laughing answer.

"I allowed no such thing," returned Elinor; "and I very much doubt his proving a *tame* dangler."

"So much the better, Nelly. Tame is synonymous with stupid."

"But how is it to end, Cecy? Are you so confident in your skill, as to be in no danger of entangling *yourself*?"

"I am, Miss Elinor. I can enjoy the conversation of an agreeable man, without seeking to know whether he be able to keep a wife, and a coach and four."

"If you would but be serious for five minutes, Cecilia," observed Elinor, shaking her head with something between a smile and a sigh.

"Serious? So I will in time and season, child. If that *end* of which you think so much, ever should befall me, I'll be solemnity personified. But not about a pleasant partner at a county town ball, or in a country ride."

"*Tant va la cruche a l'eau*; you know the rest, Cecy; and French covers the vulgarity, even of proverbs, I believe."

"What! dealing out the saws of old experience, Nelly dear?"

rejoined Lady Cecilia. "But never fear, pet; it shall have its Colonel when I have done with him, and very little the worse for wear."

"Your Ladyship is lavishly generous," retorted Elinor, blushing and laughing; "but you will please to recollect, that the intended receiver may have some choice touching such gifts, as well as the intended giver."

"As for the receiver, my discreet coz," replied Lady Cecilia, "before you can persuade me of your dislike to the gift, you must learn to silence the eloquence of that pure blood of yours."

The dialogue just detailed may suffice to give an idea of the state of affairs at Selborne Abbey; a state in which, with trifling varieties, they remained, until the appearance of a new character upon the stage materially affected the relative positions and proceedings of the personages of our tale.

The Colonel, as he was taking his leave one evening, said, "I must deny myself the enjoyment of Selborne Abbey society for some days, unless Lady Cecilia and Lord Shuckborough will permit me to bring a friend with me, for I expect a visiter to-morrow."

"Any friend of yours, Colonel Ernewold, must be welcome," replied the Earl, with grave courtesy; while his daughter gaily exclaimed, "A flirt for Elinor!—Oh, by all means; it will save you the immense labour of trying to divide yourself between two *exigeante* damsels."

"The most considerate of all earthly cousins are you, Cecilia, beyond dispute;" returned Elinor. "But a flirt is not actually essential to my existence."

It was not with his wonted ease that the Colonel said: "It is fortunate for our sex that all ladies do not hold us quite so cheaply as Miss Selborne. However, I must try to avenge our cause by deputy, and never will I forgive Corringham if he does not teach my Lady Disdain to appreciate flirts more highly."

"Corryngham?" exclaimed Lord Shuckborough and his daughter, simultaneously—"Is *he* in England?"

"He is just landed, and writes me word he will spend a few days with me on his way home."

"Quite recovered, I hope?" inquired the Earl.

"So he tells me," returned the Colonel.

"We shall be delighted to see him, and I rely upon your bringing him to dinner to-morrow, Colonel," resumed the stately peer. His visiter bowed assent and departed.

The next day Colonel Ernewold presented Lord Corringham at Selborne Abbey; and need it be said that the new comer was not assigned to Miss Selborne,—as her flirt was not made over to *her* care and attentions! That on the contrary, Lady

Cecilia instantly devoted all her powers and talents to his entertainment. Was this the effect of simple politeness to a stranger?—or of obedience to her father's injunctions? Or, notwithstanding her professions of being no establishment-hunter, of enjoying the conversation of an agreeable man without reference to his merits as *un parti*, was her ladyship fully sensible of the advantages of marrying the heir of a wealthy earldom? Did she begin to reflect that, however unbounded the power she enjoyed over her father's establishment, she might not be likely to rule her brother's with quite so absolute a sway? Gentle reader, these are captious queries, implicating a fair lady's character for consistency, and must not be rashly answered. The sequel of the story will possibly afford their solution. Objectionable, however, as such interrogatories may be, they presented themselves to our friend the Colonel's mind, and that so urgently, as to influence his conversation with Elinor, in whose gentleness he now began habitually to seek solace.

"Does Miss Selborne," he inquired, in an under voice, "admire the disinterestedness, or laugh at the simplicity, of an old war-worn soldier, who has so frankly contributed to supplant himself?"

"Not exactly either," returned Elinor, smiling, "since she is not quite aware of the fact."

"It is only the way of the world," he resumed, without replying to her propitiatory disclaimer; "and I might have remembered from my school-boy lessons, that arms must give place to robes. Yet, I did not quite think that Lady Cecilia—"

"Nay, but Colonel, recollect; Lord Corringham is a stranger guest, and as such, entitled to attentions, which, if paid to you, *l'amî de la maison*, now almost *l'enfant de la maison*, would be ridiculous."

A pause of a few minutes ensued, during which both interlocutors were occupied in observing the animation displayed by the young and lovely hostess in her conversation with this 'stranger guest.' At length Ernewold renewed the dialogue, with increased bitterness of tone.

"And do the attentions due to a stranger include the display of every charm, the exhibition of every power of fascination, the utter forgetfulness of every other visiter?"

"Colonel Ernewold," said Elinor, more gravely, "Cecilia has from her infancy been accustomed to universal admiration, and it has become as essential to her existence as the air she breathes."

Colonel Ernewold looked earnestly at his companion, and the mistrust he had conceived on the evening of his first introduction to the fair cousins recurred to his mind. He assumed that air of

conventional gallantry so well described by the French term *bannale*, and said, "I am afraid I shall give Miss Selborne a very poor idea of army gallantry, for this is, I believe, the second time I have been guilty of that solecism in good manners, the entertaining one lady with the merits or demerits of another."

Elinor was deeply wounded. To be altogether overlooked, in his admiration of her more brilliant cousin, even by the man of whom, despite her best endeavours, she thought too much for her own happiness, she had borne. But to be despised by him as meanly envious of superior attractions—that she could not bear. She made a strong exertion to command her agitation, and with a faint smile returned, "At whatever hazard to the reputation of the whole British army, I must not, I will not, suffer you to change the subject of our conversation at this moment. Could I do so, immediately after making a remark disparaging to Cecilia, I should indeed deserve the bad opinion that I believe you have just formed of me."

He attempted a vague disclaimer, and asked some idle questions. Without attending to either, she went on with growing earnestness :

"I must not tell you of Cecilia's only fault, without adding, that she possesses not merely every charm—that you know as well as I do—but every excellence of head and heart, to counterbalance it ; and if that fault dwells too constantly in my thoughts, it is not from jealousy ; that I cannot feel, having no ambition such as hers, to produce either jealousy or rivalry ; but because I tremble for its consequences to her own happiness.

"Colonel Erneuld, I am convinced that no strength of affection will ever wholly supersede her thirst for admiration ; and he who aspires to Cecilia's regard, must make up his mind to rest content with the certainty of possessing her invaluable heart, and quietly see her exert all her powers of captivation to allure every fresh insect tempted to scorch its wings in the dazzling flame. And now," she added in a lighter tone, "we will talk of whatever you please."

Erneuld shook his head, muttering half to himself, yet not inaudibly, "Corringham is not one of the insects who will burn his wings ;"—and then readily following Elinor's lead, answered her inquiries respecting foreign lands and past times, till he almost forgot that his delighted and intelligent auditress was not her whose attention he most desired to fix.

The next morning, as the two lovely cousins sat engaged in their several occupations, the one abruptly asked the other, "Nelly, what in the world were the colonel and you discussing so earnestly last night ?"

"Every thing in the world, my good coz, and a few things besides."

“Two of those latter things, I presume,” rejoined the fair querist, “being the Lord Viscount Corringham and the Lady Cecilia Selborne.” She paused for an answer; but receiving none beyond a nod and a smile, went on: “I suppose Ernewold was very angry, poor fellow?”

“Of course, Cecilia,” said Elinor, gravely, “he could not be pleased to see another usurp privileges you had taught him to consider as his own.”

“Taught him, Nelly? Suffered him, you mean.”

“Hum! A nice distinction, Cecy.”

“A correct one, Nelly. I cannot help the fancies a man may take into his head. But if I had *taught* the creature to consider these privileges his, as you phrase it, it would be too late for me to follow your advice, my sage coz, as I mean to do.”

“Follow my advice? In what, pray?”

“In not flirting further with any man who would not be a suitable *parti*.”

“Indeed! Was that my advice?”

“Your rule, as I understood it. And in that point of view you have no objection to the Lord Viscount Corringham, I presume?”

“None, Cecy, except that I understood from Colonel Ernewold he is no marrying man.”

“No marrying man!” retorted the spoiled beauty. “Lord help us, child! and do you and Colonel Ernewold fancy Cecilia Selborne has no chance of any husband who does not go about the world like the poor youth of

“Ballynocracy,

“Who wanted a wife to make him un-ai-sy.”

And she sang with burlesque pathos the well-known line of Alley Croaker.

Elinor laughed and shook her head, her frequent return to her cousin’s fallacious justifications of her own conduct;—then asked, “Is not this Lord Corringham a notorious man of gallantry?”

“The fitter that I should avenge the wrongs of my sex, Nelly, by bringing him to my feet in despair.”

“And then?” asked Elinor.

“And then reject him in punishment of his manifold sins and offences, or confirm his repentance and reformation by accepting him, just as I find myself in the humour to carry a knapsack, or to repent in my turn, in a coach and six.”

To this rhapsody Elinor made no answer, and Cecilia archly asked, “Are you bent upon my marrying Ernewold *coute qui coute*, Nelly?”

“I am bent upon your knowing your own mind, Cecy.”

“Oh! that I do perfectly; and it is, to drag viscounts and colonels, profligates and marrying men, at my chariot wheels.”

In this altered state, affairs continued for some time, during which Lord Corringham prolonged his visit to his military kinsman. Colonel Ernewold did not cease to watch his flirtation with Lady Cecilia, and to remark upon it in his conversations with Elinor; but the bitterness with which he had first done so gradually disappeared, and could his hearer have felt disposed to criticise any thing in an intercourse so delightful to her, the fault she might have found would have been that he seemed to look upon the parties engaged in that flirtation as a couple of gladiators, exhibiting their "nice fence and active practice" solely for his entertainment, without the least interest in the event of the contest. Something of this hardly conscious feeling had been perceptible one day in her language; and the impression it made upon her auditor will appear from the dialogue that took place between the male cousins, as the Colonel drove his noble visiter home to his quarters. He asked pretty nearly in the words Elinor had previously used with respect to himself—

"How is all this to end, Corringham? I hope you do not intend to add Lady Cecilia's broken heart to your already innumerable amorous trophies?"

"Lady Cecilia Selborne's broken heart!" ejaculated his noble companion, with a burst of laughter that would have injured his reputation in the eyes of Lord Chesterfield. "Faith, that is too good! Lady Cecilia Selborne's broken heart!"

"She may *deserve* to be jilted in her turn," resumed Ernewold gravely; "I will not dispute that; but as I introduced you at the Abbey, Corringham, for my credit's sake—"

The Viscount interrupted him; "My most scrupulous Colonel, if your credit remains unimpeached until Cecilia Selborne's heart is broken, yours will indeed be an immaculate career! Her heart broken!"—he went on, intermixing his words with peals of merriment: "This is the first time I ever heard that any naturalist even suspected the existence of a heart in the coquette *genus*."

"A coquette she certainly is," observed the Colonel, with a sigh; "but her thousand charms and excellencies—"

"Ay, indeed! Are you so well acquainted with her charms and excellencies? Why then I suspect 'that a certain gallant officer, more experienced in the field of Mars than of Venus,' as the newspapers would elegantly express it, is infinitely indebted to his noble, but calumniated relation, for coming to reveal the speck, which, in sentimental eyes, should mar all the beauties."

Colonel Ernewold made no answer, and after a short pause, Lord Corringham resumed. "Silent, Ernewold? Nay, then the business is serious indeed. But, my dear fellow, this Lady Cecilia is no heiress, I think. Lots of school-boy brothers, has

she not? You have not fortune enough to marry a poorly portioned girl, even if she were as much attached to you as Lady Cecilia seems to have persuaded you she was before Cæsar Corringham interposed with his *veni, vidi, vici*."

"Corringham, the woman who is content to live on my income, and follow the regiment for my sake, will always have portion enough for me."

"Doubtless, my good Amadis, doubtless; but Lady Cecilia Selborne, take my word for it, will never be that woman. Another Selborne, indeed, I suspect, there may be, who would willingly starve with you, were your income an ensign's pay, and follow your regiment, though she had to tramp after it on foot."

Again Colonel Ernewold made no answer; and again Lord Corringham, casting his momentary seriousness aside, began to divert himself with repeating, "Break Lady Cecilia Selborne's heart! Ha! ha! ha!"

If this discussion produced any effect upon the disputants, that effect certainly was not to diminish their assiduity in visiting at the Abbey, or to check Colonel Ernewold's eagerness in seeking Elinor's society, in which he appeared daily to discover new charms. Neither was any alteration visible in the style of incense offered up by Lord Corringham at Lady Cecilia's shrine.

At Selborne Abbey, therefore, all was harmony and satisfaction. Lord Shuckborough took especial care not to interrupt proceedings that seemed to promise suitable establishments for his daughter and niece; and those damsels themselves appeared to be perfectly happy. Appeared? One *was* so. Elinor had not a wish ungratified, whilst she watched the gradual change taking place in the Colonel's feelings with regard to Cecilia and herself; and if a painful recollection of Lord Corringham's character for gallantry sometimes disturbed her with a fear for her cousin's prospects, she was in no mood to be suspicious of a relation of Ernewold's, or one whose arrival had been fraught with such felicity to herself; and she was therefore easily satisfied with the lady's own assurances of her perfect confidence in the *ci-devant* gay Lothario.

But did Lady Cecilia really feel all the confidence she expressed? Was *she* likewise as happy as she appeared? She tried to believe it. Nothing could be more devoted than this not-marrying-man's attentions; nothing more delicate than his flattery. He was prolonging his stay at B. wholly upon her account,—so much he had given her plainly to understand, when he had spoken of the duties, of the imperious claims, he was disregarding, from the impossibility of tearing himself away from the neighbourhood. And if an unpleasant consciousness did at times obtrude itself upon her, that this was the nearest approach he had ever made to any thing like speaking out, she consoled

herself with the reflection, that a professed not-marrying-man must naturally hesitate longer than another, ere taking the irrevocable step; and she only exerted herself the more to secure so splendid a triumph; whilst the worst suspicion she ever admitted, even to reject it, was, that the imperious claim his Lordship had alluded to, was the entanglement of some former illicit attachment, which he must needs disentangle, or break through, prior to thinking of marriage. Need it be added, that this suspicion only stimulated Cecilia's endeavours to captivate?

But there was a further drawback to her Ladyship's happiness, which she yet less avowed to herself, and never would have acknowledged to another. She sedulously observed the intercourse between her discarded admirer and her cousin. At first she was gratified by the conviction that Ernewold sought Elinor merely to complain of her conduct. But latterly she perceived that the Colonel's eyes dwelt less upon herself, and more upon her cousin. And the irksome apprehension that he might have broken her chains, was embittered by an involuntary sense of the superiority in all, save rank and fortune, of the captive she was losing, perhaps had already lost, to the rival for whom she had slighted him.

At length the long-deferred day of Lord Corringham's departure came, and he managed it with the skill that had characterized the whole of his intercourse with Cecilia. A country party was assembled at Selborne Abbey, necessarily compelling her to divide her attentions; but, ere the company broke up, he whispered in her fluttered ear—

“Pity me, for the hours of happiness are past! I may no longer brave those imperative claims that, during so many delicious days, have vainly summoned me hence.”

Cecilia changed colour, and her lips quivered between the pain of these tidings, and the expectation that the moment of parting would be that of explanation. She had no wish to conceal her encouraging emotion from him who caused it, and faultingly asked, “Are you then really going?”

The answer was comprised in the single ejaculation, “Alas!”

“And soon?” again asked Lady Cecilia.

“Now! Even now!”

“Now!” she more faintly reiterated.

“I ought to have gone this morning, but I could not sacrifice these last moments of enjoyment. I ordered the carriage hither, and it waits—has long been waiting.”

Agitated by conflicting hopes and fears of what was to follow, shrinking with maiden delicacy from saying too much, and dreading by an unseasonable word to check the declaration she expected, Lady Cecilia remained silent, merely bending her

head in acknowledgment of the compliment. The Viscount, after a brief pause as if waiting for an answer, resumed—

“To me the interval will seem an eternity—yet be in fact but a few weeks. The season will bring you to town, and then I may hope—” The listener trembled and coloured more deeply; but without appearing to notice her emotion, Corringham went on, after a momentary hesitation, “I may hope to—present myself in Grosvenor-square, may I not?”

Lady Cecilia could scarcely conceal her disappointment, though her pride enabled her to answer in a steady voice, “We must always be happy to see Lord Corringham.”

“Millions of thanks, and as many farewells!” he exclaimed, as he pressed her hand fervently, and rising from her side, addressed himself to take leave of his noble host. Lord Shuckborough stood confounded, when he heard that his intended son-in-law was leaving the neighbourhood without a word concerning any serious intentions, without any seeming purpose of further intercourse till they should meet in town. But a room full of company was no place for explanations, and in fact, before the Peer had sufficiently collected his faculties to consider how he should act, the noble commoner had shaken hands with Miss Selborne, slapped Colonel Ernewold on the shoulder, with the words, “*Au revoir* in town,” sprung into his travelling carriage, and driven off at the utmost speed of four post horses.

But no human eye might be permitted to behold the mortification of Lady Cecilia Selborne; and so perfectly did she command herself, so gracefully and so cheerfully did she continue to play the hostess, that her father even mistook matters, and imagined, until undeceived, that a perfect understanding existed between the young people.

On the morrow, however, a new annoyance awaited the Coquette, for which, it being unprecedented in her experience, she was altogether unprepared. Colonel Ernewold returned, as formerly, unaccompanied, but, not as formerly, he now came to devote himself wholly to the gentle Elinor. Lady Cecilia saw herself neglected for her cousin, and found such neglect intolerable. It was not that she would allow no one a husband or a lover but herself; on the contrary, from the time of her perceiving Elinor's growing attachment, she had made up her mind that the Colonel should one day or other be her cousin's. But then she had intended this to be brought about rather by her own will, than by Elinor's charms; to be preceded by her own marriage, or at least by her positive rejection of the Colonel's addresses, in short, by his actual despair with regard to herself; and as yet, though he might reasonably enough be very angry with her, he had no just cause for despair. Accordingly, a little consideration satisfied Lady Cecilia that Colonel Ernewold,

under the influence of excessive anger, was deceiving poor Elinor, and probably himself likewise; an evil which should not be suffered to continue.

But in vain did the accomplished Coquette throw out the most powerful lures—Ernewold saw them, as though he saw them not. Every courtesy due to the mistress of the mansion in which he was so hospitably entertained, every respectful or kindly attention due to the beloved relation of the object of his affections, he rendered to Lady Cecilia; but beyond this, he would not be drawn; and the mortified beauty was at length obliged to confess to herself, what all others had long seen, that save as Elinor's kinswoman, she was now nothing to the inflexible soldier. To be thus, the mere spectatress of another's wooing, was not existence; and she looked around in quest of some tolerable substitute for the present deserter, and the absentee admirer.

None immediately offered, save a certain Augustus Jackson, esquire, the vulgar dashing son and heir of a lately deceased industrious and wealthy wholesale hosier. Augustus Jackson had been destined, by the ambitious dealer in stockings, even from his birth (as is indicated by the incongruity of his christian with his surname) to soar a flight far above all past Jacksons whom the world had ever known; and never was filial obedience more beautifully displayed, than in the zeal wherewith the dutiful Augustus laboured to fulfil these parental aspirations.

Upon this, as she fancied, City Cymon, Lady Cecilia, in the actual dearth of any other coat and waistcoat bearing animal to pay her those attentions without which she could no longer exist, resolved to bestow so much encouragement as should prove requisite to convert him into a sort of stop gap flirt in the absence of better. Her purpose was quickly effected; but whether she found her vivified Cymon more troublesome, or simply less amusing, than she had anticipated, certain it is that in the very height of the flirtation (which had excited many ill-natured comments) she urged an unprecedentedly early removal to Grosvenor-square, alleging as her reason the preparations requisite for Elinor's marriage,—Colonel Ernewold having about this time solicited Miss Selborne's hand, and obtained Lord Shuckborough's courteous confirmation of the consent he had previously read in her blushing although silent delight.

In London, Lady Cecilia, as she had probably anticipated, met Lord Corringham, and their rural intimacy was renewed. But if their intercourse bore the same character as in the country, it was different in one important respect, its frequency; and Lady Cecilia was not perfectly at her ease. That he admired her—sincerely, fervently admired her—was self-evident; his manner even more than his language proved it whenever they were to-

gether, and after every absence his lamentations of the imperative engagements of business or duty that kept him away, might have satisfied the most distrustful; and Cecilia was any thing but distrustful of the power of her own charms. Not even in the secret council of her heart did she confess a doubt, a fear of the rivalry of a certain Mrs. Delraine (though the world talked much of his successful admiration of that lady), or a suspicion that the anti-matrimonialism of this finest of fine men might, after all, prove invincibly stubborn. But she did acknowledge the necessity of exerting all her power of fascination, to compel him to surrender at discretion; and she was not sorry, during these efforts, to be freed from the inquiring eye of the observant Elinor, who had declined going into public during the preparations for her marriage—an awful crisis to the female who is about to place her whole futurity in the hands of a fallible fellow-creature, however happy be the auspices under which she weds.

Excited, agitated perhaps, but certainly not unhappy, Lady Cecilia, chaperoned by her aunt, Lady Sophia Horwood, was seated in her opera-box, looking, ay, and talking delightfully with all her might (for Lord Corringham had joined her), when her eye, as it glanced over the pit, caught the face and figure of Augustus Jackson. She was petrified—but nevertheless, too practised a fine lady to be easily disconcerted, she swiftly and skilfully glanced her unobservant eye onward, fixing it for some minutes intently upon the stage; then drawing back within her box, she turned half round to devote herself more entirely than before to the task of captivating Lord Corringham. But she was not long permitted to triumph in the imagined success of her *manœuvre*. Lady Sophia interrupted a delightful conversation, by tapping her on the arm with her fan, and asking, “Is it possible all that bowing and nodding should be addressed, as it seems to be, to our box? The person is quite a stranger to me. Do you know any thing of him, Cecilia?”

“A great deal too much, ma’am, unluckily,” replied the young lady: “I am doing my best not to see him.”

The question and answer drew Lord Corringham’s attention to the subject, and leaning forward, he exclaimed with a subdued laugh, “Why, is not that your B—— neighbour of quizzical fame, Augustus Jackson, esquire?”

A smile and a nod conveyed Lady Cecilia’s assent, while her aunt resumed: “A country neighbour! My dear Cecilia, you, who know how particular my brother is about all those people, how can you be so rude to any of them?”

“My dear aunt, what rudeness is there in not happening to see any body?”

“But, Cecilia, he must be aware that you *will* not see him. Besides, he is making himself and us objects of universal observation.”

“Nay, rather than be associated with him in any way, I *will* see him,” returned Cecilia; and looking towards her now unwelcome admirer, she made him a formal obeisance. Then abruptly turning to Lord Corringham, she observed, “My father took so much notice of the creature after you left us, and obliged me to be so civil to him, that he is become infinitely more disagreeable than ever.”

A half-suppressed smile played about Corringham’s lips, and he had not yet replied to this deprecatory speech, when the box-door was thrown open, and whilst the fair proprietress’s heart died within her, Jackson entered, exclaiming with outstretched hand, “Ah! Lady Cecilia! How do? How do?”

Lady Cecilia did not extend an answering hand; but then, both hands were so evidently pre-occupied by her muff, her fan, her opera-glass, and her pocket-handkerchief, that the new comer saw no intended slight, and contenting himself with the somewhat distant bow, he went on: “Now this is what I call knowing what one’s about. Not two hours in town, and here I am already basking in the sunshine of Lady Cecilia’s smiles.”

“Are you so lately arrived?” asked Lady Cecilia, coldly enough; and at the same time leaning forward in her box to address her next-door neighbour, whom she engaged in conversation.

Jackson was for an instant disconcerted, and again a very perceptible smile relaxed Corringham’s features. But the lord of Hazlewood mansion and estate could not imagine such a possibility as a wish to avoid him, and was moreover accustomed to be occasionally neglected, when persons entitled to claim Lady Cecilia’s attention had visited at Selborne Abbey. Accordingly, he concluded that she was now thus imperatively called away, and his awkward feelings with regard to lords and ladies having evaporated in his recent intimacy with the Selborne family, he addressed Lord Corringham in a familiar tone, and with a sly wink at the stately and somewhat old-fashioned Lady Sophia, “I say, my lord, who is the old one?”

Lord Corringham dropped the lids over his eyes, and continued to play with his watch-chain, as if totally unconscious of the existence of his neighbour. Jackson’s shyness was however, as has been observed, no more; and he resumed in a louder tone, “I say, my lord—”

But Lady Sophia, to whom a disturbance of the audience proceeding from her box was actual death, now placed her fore-finger upon her lips, and fixing her reproving eyes upon the speaker, interrupted him with a solemnly authoritative “Hush!”

Jackson was for the moment silenced, and Lord Corringham, giving her a friendly nod, rose and left the box. When Cecilia turned round from her colloquy, she saw him at a distance, leaning upon the back of Mrs. Delraine’s chair.

The next day as the two cousins, on horseback and escorted by Ernewold, turned into Park Lane, they were joined by Lord Corringham, who laughingly exclaimed, "Give you joy, Lady Cecilia, give you joy of that Arcadian Celadon of yours! Why, with such a dangler you will be the wonder of the Park, and the envy of every circle. Do you take him out?"

"Mercy, mercy, Lord Corringham!" returned the lady, with a laugh far less hearty. "It is hard enough that papa should require me to woo every boor and bore in the county, in order to secure Selborne's future election, without my friends quizzing my sufferings."

"It is hard, I confess;" returned he. "And so much the harder, as you cannot expect that any human friendship, in these enlightened days, should extend to such a pitch of self-immolation as to assist you in bearing your fate." As he spoke, a movement of his head pointed out Jackson, who was galloping towards them—and with a nod he turned his horse, and cantered off in the opposite direction.

Lady Cecilia now could not stir out without encountering Augustus Jackson; and though she speedily contrived to let him know that country intimacy by no means implied even London acquaintanceship, she did not succeed in freeing herself from his importunities, however she might deprive her brother of his interest. When the aspiring upstart, in fact, was really convinced that the titled coquette had jilted him, he saw that he could not more effectively revenge himself, than by assuming the deportment of a favoured lover, and for this amiable purpose he pursued her steps more assiduously than he might perhaps have done, had his object been merely to obtain a "Lady Cecilia" for his wife.

This persecution was, however, for some days confined to the mornings, Jackson not enjoying the *entrée* at those houses where his victim spent her evenings. But as the Saturday drew near, Cecilia thought with dismay of her defenceless condition at the Opera; and at the breakfast-table on Saturday morning, she was actually meditating giving it up, for that night at least, and propitiating her father by offering her box to some of the country people, when her cogitations were interrupted by the Earl, who suddenly looked up from his newspaper with the exclamation, "Cecilia, why what the d—l is this? What have you been doing with Corringham, since we have been in town?"

"Doing with Corringham? I do not understand you, papa."

"Listen, child, does not this mean him?" And his Lordship read as follows:—

"We regret to hear that the double flirtation of a certain courtesy-Viscount has ended, as the friends of the two ladies must always have feared—the noble spinster is left to sigh

alone' whilst the wedded dame has fallen before the arts of the gay Lothario of the day.' ”

The penetrating reader need hardly be told that Lady Cecilia was by no means deeply in love with Lord Corringham, to whom in her secret heart she indisputably preferred Col. Ernewold. She was, nevertheless, fully sensible to the great powers of captivation possessed by the former, and had besides of late so accustomed herself to consider him as her future husband, that as such she had conceived a species of conjugal attachment to him; but far more than her heart, her pride was interested in accomplishing what she had undertaken, namely, the conversion of the most decidedly not-marrying-man in England, into an humble petitioner for her hand. Her hopes were overthrown—her feelings, of all kinds, wounded—as she listened to a statement too clear to be mistaken, too probable (despite her previous self-delusion) to be doubted; and she sat confounded and speechless long after her father had ceased reading.

But Elinor, whose heart, overflowing with happy love, lent its own emotions to her coquetish cousin, and who had seen nothing of the recent proceedings of her betrothed lover's noble kinsman, eagerly exclaimed: “ Oh, my dear uncle, how can you attach any importance to newspaper scandal? It is impossible! And here comes Ernest,” she continued, with a still brighter blush, as the music of the colonel's well-known knock greeted her ear, “ to vindicate his cousin. Ernest, there is not a word of truth in that vile paragraph, is there?”—And, in the warmth of her sympathy for Cecilia, forgetting the shrinking delicacy of her own nature, she flew with outstretched hands to meet Ernewold as he entered the apartment.

“ Would there were not, dearest!” he replied; “ but, alas! it is all too true! I have this moment left my poor uncle, whose dearest hopes are thus cruelly, and, I fear, permanently blighted. I am here only to tell you that I must go—I must endeavour to be beforehand with Delraine in tracing the fugitives.”

“ You, Ernest! and why? What good can you hope to do now?”

“ Good—none, I fear; but I may, perhaps, prevent more evil. Delraine scorns the idea of legal satisfaction for such an injury; and I would fain prevent bloodshed; prevent all the evils impending over Corringham,—if it be still possible.”

Cecilia slightly shuddered at these words, and Elinor fervently exclaimed, “ Bloodshed! Oh, yes, go! go! Fly, dear Ernest!”

Lord Shuckborough, however, more considerately observed, “ Lord Corringham has deliberately chosen the part of guilt, and on his own head be the consequences. I do not see why a

man upon the point of marriage, and thence in a manner pledged to decorous conduct, should involve himself."

"My dear uncle," interposed Elinor, "you do not consider Lord Corringham's life is, perhaps, at stake."

Lady Cecilia now looked up for the first time, and the colour returned to her cheek as she said, with a bitter smile, "Oh, yes, Elinor, my father *does* consider.—His niece's bridegroom is the next heir."

"Cecilia!" burst from the lips of all present, in tones varied according to the different feelings of the parties.

"You had not considered it, Elinor, that I well know; and if Erneuld had, the consideration has not influenced his conduct."

Lady Cecilia spoke calmly and coldly, and left the room as she did so. But her sarcasm was of use. Lord Shuckborough ceased to oppose his intended nephew's purpose, and Colonel Erneuld immediately took his leave.

Why should we dwell on the painful details of guilt, and its fatal consequences? Suffice it to say, that the utmost zeal of kindly and kindred affection was unable to recover the advantage that an earlier knowledge of his wrongs had given to the injured, the exasperated, the vindictive husband. Erneuld only reached Calais, whither he traced the criminal lovers, to find the duel he apprehended already fought, Corringham writhing under the agony of a mortal wound, the wretched woman who had

"given
Her peace on earth, her hopes of heaven,"

for him, in convulsions by his side, heightening his sufferings by her shrieks of despair, and Colonel Delraine in a French prison.

All that could now be done, Erneuld did. He removed Mrs. Delraine from the chamber of death; he soothed Corringham's pangs, mental and physical—prevailing upon him to sign a statement that exonerated, and procured the liberation of his antagonist; and bound himself both to obtain for the forlorn victim of his kinsman's arts, a provision from Lord Treswick, and to negotiate her reconciliation with, and pardon from, her own family.

The marriage of Colonel Erneuld and Elinor Selborne was necessarily delayed, first by Lord Corringham's death, and then by Lord Treswick's consequent grief and serious illness; and Lady Cecilia, in the depth of her various mortifications, gladly made the peculiarity of her cousin's situation an excuse for retiring with her to Selborne Abbey, and spending the remaining season of London gaiety in profound solitude.

It was as Earl of Treswick that Ernewold received the hand of his Elinor ; and whatever her bridemaid, Lady Cecilia, might feel, her countenance and deportment shewed nothing but sympathy in her friend and kinswoman's happiness.

Did Lady Cecilia continue to bury the pangs of her well-merited disappointment in solitude ? Did she buy off the title of *jilt* by becoming the mistress of Hazlewood House ? Or is she again fluttering the brightest butterfly of the London parterre, consoling herself with the inebriating incense of general admiration for the want of one devoted heart ? The solution of these questions, gentle reader, must be left to thine own sagacity. Look round amidst the Lady Cecilia's of thine acquaintance, titled and untitled, and satisfy thyself whether a thorough coquette be capable of reformation.

THE SPIRIT OF THE FOUNTAIN.

AN OLD ENGLISH LEGEND.

BY J. S. COYNE.

“She sang of Love—and o'er her lyre
The rosy rays of evening fell.”

IN the warm light of an autumnal sunset, streaming through the thick foliage of a broad-leaved clematis that festooned the open window of a room overlooking one of those richly varied landscapes which England only can boast, sat two children of earth—beautiful as the first-born pair, and like them alone in the midst of the world, for they lived but for each other; and the smile that wreathed the lips of one was reflected in the eyes of his partner. They were lovers, not in the common acceptance of the word, but in the all-absorbing influence of a passion that had become a portion of their existence.

Teresa, for that was the maiden's name, occasionally struck with playful gaiety a few chords upon a lute which hung upon her arm, at times accompanying its music with the sweet melody of her voice. Arthur, her betrothed, reclined on a cushion at her feet.

“Teresa,” whispered the youth, gazing passionately upwards into that beautiful face which bent so closely towards his, as almost to mingle her silken tresses with the thick curls which shadowed his brow; “Teresa, that sweet strain which you sang me last night haunts my imagination, its mournful cadences still dwell upon my ear; will you sing it once more?”

“Tis but the fragment of an old ballad, Arthur, but if your fancy be pleased with such sad music, you shall hear it again. It is called ‘The Spirit's Song.’”

Preluding the strain with a simple symphony, she commenced.

SONG.

Come back—come back—I am fleeting far
To my distant home in a cold bright star;
I am wasting away—like the moon in the wane;
Like mist from the fountain,
Like snow from the mountain;
I am going—and hither I come not again.

I go—I go—like the trackless wind,
 To-morrow you seek me, but shall not find ;
 I am looking my last on the scenes I lov'd best,
 But hadst thou not slighted
 The flame thou hadst lighted,
 This night a foud besom to thine should be prest.

“What a strange indescribable feeling that old lay always awakens in my mind,” said Arthur, after the song had been concluded ; “To what circumstance could those wild verses have related ?”

“There is a romantic legend attached to them, which I remember having heard many years ago from an old retainer of my family,” replied Teresa.

“A legend ! Dear Teresa, you know my passion for legendary lore. Can you recal it to memory ?”

“I doubt not but I can ; and as the moral it contains may afford a useful lesson to your inconstant sex, I will repeat it for you.”

A half reproachful smile from Arthur was his only defence against this sportively aimed shaft.

LEGEND.

“It was (began Teresa,) in those days of chivalric gallantry when ladies' smiles were won amidst breaking lances, and when cleft hearts and helmets were quite the *ton*, that a brave and accomplished English knight, Sir Edred Walthen, the heir of large and fruitful domains, returned to his paternal castle crowned with laurels reaped in the conquered plains of France under the victorious banner of our third Edward. The youthful warrior had accompanied the king on his return from France to the English capital ; and, amidst the gallant train of courtiers that composed the royal retinue on that occasion, none was more distinguished than Sir Edred, by the gifts which nature and fortune had showered on him with a liberal hand. Brave, rich, and handsome, honoured by the favour of his Sovereign and assailed by the bewildering glances of high-born beauties, he had yet sufficient strength of mind to resist the allurements of love and ambition, and to follow the dictates of his free fancy, which led him to indulge in the manly sports of the chase in his native forests, rather than waste his youth and health in the meretricious pleasures of a peaceful court.

“It was, therefore, with feelings of ill-suppressed chagrin that many a proud fair one, who had contemplated bringing the young knight into her silken bondage, beheld him spurring his fiery charger beneath the royal balcony, and waving a graceful but careless adieu to the courtly dames who graced it with their presence.

“ ‘ Methinks Sir Edred Walthen lacks somewhat of his

knightly courtesy in quitting the palace so abruptly;’ observed the haughty Matilda de Vere to her cousin Adela Norham, as, leaning over the balustrades of the balcony, she watched with a bitter smile and heightened blush the white plume of the heart-free knight till it was lost beneath the gloomy portals of the castle.

“ ‘I’ll wager my carcanet against your ruby ring, cousin—that this Sir Edred Walthen would never dream of forsaking the pleasures of the court if he had not some strong inducement to draw him away. It is not of the old towers and gloomy halls of his castle that he is enamoured.’

“ ‘What then can his object be in quitting us so suddenly?’—eagerly inquired Matilda.

“ ‘Some base-born rustic has I doubt not captivated him; how could he otherwise have escaped the snares you laid to entrap his heart?’—replied Adela, with spiteful triumph.

“ ‘I lay snares for his heart! No, cousin—I despise him—hate him!’ With these words, accompanied by a disdainful toss of her beautiful head, Matilda quitted the balcony, inly resolving to leave no means untried to make Sir Edred a captive to her charms, whenever an opportunity might again offer for doing so.

“ ‘Sir Edred, as he pursued his journey with a light heart, heard not, nor, if he had, would he have heeded, these feminine reproaches; his heart had never felt the influence of love, nor had his lips ever spoken its language. War had heretofore been his sole mistress; and now, pursuing with avidity the delights of a forester’s life, love had found no opportunity to aim one well-directed shaft at his heart.

“ ‘Each morning, surrounded by his vassals and retainers, he might be heard making the haunts of the wood-deities echo to the clear reheat of his bugle-horn—and each evening beheld, girt with the companions of his sports, seated at the head of the great oaken table in his ancient hall, draining the wassail-bowl and making the old roof respond to many a joyous carol and merry roundelay.

“ ‘For several months Sir Edred continued to pursue his careless habit of life; until one evening, after a severe and protracted chase, during which the knight became separated from his followers, he found himself in a remote and to him unknown part of the forest. In vain he blew the summoning call for his retainers; the blast died away unanswered save by melancholy echoes from the forest’s leafy depths.

“ ‘The spot whereon he stood was a small circular glade or open space, encompassed by dark ancestral trees, that, like shadowy shapes worked by a sorcerer’s spell, seemed crowding round the magic boundary, yet afraid to encroach on its limits. One solitary sycamore, like the magician of the scene, waved its tall



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form in the centre of the enclosure, and shadowed with its spreading branches a small fountain that sparkled at its root. The rising moon shone with unusual brilliancy, and, pouring a flood of light through the motionless leaves of the sheltering tree, gave to the mirror-like bason beneath the appearance of a splendid chequer-work in ebony and silver. Sir Edred, faint and exhausted with the toils of the day, beheld with mingled feelings of surprise and joy a refreshing draught thus opportunely presented to his lips. He immediately dismounted, and approaching the spring, was at point of kneeling down on its flowery margin to slake his thirst in the cool waters, when he became suddenly rooted to the earth by the apparition of a young female clad in white sitting on the opposite brink of the fountain, looking intently into the water, and rocking herself to and fro with slow and mournful regularity.

“Sir Edred, whose courage had never failed him in the hour of peril on the battle-field, now stood irresolute and awe struck. The sudden encounter of an armed enemy would have hardly caused his pulse to beat with quicker motion; but there was in the strange appearance of that defenceless girl amid the untrodden depths of a wild forest something so mysterious, that an indefinable sense of fear held him for some moments motionless. At length, perceiving she did not speak, nor appear to notice him, he summoned sufficient resolution to address her.

“‘Lady’ said he, ‘what seek you in this lone place—unmeet for gentle damsel? If there be aught in which the sword of Sir Edred Walthen can serve thee, name it, and by my vow of knighthood I will see thee righted!’

“The figure replied not; but raising her head from its drooping attitude, smiled mournfully upon the knight. Sir Edred thought he had never beheld a face so ineffably beautiful; she was pale as the opening snowdrop, but her dark blue eye shone with more than mortal splendour, and her taper fingers, as she removed the dark tresses from her lofty brow, seemed like shafts of moonlight breaking through the darkness of a dungeon. His heart thrilled with a new and pleasurable sensation as he gazed upon the mysterious being; and again, after eagerly demanding how he might assist her, he intreated her to inform him who she was.

“‘I am,’ said the figure, with a voice whose tones fell in delicious melody upon his ear, ‘the guardian spirit of this spring; for ages numberless have I sat on its margin looking into its clear waters, and waiting with anxious hope the fulfilment of my destiny.’

“‘And what may be thy destiny, fair spirit?’ inquired the knight.

“‘To watch by this fountain until a youth shall for twelve months continue to love me with unchanging constancy.’

“ ‘ Can it be possible that no man could be found to preserve his vow of love unbroken for that time ? ’ asked Sir Edred.

“ ‘ Mortal steps have never approached my retreat until this night,’ replied the spirit.

“ ‘ What if *one* should woo thee who would keep his faith for a year ? ’ ”

“ ‘ I should then become mortal as he is ; and his fate should be united to mine,’ answered the Guardian of the fountain.

“ ‘ *Mine* be that enviable lot, sweet spirit,’ cried the enamoured knight. ‘ Here by thine own pure fountain let me swear ——’

“ ‘ Stay, generous mortal,’ interrupted the spirit, ‘ you know not the consequence if you fail in your oath ; my faint spark of hope will be extinguished the moment *you* forget your pledge, and the remainder of my miserable existence must be with those sad shades who wander with the distant stars in the dreary realms of space through a long eternity, without hold on earth, or hope of heaven.’

“ ‘ I am still resolved. Let me swear ! ’ exclaimed Sir Edred. ‘ May shame and dishonour light on my crest, when a thought of mine shall wander from thee.’

“ The spirit’s beautiful countenance beamed with tender delight as she replied : ‘ Be it so, Sir Knight. Freely do I bestow on thee the full confidence thou seekest ; on thy fidelity my future misery or happiness must now depend. Hear the conditions of my love. At this hour, and beside this fountain, on each returning full moon for the next twelve months, you must meet me, without change of heart or mind. Do you promise this ? ’

“ ‘ I do, by my trust in heaven ! ’

“ ‘ ’Tis well ;—and this shall be the token of your truth,’ said the spirit, plucking a white water-lily that grew in the fountain, and presenting it to the knight. ‘ This flower, while your faith remains unbroken, shall retain its beauty and freshness ; but if, lured by the love of woman, you forget your vow to the Spirit of the Fountain, it shall instantly become withered, and the unfortunate giver lost to you for ever.’

“ Sir Edred took the proffered flower, and pressing it fervently to his lips, was about to reiterate his protestations of love to the fair spirit ; but when he turned to address her, she was gone, and he stood alone beneath the broad sycamore tree beside the fountain.

“ Musing on the strange events of the evening, the knight remounted his steed, and taking a path through the forest which he judged would lead to his castle, he arrived safely there about midnight.

“ After his adventure at the fountain, Sir Edred became an altered man ; the sports of the chase, which had formerly so

engrossed his time, were suddenly abandoned ; he shunned the social board with the strictness of an anchorite, and appeared to receive no enjoyment but in wandering through the solitary depths of the forest. He continued to wear the lily the spirit had given him in his bosom, which, instead of fading, appeared each day to grow more fresh and lovely.

“ At length the evening of the first full moon since his interview with his mysterious betrothed arrived, and Sir Edred, who had watched for it with the impatience of an ardent lover, flew to the appointed spot, breathless with expectation ; and there, seated beside the spring, he again discovered the mysterious guardian of its waters. A smile of delight played upon the beautiful features of the spirit as the knight approached, who, kneeling by the fountain side, drew the lily from his bosom, fresh as the moment it was plucked.

“ ‘ The token is still unfaded,’ said she, ‘ but you have not yet passed the ordeal of temptation ; if your constancy then hold firm, we shall be happy.’

“ The knight again repeated his vows of unalterable love to the gentle spirit, who listened until the declining moonbeams no longer glistened on the still waters of the fountain—and then Sir Edred was alone.

“ During ten succeeding moons the young knight, faithful to his vow, repaired on the appointed evening to the fountain in the forest : up to this period his heart had never strayed from its allegiance to his mistress, and the eloquent smiles of the spirit at each meeting spoke her love and gratitude to the arbiter of her fate.

“ On the night of the eleventh full moon, the last but one which was to have completed the term of his vow, he flew on the wings of passion to meet his beloved spirit. She was sitting where he had first beheld her, but a gradual change had taken place in her appearance since that time ; her eyes were not now bent in intense sadness upon the waters of the fountain, but sparkled with love and hope ; her form, which then seemed almost as impalpable as a wreath of mist, had assumed a more tangible but not less lovely appearance ; and the eloquent blood had begun, like the herald clouds of morning, to tinge her pure cheek with a vermeil tint. In short, it was evident to Sir Edred that the beautiful creature for whose love he had languished was on the verge of quitting the land of spirits, and that the vesture of mortality was about to clothe the bright form he idolized. Another tedious month would, however, intervene before he could clasp her to his bosom as his chosen bride.

“ A few days after this last meeting of the lovers, while Sir Edred’s whole mind was engrossed with his approaching felicity, a courier from the king announced to him that his majesty, now

on an excursion of pleasure through the kingdom, purposed, for the recreation of himself and his court, to spend a few days hunting in Sir Edred's noble forests, and during that time to honour his castle with his presence. The young knight would willingly have dispensed with this unseasonable interruption to his secluded pleasures; but as he could not with safety evade the royal visit, he returned a suitable reply, expressive of the high gratification he felt at this mark of his sovereign's favour. Accordingly, in a few days after, the old halls and chambers of Walthen Castle were filled with the proud, giddy, and lazy followers of the court. In the rude fashion of the times, feasting and hunting by day, and wine and wassail by night, filled up the hours so merrily, that old Time seemed to have plunged into the vortex, and to have forgotten to chronicle the fleeting minutes.

“Amongst those high-born beauties who glittered in the royal train, none blazed with such resistless lustre as the young and fascinating Matilda De Vere. She it was who, piqued at the coldness of Sir Edred during his sojourn at the royal court, had so pettishly censured the knight's courtesy on his departure from the palace, as has been already related; and who now, with the true spirit of mortified pride, determined to subjugate a heart that had despised her power. To effect this, to her, paramount object, she armed herself with all the resistless arts of her sex, and spared none of those seductive wiles which so successfully entangle men, to bring the stubborn Sir Edred to her feet. For some days her nets were spread in vain; but the constant presence of a beautiful girl, whose preference for him was too undisguised to be mistaken, flattered his vanity and led him almost unconsciously from one little act of gallantry to another; and though he soothed his scruples with the consciousness that he still really loved only his own sweet Spirit of the Fountain, he suffered himself to become the close attendant of Matilda De Vere in the chase, and her sole companion in her evening rambles through the romantic scenery by which they were surrounded.

“‘Man's a strange animal,’ says a modern poet, and the strangeness of his nature was never more strongly exhibited than in the easy infatuation with which Sir Edred resigned himself to his new passion;—each day his struggles with the tempter became less resolute, until at length his virtue and honour sank in the conflict, and his vow was all but forgotten. Still he hesitated to consummate his infidelity by making an avowal of his passion to Matilda De Vere, and the twelfth full moon of his probation rose upon the earth without witnessing his total perjury.

“ An entertainment of extraordinary magnificence had been held on that day in Sir Edred’s castle, followed by a revel at which all the dames and gallants of the court shone with redoubled brilliancy. The hall had been cleared for a dance, and the musicians in the gallery had struck up an inspiring measure, when Sir Edred, approaching a bevy of beauties who occupied a distinguished place at the top of the hall, bowed gracefully to the fair Matilda, and taking her hand led her forth as the chosen mistress of the revel.

“ A hum of admiration ran round the circle, as the noble pair moved through the mazes of the dance with inimitable ease and dignity; and while the audible praises of the courtiers heightened the bright blush that mantled on the cheek of the triumphant beauty, she bent on her partner such passionate glances, that the last feeble defences of his resolution gave way before their enchantment.

“ After the dance had concluded, Sir Edred and his new mistress retired from the throng to enjoy the refreshing coolness of the night air, in an alcove formed by the embrasure of one of the hall windows; there, screened from observation, the false knight pressed Matilda’s hands to his lips and to his heart, and besought her to listen to his passion.

“ ‘ Hold, sir knight!’ she exclaimed; ‘ would you persuade me that my poor charms could wean you from the sports of the field or the glory of the camp—you who have hitherto spurned love’s slavery?’

“ ‘ Alas! I am now love’s captive, fair Matilda, and it is your smiles alone can make my bondage endurable.’

“ ‘ Mine!’ cried she, with an air of well feigned embarrassment; ‘ No, no! it cannot be; I must not permit myself to indulge—’ She felt she had said too much, and turned away to conceal her blushes.

“ Sir Edred clasped the unresisting maid to his breast—his plighted love was forgotten, and in the ecstasy of the moment he sealed his apostate vows upon her lips without bestowing a single thought upon the confiding being whom he had consigned to undying misery by his fickle heartlessness.

“ Matilda turned upon him a glance full of tenderness, and observing the lily which he wore in his breast, she attempted to snatch it, saying, ‘ This then, shall be the emblem of your love, and I shall be the lady of the lily.’

“ Recalled to a remembrance of his perfidy by these words, he turned his eyes upon the flower; its beautiful petals hung bruised and withering upon the stem. He knew that the measure of his crime was complete, and that he had for ever lost her whose bright hopes, like that flower, had been crushed by the hand

that should have cherished them. A suppressed groan burst from his lips ; he flew precipitately from the presence of his destroyer, and taking the well-remembered forest path, reached the fountain, breathless with shame and exertion.

“The last rays of the moon just silvered the topmost branches of the tall sycamore, but the fountain lay in lonely darkness beneath.

“Sir Edred gasped with agony when he perceived that the spirit no longer watched by its waters. He called on her by a thousand endearing epithets—the deep echoes of the forest were his only reply. He besought her to return but for one moment—to let him behold her beauty once more—to implore her forgiveness—and to tell her he still loved her as mortal never loved before. A soft low sigh seemed to breathe in his ear, and the figure of the spirit floated over the fountain, but so dimly visible that, but for the mournful brightness of her eyes, the knight could scarcely believe it to be the form of her he loved. Thus she continued, gazing with sad regard upon her faithless lover, till her faint shadow faded into air ; and then a low sweet melody came upon the midnight wind—it was the lay of the parting spirit mourning her dark doom—the sad record of woman’s love and man’s inconstancy. This was the song which I sang for you.”

“A sad tale, indeed, dear Teresa,---and Sir Edred, what was the fate of that unfortunate?” inquired the fair narrator’s interested auditor.

“Tradition says he was discovered by his vassals the following morning, stretched beside the fountain, the withered lily crushed between his clasped hands. He lived, but his name and sorrows descended with him to the tomb in a few brief years. What became of the proud Matilda De Vere I know not, for the legend is silent on that point ; but it is not improbable that she sought in the conquest of other hearts a consolation for the loss of Sir Edred’s.”

“Teresa, think you that a female heart would have better resisted temptation than the ill-fated Edred’s?” asked Arthur, thoughtfully.

“In faith, Arthur, I will not presume any thing of the kind ; but since my legend has cast such a sombrous shade over your countenance, I must in mere charity charm it away by a merry lay : listen !”—and the laughing girl commenced a playful French *chanson*, which soon had the effect of restoring sunshine to her lover’s brow.

RETALIATION.

A VENETIAN SKETCH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MANUELLA," &c.

"Chi va piano, va sano,
E chi va sano—va lontano." ;

TOWARDS the latter end of the last century, Venice had attained, on the verge of her fall, the very acme of her splendour. The factitious display of power and magnificence that awaited the gorgeous Bucentaur, when she launched forth with her princely burthen, was never, perhaps, at any epoch of her story surpassed by that which was manifested at the bridal anniversary with the sea, in the year 1786. The accumulated wealth which an unequalled prosperity of eight centuries had conferred on this city of the sea, at once her antidote and bane, was now the bulwark which was deemed infallible, and a fatal security in the immaculate "Città Vergine," lulled her sons in confidence to the last. But the energies and industry of the exiled race, who first snatched from the empire of the seas a secure asylum, and fixed the marble palaces of opulence and grandeur upon the bosom of the deep, were gone; and the glorious surname of the Città Vergine—yet undefiled by the invader's arms---was doomed to fall undefended.

"The maiden city," however, deserved well the preference which was bestowed upon her in the last century, as the resort of the wealthy and the dissipated. Here swarmed the German "Herr" and the Spanish "Don," the English "Milord," and the Parisian "Beau Marquis," whilst the flower of European beauty emulated each other to adorn the magic islets of the Adrian Lagoon.

Of all the visitors who, on the year alluded to, crowded St. Mark's, none equalled in magnificence, the display which was made by a certain German, reported to be of illustrious birth, and who arrived, incognito, under the title of Baron Von Heidelberg. With the munificence which ever distinguished the hospitality of the Venetians in the years of their prosperity, it was resolved upon by the noble houses of the Gradenigos, the

Moncenigos, the Balbi, the Benzoni, and other distinguished Patricians, to do the honours of the city suitably to the rank of the stranger; and, without infringing upon the *incognito* of the Baron Von Heidelberg, yet with judicious *savoir faire*—to procure for him the *run* of their palaces.

This was easily accomplished. Fête succeeded fête. The masque—the ball—the ridotto, came in quick succession, and the Herr Baron was a constant guest.

Yet disappointment was marked in his Excellency's features, every time he returned from the festivals of the great. No pleasure was derived by him from the gala or other display purposed to entertain him—morose and sullen, his dissatisfaction continued rather on the increase than the wane, in consequence of the efforts which were made to divert him.

At length the Baron Von Heidelberg resolved on quitting a scene which hourly became more uncongenial to his mind, and he fixed the day for his departure. But the noble Contarini would not hear of this until the baron had witnessed a fête got up expressly for him, and Heidelberg at length assented to his pressing solicitations.

“Once more,” soliloquized the Herr Baron, “once more let me consent to witness the degrading exhibition,” as, lounging in a gondola, he was wafted on to the Giudecca, there to enjoy the extent of walks afforded by some patches of garden that ornamented this fraction of the sea-born city: “and if again the insult be offered, I can no longer doubt its application—then will I be revenged.”

Night came on; the cafés of San-Marco, brilliantly illuminated, traced the boundary of the Procurazie; whilst the throng of the wealthy and gay stretched far from each bottega to the centre of the Piazza. Parties, seated in merry and convivial groups, were sipping their sorbeto, or quaffing that fragrant preparation of coffee, unrivalled since the berry was ever roasted for the human palate.

Never assert to a Venetian that you have tasted better coffee than at San-Marco. He will either take it as a marked insult, or consider you to be deficient of brains.

Florian's coffee-house, too, is the first and the finest in the world; at least, so poor Florian himself used to say. He and Canova were very intimate, and were most determined patriots on this point. Florian pronounced that there were only three great men in his day—namely, Napoleon, Canova, and—himself! But we are digressing.

And so, to return to the last century, Baron Von Heidelberg took his accustomed stroll under the porticos of the Procurazie: at once recognized by the unaffected Venetians, every where courtesy awaited him.

Again Herr Von Heidelberg wavered in his conjectures, overruled his suspicions, and joining in the mirth of the lively sons of the Città Vergine, banished distrust from his honest heart.

In truth, the Herr Baron was an estimable individual; well disposed to love his neighbour, and to wade through the storms of life with as little buffeting as possible. He truly was cast in the old Teutonic mould. "Langsam" (slowly) was the ever-ready word of advice used by his father's great-grandfather, and faithfully was it resumed in succession, till, adopted by himself, he at length incorporated it as an heir-loom in the coat-of-arms of the Heidelbergs,—defining more explicitly the sapience inherited from his ancestors by the motto, "He stumbles who runs fast."

Verily the baron, impressed as he was with its importance, reaped the benefits of its fulfilment. No sudden calamity, no event, however disastrous to his feelings or his fortune, could suddenly ruffle the equanimity of his temper or shock the sensibility of his nerves. Thus, temporizing with the instability of human decrees, philosophy found time to slip in and lay her healing unction to his soul.

But if adversity thus found him invulnerable, success, on the other hand, created little emotion in his breast; for, upon the very same cautious principle of investigation, suspicion crept in to adulterate its sweetness, and Mein Herr Baron, on the whole, was not to be envied.

Wealthy, and at the same time unostentatious, his amiable bearing soon sealed his welcome with the mercurial and more witty Venetians. Every opportunity was seized upon by them to court him, and, with real urbanity, all endeavoured to lure him into that social *franchezza* which is the charm of their society. But it unfortunately fell out that their good intentions were marred by a circumstance which gave repeated disgust to the Baron, and which he was doomed again and again to experience.

At the Contarini Palace, that very night, the *élite* of the patrician class was assembled, and the diversions catered for the noble German were introduced by a dramatic pasquinade—the reigning fashion of the times.

The guest beheld in dismay the rise of the curtain, and forth sallied the histrionic heroes of the performance.

Gross was the prevalent taste for these exhibitions; buffoonery and ribaldry were the extent of their pretensions; and it unluckily happened that, mixed up with these, was introduced a caricature upon the Germans, under the unequivocal title of "Meinherf Sourcrout."

"Meinherr Sourcrout" was invariably a tun-bellied drunkard, the butt of all their humour, whose Bœotian capacity was ever

bounded by such phraseology as *schnapps*, *donner-wetter*, *ja* and *nein*, in the utterance of which the lower jaw alone was set in motion, no muscle of the face ever breaking the unvaried monotony of the mime's countenance, the imperturbable gravity whereof, something like that of the "Liston" of our day, would convulse the audience. Not so, however, with the mime's prototype, Meinherr Baron; every line of whose face was in telegraphic commotion, who in verity

" N'avait mérité

Ni cet excès d'honneur ni cette indignité."

But a deep and determined scheme of revenge now took possession of his mind, and with the prospect of it, he was enabled to maintain the imperturbable outward calmness of his features, as he took his leave of the company, and gave them invitations to an entertainment which he proposed should take place on the eve of his departure from Venice. Then, stepping into his gondola, and slinking under the *felzer*, he ordered the gondoliers to strike for the Riva de Schiavoni, and, refreshed by the midnight breeze which floated over the unruffled waves of the Gran Canale, was soon lost in those bitter reflections to which his late mortification had given rise.

"What!" soliloquized the Baron, "shall the countrymen of Kepler, of Tscernhausen, of Burckhardt, of Leibnitz, become the butt of ribald mountebanks? No more! Heidelberg shall be your champion." With this determination he forthwith summoned his maggiordomo to his presence.

The maggiordomo, Franz Dummeresel, was a personage of some importance, at least you had his own authority for it. In fact, to have seen the strut of Franz, as he swaggered along in his master's cast-off clothes, it became evident that, if he were appreciated after his own estimate, he was a great man—especially when the unostentatious Baron, to escape remark, would sometimes order his dependent to wear, for a day or two, the gloss from off a *new* coat or hat;—then Franz, as if the honours of all the Heidelbergs were collected in his person, would parade about before the "up-turned wondering eyes of mortals,"—the retinæ of his own peering far above that level which should "guard their master 'gainst a post."

On one of these occasions, Dummeresel, as he turned down a cul-de-sac which abutted upon an insignificant canal in the environs of the Rialto,—forgetting that he was in Venice, and dreaming of his own dear pre-eminent terra-firma-built native village in the Black Forest,—was observed, while striding pompously along, actually to walk into the water! To his consternation, he found himself neck-deep in the mire of the canal, which event introduced him more generally to the Venetians under the soubriquet of *Stick-i'-the-mud*.—A rooted dislike was

henceforward conceived in the breast of Franz Dummeresel towards the sea-born city, which was moreover heightened by another circumstance.

In those day-scenes of revelry which, during the height of Carnival, at the time whereto we allude, often convulsed the whole city with merriment, and produced a sort of epidemical madness—such as thrust themselves upon public notice seldom escaped smart raillery. Franz Dummeresel had condescended to wade through the shoals of masks which crowded the avenues to the Piazza di San Marco, disdaining to conceal those features to which his glass had long reconciled him. It is true, Franz had a huge nose—but that he deemed aristocratic. However, a proboscis he certainly had, of such dimensions as to entitle him to the designation, not of “the man with the nose,” but rather of “the nose with the man.” A wag no sooner perceived the shadow of this promontory, as its owner turned an angle of the piazza, than he conceived an atrocious scheme—namely, to affix a ponderous pair of ass’s ears to the bonnet of Dummeresel. This being slyly accomplished, the latter was scarcely launched among the crowd of masks collected in the piazza, when a loud, and almost stunning shout, accompanied by peals of laughter, saluted him.

All that had been either incorrect or ridiculous in his past life flashed at once upon Dummeresel’s mind; he sought instinctively to account for the commotion; and the glancing retrospect did not mend his humour. The bad passions of the man became fairly roused; like a baited bull, he set his tormentors at defiance; but, beyond the sport he could afford them, they wished him no ill, and the more he fumed and stormed, the more unbounded was the merriment of the masquers.

Franz at length retreated to the piazzetta, where he motioned to a gondolier, and, stretching himself under the felzer, was borne away—though some time elapsed ere he could escape the roar of the revellers.

In this state of excitement and exasperation, immediately on his return he was summoned, as we said, by his master, whom he resolved to make acquainted with his griefs, and urge to quit a city so ungrateful for the benefits reaped from strangers in general, and especially from the Herr Heidelberg.

But what was the dismay of Franz when, on his appearance before his master, the noble Baron well nigh went into fits; peal succeeded peal, each being louder than the former! Heidelberg, indeed, absolutely *roared* with laughter; whilst Dummeresel, gazing around in stupid wonderment, to ascertain the cause, at length, in the mirror, beheld his *coiffure*! Not even the presence of his master sufficed to prevent his pronouncing a tremendous curse on the *spitzbubenstreich*, which denunciation

recalled the Baron to his task. Letting his maggiordomo into the scheme, who, glowing with resentment, chuckled at it delightedly, Heidelberg directed Franz to make every arrangement for the portentous entertainment which was to secure for both the luxury of Retaliation.

The appointed night approached; the hall of the building occupied by the Baron was brilliantly illuminated—the lights from the lofty casements being reflected in the glassy canal; whilst numerous forms were seen passing to and fro within, proclaiming, in their busy and bustling speed, the extensive preparations made for the reception of the magnificoes of Venice.

Slowly, and in small detachments, the visitors at first arrived; but as the hour advanced, such as would impress their host with their own importance began to appear—until the Sala grande was filled with the *élite* of Venetian noblesse.

A collation awaited them—such as had seldom been equalled for delicacies: the tables groaned under the extravagance and variety of the comestibles—whilst the choice bin of the Baron's Tokai, (the growth of his own estate) profusely flowed in libations to the health of the noble host.

Exhilarated by the princely cheer, with hearts warming to the wealthy Baron, his guests intuitively followed his steps to the *sala del Teatro*, prepared to extol to the skies the dramatic entertainment, were it from the pen even of "Sourcroust" himself.

In the confusion which takes place in disposing of one's person with comfort and advantage, where so many are candidates for places, the Baron made his exit unnoticed.

A breathless silence had succeeded amongst the audience, who were waiting the debüt of the actors—but the drop-curtain was not yet raised, nor even agitated. After a considerable pause, however, it was drawn. The stage represented a studio, and the Baron was discovered perusing a book, and appearing unconscious, for some moments, of all around him. Not the immutable features of "Sourcroust" himself were so impassive as the now elongated visages of the audience whilst they witnessed in breathless suspense this singular exhibition.

Rising suddenly from his seat, and advancing, Von Heidelberg thus soliloquized:---

"Would that now, from the gloomy Tartarus, the spirit of the Roman Cicero would appear, and that to a mortal it were conceded to overcome the interval of time---to see, to hear, the noblest orator that ever lived.

"Ha!—what do I see!—my vows are heard—behold where Marcus Tullus comes!"

The audience were dumb, occasionally gazing upon each other and the Baron, whilst each was secretly coming to the conclusion, that his poor host was cracked—nay, some had ar-

rived at a conviction that he was stark *mad*, and were beginning to think of taking necessary precautions. At this pass, the spirit apostrophized as the shade of Cicero made its appearance, like a tall unearthly being in a white toga and a mask, and played its part thus :—

“What region do I behold ! Italia—blest Italia ! thy air is native to my spirit. But thou, proclaim thy country—if Roman, once more let me delight in the human voice.”

“Spirit of Cicero, bear with me : I am one from those northern hordes, the Teutoni, that in the Forum thou hast classed with Barbarians.”

“Ha, speak on ! What strides, with the Imperial mistress of the world to guide, has thy country made in arts and sciences ? What do I behold !”---taking up the book which the Baron had laid down:—“My works—compressed into this volume !”

“Reserve your admiration, noble Roman ; ’tis but the invention of a German—the art of PRINTING.”

“And here, this dial, fixed in the shade, yet pointing to the hour !”

“Another trifle resulting from a busy barbarian of the north : a mechanism by which the hour, nay, the very minute of the night is known—the discovery likewise of a German.”

In short, the Baron had collected whatever his countrymen could lay claim to for invention ;—whilst the spirit of Cicero, enumerating every object with wonder, as his companion proclaimed each the production of Germans, was no longer able to contain the feelings of admiration.

“Well hast thou prepared me, by such wondrous instances of *Barbarian* ingenuity, to witness the attainments of the conquerors of the world. My reason staggers at the expected display. Stranger, produce a mark of *Roman* ascendancy.”

“Behold !” said the Baron, as, at a signal, a clown rolled on to the centre of the stage, forming a rotundity in his person by ingeniously confining his legs with his arms. “Behold the Roman Grimaldi, who, though he no longer encompasses the world, has achieved the meritorious feat of encompassing his own person.

“The descendants of Aquilia, once the invulnerable barrier of the North, the bulwark against the Gotthi, have emulated the citizens of the imperial mistress of the world. Here comes Signior Arlechino !” and, at a signal, the glittering and spangled hero of pantomimes vaulted gracefully before them, whilst, faster than thought, a thousand antics manifested the flexibility of his body. “Behold,” said the Baron, as he glanced triumphantly at the audience, “the Italian of our day, who no longer daring to face the foe with me, nor to cast the fetters of an iniquitous

inquisition, wears a sword of *wood*, and becomes a warrior-mountebank !”

The words had scarcely escaped the speaker's lips, when a sudden murmur ran through the audience. But ere it waxed to danger, the curtain, by preconcerted arrangement, dropped ;—the Baron's gondola was in readiness, and he and the corporeal Cicero, (no other indeed, than our friend the maggiordomo,) propelled away by the sturdy strokes of six gondoliers, were soon beyond the Lido, on their course to terra firma, no without some danger of being overtaken by the Sbirri of Venice, for the gratuitous comment made upon the Inquisitori di Stato—and of being sent to learn manners, over the Bridge of Sighs, to the *Pozzi*, or the *Piombi*.

M. P.; OR, THE UNDERTAKER.

A TALE OF THE TIME TO COME.

BY W. H. WILLS.

THERE is a vulgar fact-hunting spirit of investigation abroad, that urges people to inquire into the comparative probability or positive truth of every species of narrative. Matter-of-fact reasoners there are, who will insist upon judging of a fiction, not according to its intrinsic merits, but just as it approaches, in reality or appearance, the standard of truth;—ruthless literary *utilitarians*, who would dig up the “mazes of romance” to sow cabbages or further their geological researches, and pull to pieces the “flowers of rhetoric” for the purposes of botanical dissection;—sticklers for “useful knowledge,” who do not believe in poetry, and call imagination a humbug!

We beg to warn such folks from reading much of this story, for its author does not even pretend to “lie like truth.” He has neither consulted Hume and Smollett, to manufacture a tale of the “olden time,” nor sneaked his way to silver-fork dinners, to pourtray the manners of the present day; but, regardless of the creeping pace of him of the scythe and hour-glass, boldly takes the old gentleman by the forelock, and stretches his fancy into “the time to come.”

“He who writes a fiction,” said William Hazlitt, “performs a work of imagination,—he who reads a fiction, also performs a work of imagination.” Gentle reader, prithee lend us thy fancy to settle the *locale* of our “M. P.” Picture a snug little town, in any English county you like, the more romantic the better; clap it into Schedule B., with one parliamentary representative, a mayor, and a town-council. Place in it a palace of an inn, and sprinkle about in its streets and alleys a few supplementary wine-shops, for at the time future to which our sketch refers, we unhesitatingly predict the abolition of beer,—invest it with an imaginary market-place; lastly, be kind enough to call it *Dundertown*, and *your* work of imagination is finished.

Having been so obliging as to assist us in “setting the scene”

of our prospective drama, you shall now, kind reader, see us bring forward the actors.

I.

“Waiter! fill me a bumper of claret from the blue bottle; and, d’ye hear—make haste with the fly!” exclaimed Mr. Mercury Mix, buttoning his coat with the air of a man about to do something desperate.

“Don’t be alarmed, my angel!” continued the same gentleman to his lovely companion. “It will soon be over. My friend, the Rev. Scarum Scamper, has been backed to matrimonialize in four minutes and a half. That done, we shall hasten, by the twelve o’clock train, to Dovor, embark in the ‘Rather-faster-than-lightning’ for Calais, and get to Paris by dinner-time. The governor cannot possibly know of our flight until this moment; and, as we have at least twenty minutes the start of him, all chances of being overtaken are at an end.”

The charming Julia Jennings looked confidently at her abductor, and placed the whitest of kid gloves upon his proffered arm, with an assurance of confidence in his protection and conviction from his logic truly encouraging, while the waiter announced the fly.

“What a horrible din!” ejaculated Mercury, enjoying all the delights of a “rumble-tumble” with his future partner for life. “What possible tune are they perpetrating?”

“See, the conquering hero comes!” answered Julia, with extraordinary clearness of utterance, for one on the very precipice of matrimony.

“But who *is* the conquering hero? Oh! I see:—a fat man in spectacles. Get on, driver, for heaven’s sake! What, another stoppage! Confound the mob!”

In truth, no time could have been selected less propitious for an elopement than that hit upon by Mr. Mercury Mix. It was “mayor-choosing day,” and all the freeholders, flag-holders, and piemen of Dundertown united to make the road impassable, even to a pair of lovers in a one-horse fly. Phipps, the active fishmonger, had beaten Fuddle the retired farmer, and the cry from the public self-acting pump to the forum of the “brothers of rhetoric” was “Phipps and liberty!”

The procession at length began to pass on, and the vehicle to move; but scarcely had its wheels made one revolution, ere a description of shouting was heard, extremely alarming to the happy couple. It sounded terribly like, “Hallao, there! Stop that fly! Stop, there! A sovereign for any man who will stop the horse!”

The words of a charm could not have produced a more magi-

cal effect than this ejaculation had upon the mob assembled to cheer and cheer the new functionary. All his supporters, personal and collateral, deserted the *mayor* to stop the *horse*! At the trisyllable "sovereign," Phipps's more immediate supporters cut the "god of their idolatry," with uncommon alacrity. They found their burden weigh heavily against the chance of twenty shillings, and left it in a ditch. The flagholders deserted their colours, the itinerant pastrycooks their gingerbread-nuts, and the unhappy fugitives were speedily in the custody of a mayor-choosing mob!

Julia fainted in her lover's arms with becoming promptitude, and was conveyed into the "Monarch of Ireland," in undoubted hysterics.—The cause of all this hubbub attempted to follow, but his unlucky liberality prevented him. A dispute had arisen touching the ownership of the proffered sovereign; and as the disputants amounted in number to not less than six hundred and forty odd, there seemed little chance of a speedy settlement. A lucky thought occurred to the pursuer; he procured a pound's worth of sixpences, instituted a vigorous scramble, and left the "destructives" to exercise their vocation upon each other.

II.

The coin-distributor was no other than the "governor," of whose appearance Mercury entertained such strong doubts. Mix the elder was eminently favoured by what novelists call an "ardent temperament." Now there were two things which he vehemently desired above all others; firstly, that his son should not marry Miss Julia Jennings; and, secondly, that the young gentleman should win the distinction implied by those tempting initials—M. P.

The inexorable father was still in a towering passion, and the interesting Julia in a second swoon, when the waiter entered to announce, that Mr. Alderman Fuddle was anxious for an interview with Mr. Mix. "Understand he wants to see you on the subject of your hasty visit here," continued the fellow, casting a sly glance at Mercury.

"So, sir, you have not only made a fool of yourself, but one of me also," exclaimed Mix the elder. "Have I not taken every pains to present you to the constituency of Dundertown with *eclât*? Where is your letter of introduction to my old friend, Fuddle?"

"Not delivered yet, sir."

"Ah! a pretty mess we shall make of it! Here comes the worthy alderman, and——"

"Mr. Alderman Fuddle!" exclaimed the waiter, opening the door wide enough to admit a regiment of cavalry, or a coach and six.

Julia, who had in some degree recovered, simpered a wish to retire, while her lover asked leave to accompany her to the chamber *door*. This request was granted; but whether the requisitionist went further than such permission warranted, this deponent sayeth not.

Mr. Alderman Fuddle, who had by this time commenced his interview with old Mix, was one of those rare productions of the march of intellect, compounded of the opposite elements of scholiast, agriculturist, and orator, with a dash of the humourist. He cultivated his land according to Virgil's *Georgics*, wrote learned essays in the *Gardener's Penny Magazine*, made speeches uncommonly long in the common hall, and thus produced the lengthiest harangues and the largest turnips of any man in the county.

After the first greetings, and the disappointed father's tale of a son's intended matrimonial delinquency, were over, the alderman placed three fingers between his waistcoat-buttons, hummed thrice, and, knitting brows that cast the "shadows before" of an oration "to come," launched an anathema at the heads of poor Mercury and his intended bride, that quite overawed old Mix! and it was with no small difficulty that the support of the illustrious Fuddle could be gained for the amorous candidate.

The rugged virtue of the Dundertown patriot was, however, at length overcome; and it was settled that Mercury should be put in nomination as soon as he had delivered his credentials from his father. But Fuddle, with the full conviction that love and politics are ever "opposition members" in the affections of a gentleman so young as Mr. Mercury, insisted that Miss Julia Jennings should be restored to her friends instanter. So satisfied was he that nothing could be done without some such arrangement, that he "made assurance doubly sure," by seeing the all-but-father-in-law and the disappointed maiden take their departure in the same carriage; the disconsolate Mercury, whom he had never yet seen, having been left to use his note of introduction *pro forma*.

III.

The next morning, a young gentleman was seen anxiously watching the faces of all the passengers who alighted from the carriages of the "London and Dundertown rail-road company." Grief was stamped on his countenance; which, with a white pocket-handkerchief in his hand, gave him a melancholy and interesting appearance. Presently a man in livery stepped from the steam-coach, and the sorrow-stricken stranger hastily saluted him.

"Well, Squib, *have* you done the deed?"

The footman seized the stranger's arm, and, taking him

cautiously aside, with an air of profound mystery, answered
 "Yes!"

"Murder?" asked his companion with shortened breath.

"No, suicide!" was the reply. "Here is the paper."

The stranger snatched a newspaper from the servant's hand, and glanced his eye over the contents until it caught the following paragraph:

Alarminglly awful suicide!—Last evening the neighbourhood of Dundertown was thrown into a state of the greatest excitement, by one of the most shocking suicides it was ever our painful duty to record. The deluded victim, it appears, having sharpened his razor upon one of Mechi's old-established magic strops (see advertisement) completed the terrible deed, ere assistance could be procured. Awful to relate, the miserable, misguided, young gentleman was discovered to be Mercury Mix, Esq., who had gone down to canvass the borough for the ensuing election. A disappointment in love is said to have caused the rash act.

"Well," said the reader, coolly doubling the paper into his pocket, "if this does not make the governor relent, his heart is flint. And now, Squib, I am off for town. Take this letter of introduction—it is directed to Alderman Fuddle—deliver it yourself if you please; I care not what becomes of it, so that I am rid of the precious epistle. If the governor should come down to bury me, tell him 'I am married and can't come;' for a husband I intend to be before this time to-morrow;" then throwing a well-laden purse at the delighted valet, Mr. Mercury Mix (for it was he who had so deliberately read over his own account of his own decease), instead of "starting" for Dundertown, departed for London.

It hath been propounded by the celebrated Doctor Alchymicus Von Hydroghen de Flamall, in the seventeenth volume of his treatise on animal magnetism, that the near approximation of certain metals—particularly gold and silver—to that part of the human body usually under the waistcoat pocket, produceth an inordinate thirst. The learned doctor's theory was never better illustrated than by the case of Mr. Squib. The clink of the coin insensibly drew him towards a well-known wine-shop, and, having inducted himself into the comfortable recesses of an easy-chair, the gentleman's gentleman ordered a bottle of frontingac—a wine lately become particularly fashionable amongst livery servants. The happy lackey had placed his hand upon the bell to call for a clean glass for his fourth bumper, when a well-known laugh saluted his ears. "Nick Naylor, by all that's indefatigable!" he soliloquised. "So, he has read of master's suicide, and come down to look after *the job*."

Squib was not mistaken; the undertaker, of Burying-ground buildings, Marylebone, was indeed in the house, on his way into the room; which (as he is a person of no small consequence in this history) we cannot allow him to enter without a preliminary flourish.

Never was a man less fitted for the part he was destined to play in the great drama of life than Nicholas Naylor. Nature evidently intended him for a comedian; but circumstances made him an undertaker. More suited to the gay than the *grave*, he never would have procured a second job but for his excessive perseverance. He was member of every burial society within the bills of mortality, and took in all the morning papers for the sake of the "deaths." His great misfortune was his untamable happiness. His features exhibited a perpetual giggle, which has been known, even in the act of consoling the "disconsolate" of some dear departed, to ripen into a hearty laugh. One peculiarity which he had, amounted, in his profession, to a positive calamity. It was impossible for the most sincere mourner to resist the force of his fun-fraught visage—his was an epidemic laugh, a catching cachinnation!

As this gentleman had actually travelled per steam from London, on the strength of the reported suicide, he was not a little delighted to meet his old friend Squib. But his hopes were blighted on hearing that he had been, like most other "constant readers," unequivocally hoaxed.

"Devilish bad luck," cried the undertaker. "Ha! ha! but who knows?—I may drop in for a job yet."

"To be sure you may," replied the lackey, with a twinkle in his eye portentous of mischief. "What would you say if I had one all ready cut and dried for you?"

"Say? Why, say that you are—; but I'll do the handsome. He! he! Do you know of a job though?"

"Do I? Ay, of twenty. Why, since they have got up a pump-room here, and enticed so many London doctors to settle in this town, the undertakers have been retiring upon their fortunes by the dozen. You see this letter; it is from my governor's governor, directed to Mr. Alderman Fuddle. He has just had a death in his family. Need I say more?"

"Not another word," replied the delighted Nick. "Here, take this sovereign; you shall have another when the job is over. Ho! ho! And as dispatch is the soul of business, I'm off! Where shall I find you in an hour?"

"Here!" cried Squib, bagging the sovereign without the smallest remorse, "You will find me over my champagne punch."

In five minutes time, by the patent, warranted-never-to-stop, clock of Dundertown, Mr. Nick Naylor knocked a respectful tap!—one loud one, then a little one behind—at the door of Alderman Fuddle's town-house. Fortified with Mercury's letter of introduction, Nick asked the servant "if his master was at home" with the air of a man whose business was no trifle. He found the literary farmer perusing the last number of the Penny

Virgil, printed in Latin for the edification of the poorer classes.

As the alderman took the letter from Nick, he eyed him with a searching glance. "From Mr. Mix, I believe." Naylor grinned assent.

The undertaker looked round the room, and was surprised to discover no signs of mourning. The windows were unclosed, and there was not the smallest vestige of any thing black, except the cat.

"Well, Sir," began Fuddle after reading the letter, "suppose we commence business at once."

"As you please," answered Nick; and, after letting off a few professional condolences, he wound up with "but, Sir, it is what we must all come to sooner or later. He! He!"

"Very true," replied Fuddle, thinking of Mercury's near union with Miss Jennings, and the fact of his witnessing the commencement of the lady's journey. "These things will happen. *Nemo mortalibus omnibus horis sapit.* But I saw her off, *and she bore the separation with surprising resignation!*"

The undertaker inflated his lungs for an affecting sigh, but in the course of explosion it went the wrong way, and added considerable risibility to what might otherwise have amounted only to a titter.

"Then," continued the alderman, who began to entertain great hopes of the supposed candidate from his not betraying any signs of disappointment at having lost his lady-love, "Then, as there is no time to lose, the sooner we take our measures the better."

"Whenever you please, Sir," interrupted Nicholas, deliberately unfolding a foot-rule.

Mr. Alderman Fuddle, as we have elsewhere hinted, was, despite his dignity, fond of a joke; and, as the undertaker's phiz exhibited its usual grin, the functionary felt himself called upon to laugh also, adding with a patronising air, "Capital, capital joke I declare! Why, you are quite a wit!"

"He! he!" thought Nick, "it must be his wife, he is so lively!—Of course," he continued aloud, "I am to provide hat-bands and the *etceteras.*"

"O dear no, I will arrange all that," answered Fuddle, his head teeming with election favours in spite of the ribbon act: "Pray what colour do you propose to select?"

"O, black of course, ha! ha!"

"Black! come, come, my friend, a joke is all very well in its way; but business is business, and ——"

"Oh! oh!" thought the undertaker, "it is only a *babby* after all. Suppose then, Sir, we say blue and white, eh?"

"The very thing, the exact colours we have always been represented by; you must be as prompt and active as possible, for

perhaps you are not aware that you will have an opponent to contend with. The eldest son of the new mayor, Mr. Phillidor Phipps, is ——”

“A rival undertaker!” cogitated Nicholas.

“But however, no time is to be lost: I will instantly go to the Town Hall, and after completing our arrangements there, shall be happy to see you again as soon as convenient.”

With this Nicholas departed, his head teeming with the fancied obsequies of an imagery young Fuddle, and his heart overflowing with gratitude towards Squib.

IV.

The polling day was near at hand; but the friends of Mercury, of whom Fuddle stood foremost, were disappointed in their expectation, that he would walk quietly over the course. The son of the newly elected mayor was started in opposition, and he promised to be a most eligible representative.

The accomplishments of Mr. Phillidor Phipps were varied and extensive. He had spent much of his time in London, where he became a member of several debating societies, and speedily rose to the rank of a first-rate orator amongst a legion of lawyers' clerks, and a host of “raff” from the inns of court. He had learnt boxing, gone up in a balloon, been twice behind the scenes of the Italian Opera, very nearly won the heart of a French *danseuse*; and, besides knowing the Premier intimately—by sight—he had had the honour to dispatch several glasses of brandy and water with an independent hebdomadal critic; and having on each occasion paid for the same, had secured the powerful interest and advocacy of his paper: in short, if the influentials of Dundertown had employed a *mimber* to seek out a gentleman who would “like to be a baronet,” he would not have provided a more eligible candidate than Mr. Phillidor Phipps.

As this gentleman was put forth by that part of the constituency of Dundertown which professed the highest liberality, his friends insisted upon extracting pledges from him on every possible political question wherein he was likely to take part.

A deputation accordingly waited on him; the proceedings of which we take leave to extract from the *Dundertown Independent*.

“Yesterday, a highly respectable deputation, consisting of Malton Hops, Esq., the eminent porter brewer; Mr. Sweet, the confectioner and maker of the celebrated Dundertown brandy-balls; Mr. Popkins, the gun-smith; and Mr. Yardley, the eminent linen-draper—assembled at the Dundertown Arms to meet and question Phillidor Phipps, Esquire, preparatory to affording him their support in the ensuing electioneering crisis. The following conversation took place:—

Mr. Yardly. "What are your opinions concerning the encouragement of British manufacture?"

Mr. Phipps. "Decidedly liberal."

Mr. Yardly. "Would you support a bill providing severe punishment for all ladies who presume to wear French lace?"

Mr. Phipps. "Yes."

Mr. Yardly. "And the making it felony for a gentleman to be seen with an Indian handkerchief?"

Mr. Phipps. "Most certainly."

Mr. Malton Hops. "Are you prepared, Sir, in the event of your election, to propose to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the expediency of doubling the tax on malt?"

Mr. Phipps. "I have not the smallest hesitation in saying such a measure should have my strongest support."

Mr. Hops. "Would you also advocate the entire abolition of duties on Spanish liquorice?"

Mr. Phipps. "I would."

Mr. Popkins. "As regards the church, do your principles accord with those laid down in the Rev. Dr. Twaddle's admirable pamphlet called, 'Every Man his own Parson?'"

Mr. Phipps. "I dare say they do."

Mr. Popkins. "You must be more explicit, Sir. Do they, or do they not?"

Mr. Phipps. "I see no reason why my opinions should differ from any put forth by the excellent authority you name. I shall be better able to judge after having read the work."

Mr. Popkins expressed himself satisfied.

After a few other less important questions the deputation retired : congratulating the worthy scion of our chief magistrate, on the manly and unhesitating manner in which his pledges were made.

v.

"Will you believe your own eyes?" exclaimed Mr. Grumps to his friend Fuddle, as they crossed the market-place on their way to the hustings. "Here is the paper with a circumstantial account of his suicide!"

"Poo! poo!" answered the alderman with dignity; "who believes what newspapers assert? Why, he has not left my house an hour."

"It certainly *is* odd that the body cannot be found," was Grumps' rejoinder

"Cau't it?" asked Fuddle, "I'll be bound to find it in five minutes."

"Where?"

"At the 'Monarch of Ireland,' sipping champagne with his own servant. Jumps has just left them as jolly as two tinkers."

"Really, Mr. Fuddle, you must be mistaken. What! a gentleman drink with his own servant?"

"Of course, 'tis the fashion in town. Valets are held in the estimation of friends and allies by their fashionable masters. But see, here they come arm-in-arm. Now who is right, Mr. Grumps?"

"Huzza! Mix for ever and no Phipps," shouted Squib, over-setting a row of apple-stalls.

"'Pon my word!" whispered Grumps, "our worthy candidate is not quite sober."

"I fear he has had a drop too much."

"Not a drop, old boy!" exclaimed Nick Naylor, reeling up to Fuddle, and giving him a smart *bonnet* on the crown of his hat. "Could a man drink too much champagne, eh, alderman?"

"Really, sir, considering the important station you are about to occupy, I think—"

"O, you are mistaken," interrupted Grumps: "this fellow cannot be our new candidate—"

"What d'ye mean by that?" shouted Nick, doing the possible to put himself into a fighting attitude: "arn't I the *successful* candidate for old Fuddie's job?"

"I'd have you to know, sir," exclaimed Grumps, "that this election is no 'job;' ours is not a close borough."

Squib was sufficiently sober to see the impending danger of a premature *denouement*, so, to prevent it, he shouted with might and main, "Mix for ever, and down with the Phippses!"

This time the sound was caught up by some half-dozen butchers and potatoe-merchants, by whom the words were most vociferously echoed. A mob soon collected, and Fuddle, who never lost an opportunity of making a speech, jumped upon a heap of butter-tubs and harangued the assembly. "You see, gentlemen electors," said he, "of what our political enemies are capable. Behold this paper," he continued, taking it from Grumps; "it contains a paragraph which no rational being can doubt was supplied by our political opponents. Gentlemen, it is a most sanguinary, diabolical, incendiary, paragraph!—why, it actually states that this worthy gentleman has cut his own throat!"

"Shame! shame!" cried the tender-hearted butchers and sensitive dealers in *pommes-de-terre*.

"Yes, gentlemen, there he stands, the persecuted victim of political slander and a newspaper paragraph."

All attention was fixed upon Nick, who, being at that moment in the agonies of certain stomachic inconstancies, turned up the whites of his eyes towards Fuddle with a pathetic look of drunken lackadaisicalness, which the mob mistook for the expression of horror at the calumnies heaped upon him.



“Shame! shame!” resounded from every corner of the market. “Down with the Phippses! Chair him! Chair him!”

A shutter was instantly procured, upon which the unfortunate undertaker was hoisted before he could utter even an expostulation. For some minutes he managed to sit upright. But a sailor who had the honour of shouldering one corner of his vehicle happened, as he said, “to give too much heel to star-board,” and poor Nick was thrown flat on his back! Thus he arrived upon the grand scene of action, more like the victim of one of his own hearses, than a chaired candidate.

VI.

On the arrival of this singular *cortége* at the hustings, Mr. Phipps—who was lecturing the mob—was completely overwhelmed by the mixture of cheers and hisses by which the procession was hailed. The candidate’s rhetoric was completely lost upon the noisy multitude. Action, action, action—as Demosthenes has it—was the only resource left to him. He therefore availed himself of his theatrical knowledge, and betook himself to expressive dumb-show. He placed his hand upon his heart, turned up the whites of his eyes, and then ogling his rival with the most supreme contempt, snapped his fingers in his face. This was a lucky “move,” for the undertaker recognized in Phipps a worthy brother of the free-and-easy society of Noble Jacks, held at the sign of the Nail and Horse-Shoe in Liquor-pond-street. Without more ado Naylor seized his pot-companion by the hand, and shook it with all the vehemence of drunken friendship. This was looked upon by the assemblage as a mark of the highest liberality on the part of Nick, and “Mix for ever!” was vociferated in a combination of discordant yells that threatened destruction to every polling booth in the town.

By this time Nicholas had so far recovered his senses as to comprehend that he occupied a distinguished station in the midst of an electioneering mob, and that his quondam friend Phipps was one of the candidates; so when the noise had partially abated, in a fit of enthusiastic hope for his crony’s success, he snatched off his hat, and throwing it with all his might into the air, shouted “Phipps for ever!”

Had the undertaker set light to a powder-magazine, he could not have produced a more terrific explosion! The hisses, yells, and execrations that issued from the “most sweet voices” of the crowd, were alarming to the last degree! “Coalition! coalition!” was the cry: “Down with him! pelt him! stone him!”

A whole park of electioneering artillery—consisting of cabbage-stalks, rotten eggs, and pebbles—was discharged at the

devoted figure of the unlucky Nicholas. In vain he sued for mercy; in vain he implored the protection of his patron, the alderman, and the interference of his friend the candidate. The mob would have inevitably made a "job" for some rival undertaker, but for a spectacle which was suddenly presented to the outraged independence of the borough of Dundertown.

This was nothing less than a sort of *tableau-vivant*, the principal actors in which were, a young, fashionably attired gentleman, and an equally juvenile and fashionable footman. The former held an enormous hunting whip over the head of the latter: who, on his bended knees, seemed begging forgiveness. The young fashionable aforesaid, after inflicting a few hearty whacks upon the shoulders of the servant, turned to address the populace. "There had been a mistake in consequence of some paragraph which had found its way somehow or other into some morning paper; nothing but a domestic event of importance should have detained him from his friends and supporters. He was ready to commence the contest—no longer by deputy—but *in propria personâ*."

Phipps thrust his hands into his breeches pockets, and looked a perfect picture of *resignation*.

Mercury continued: "He had within the last few hours entered into the bonds of matrimony, and hoped to spend the rest of his honeymoon as their representative." He begged most especially to return his thanks to the gentleman, whose name he was not in possession of, (pointing to Nick Naylor) for the trouble he had been at on his behalf.

Fuddle stood aghast, Nicholas seemed like an animated puzzle, Grumps chuckled at his sagacity in suspecting the undertaker not to be the "real Simon Pure:" Phipps, in spite of a few abortive attempts at blustering, looked as if he could not help it; and the mob he had hired forgot itself and applauded the wrong man. At this stage of the proceedings, Mercury's father appeared, having left London to ascertain the truth of the newspaper report. He shook his son by the hand, asked after his new wife, and swore he would only forgive him in case of his success at the election. The old gentleman always kept his word, and Mercury *was* forgiven.

KILLED BY MISTAKE.

BY EDWARD MAYHEW, ESQ.

APPEARANCES are deceitful. The gentlest-looking creatures are often the most dangerous. The cat is a more terrible antagonist than the porcupine.

Once I thought differently. Once I formed a theory, in my young days of delightful ignorance, that man was the only animal having a natural love for the pugilistic.

The first line of that beautiful hymn, *Birds in their little nests agree*, suggested an easy and pleasant mode of testing my opinion, and I for a few pence procured a "little nest" of bullfinches. It was an interesting experiment when, with a mess of chopped egg and raw beef, I advanced to feed the emblems of concord with a skewer.

No sooner had I made my appearance, than the five half-naked creatures stretched forth their necks, each screaming at the top of its tiny voice, straining its jaws with unbecoming voracity, and, as if not satisfied with the choking size of the mouthfuls I administered, making more than once serious attempts to swallow the instrument on which they were presented. When I locked up my fledglings for the night, it was with a conviction that, at any rate, birds were not patterns for little children, as to behaviour at meals.

The next morning, however, on looking at them, I found the two largest and strongest of the family in possession of the nest; they having actually kicked their dear little brothers and sisters out of bed. There lay the two unnatural fledglings, comfortably snoozing, with half-closed eyes, no ways disturbed by the piteous cries of the ejected, who were tumbling about the bottom of the box in heart-rending disorder; nor was I able to arrange the difference between them. What they quarrelled about I cannot imagine; but, as often as I put the little ones to bed, the larger thumped them out again, so that in the end they caught cold and died. Their death-groans must have been heard by their unfeeling relatives, who, however, still seemed to doze as luxuriantly as usual, insensible even to the horrors of fratricide!

When these partners in crime could exult on approaching

maturity (which was some time before they could help themselves, wherein the feathered and human races materially differ), *they* also one day disagreed, and from that period fought so dreadfully and constantly, that, for the sake of peace, I was compelled to place them in different cages—though this arrangement was far from producing quiet, for often would they flutter, and shriek their unavailing wrath at one another through the bars of their prisons; and, as if to give my amiable theory, and the poet's dreaming, a more decided overthrow, they both, when molting season came, discovered themselves to be ladies!

I was hurt, but not convinced; defeated, yet not silenced; and, sometime afterwards, finding in Milton a dormouse mentioned as symbolical of harmlessness, I procured a pair of regular sleeping beauties. It being winter, during which such animals snooze continually, my theory for some time passed uninjured; but early, very early in the spring, I heard a squeak, and on looking into the cage, beheld the tiny brutes actually *boxing*—sitting up on their haunches, and fighting with their hands as if they had been Britons. Nor were they more forgiving than other animals. Frequently would one fellow turn the other out of their nest, and then place itself at the entrance to prevent a return. If the poor outcast ventured a remonstrance, up went the victor's fist, and "dealt a smasher on the sneezer," with the dexterity of one who had studied the noble art of self-defence. This was a deathblow to my theory, and convinced me that poetical conceptions are beautiful prejudices, and man not only the first, but, with all his faults, the best of animals.

The aim of these retrospections is to introduce my tale gently to the notice of my reader, who, unless apprized that the most gentle of Heaven's creatures has what old women call a "spice of the devil" in its composition, might be induced to judge it unnatural. However, natural or not, it is founded on fact. Nature is sometimes a sad rebel, breaking through the laws wise old gentlemen take great pains to discover for her accommodation, with a zest for mischief that fully authorizes the grammarians in classing her feminine.

Mail-coaches, as our readers are perhaps aware, only journey to towns. Letters are conveyed thence to the adjacent villages by men who are engaged for this purpose, at a fixed weekly salary, by the country postmaster.

Twenty years ago Michael Bunns went post from W——. In those remote times, communication was not so easy as it is now; and the postman blended with his government appointment the general business of a country carrier. He took out medicine for the rheumatics, and brought home wheatears for the gentry: sold poultry for the farmers, and bought gown-pieces

for their wives: executed commissions faithfully, and delivered parcels punctually. All this, added to the "fifteen shillings regular," enabled him to keep a nag and employ a lad; and at one time business had so increased, that Michael pondered whether he should "be doing *wise*" to start a cart; but after having made himself unwell by anxiously deliberating, he gave up the proud suggestion, and continued the old jog-trot. It was well he did so, for shortly after business got slack; the postmaster reduced "the regular" three shillings at one fell swoop; the doctors became more careful, and Michael had fewer commissions of inquiry: farmers' wives grew genteel, and the letterman's taste in prints was no longer to be trusted; and I am sorry to add, that even the squires combined against the poor man's perquisites. Some refused to continue the plate of cold meat and the cool pint that had heretofore delayed him on his rounds.

The consequence of all this was, that a hoard which had accumulated to fifty golden guineas, at first stood still, then began to decrease. Michael slept a little more than was his custom; Mrs. Bunns thought the nag did not *want* so much corn, and found out that "pudding-cake and taties" was an *excellent* dinner two or three times a week. But all was of no avail; circumstances got gradually worse. Michael no longer proudly boasted he "would not give a fig to call the lord chancellor his uncle," but on the contrary used, as expressive of much mental agony, to wish he "had been born a gentleman."

Now came the hardest blow. Hitherto, as no mail arrived from London on the Monday, the village postman had enjoyed that day as a holiday: but some ill-natured people, who can never bear to see a poor fellow happy, were cruel enough to wish to send letters to London on a Monday. The privileged rest was disallowed, and Michael grieved he had no longer a day he could call his own—he fell into a habit of grumbling. Still he never thought of seeking another employment, but went post, and hoped for better things long after he had published his despair of ever living to see them. The old horse-pistol was punctually drawn and cleaned, and recharged, and Michael, though altered in many respects, never forgot to brag how he would shoot any man through the head, who should attempt to rob the king's mail in his person. No opportunity ever offered of his proving the sincerity of this threat. The danger he was doomed to encounter was of a different description.

One new-year's eve, he, having sent the lad forward with the nag and parcels, was leisurely walking up the town. The roads had been newly mended, and the wheels of a waggon which was near, made so much noise as to conceal the clattering of an approaching horseman—one of those little-minded idiots who ride on, and think it brave to risk other people's lives by their care-

lessness—the first intimation of whose vicinity Michael received in a concussion that laid him on the ground with a fractured skull. The rider, when the mischief was done, hastily bestowed some curses on the unfortunate victim for not getting out of the way, and galloped on. He was never recognised, though suspected to be a young farmer who two years after broke his neck at a steeple-chase.

Leaving Michael to the attention of the passengers by whom he was surrounded, let us peep into his home.

Mrs. Bunns, and her only child, Car—abbreviated from Caroline—were making preparations for the postman's return. A pair of shoes was laid ready in case the good man wished to take off his high-lows. The washing-things were in one corner, and the tea-table was in the centre of the apartment. Little Car, then a girl about eleven years of age, was squatting on a three-legged stool, toasting her own face and a round of seconds bread, which latter article, after it had been clapped between her mother's hands, (according to the peasant-recipe for making toast light) and moistened with a spoonful or two of warm water, was to have been nicely buttered for father's tea.

Mrs. Bunns was all of a bustle: it was past the hour for her husband's return; and report, which tells Michael to have been a good feeling fellow, also adds, that he was as hot in head as heart, if all things did not please him when he arrived tired and cold from his journey.

“Do make haste with that toast, there's a good dear!” cried the woman, as she fidgetted about the room.

Little Car, no less anxious, repeatedly took the bread from the fire to peep and see if it was beginning to do.

They were thus employed when they were startled by the sound of a carriage stopping before the door. At first, Mrs. Bunns doubted the truth of her hearing; but peeping through the shutters, her eyes confirmed it, and she began to tidy herself, half afraid that so great an honour portended her no good.

The door soon opened, and in came a well-meaning neighbour, entreating Mrs. Bunns not to alarm herself.

Mrs. Bunns as yet knew no reason why she *should* be uneasy, but perceiving from her friend's manner it was time to begin, without indulging idle curiosity became violently agitated.

Then came another considerate neighbour, hoping there was no danger.

Mrs. Bunns understood this as an announcement of some horrible catastrophe.

More neighbours followed, each with a scrap of consolation, till Mrs. Bunns was consoled into so dreadful an alarm as perfectly incapacitated her from meeting the real trouble when it should appear; she was unable even to inquire what so much

confusion meant, but stood fiddling with her apron-strings, and looking as if she was going to laugh.

A noise as of feet shuffling upon the pavement, and a feeble moan, as of some one disturbed when asleep, was now heard.

“Clear the way!” cried the doctor’s assistant.

Mrs. Bunns fainted across the threshold, which was soon effectually blocked up by a group of females, pulling the poor woman as though they sought to tear her piecemeal, and giving energetic expression all the time to that excessive pity they were unanimous in feeling for her situation.

At length the doorway *was* cleared, and several men entered, carrying Michael in their arms.

Warm water was called for.

Three women rushed at the same time to make themselves useful—upset the teakettle—put out the fire—and scalded the cat. A dispute instantly arose concerning who did it.

Warm water was again demanded.

Mrs. Bunns, now showing some symptoms of revival, was shaken and pinched to make her tell where the wood was kept. Car, whom no one had hitherto thought of, brought some instantly, and half-a-dozen of the senior visitors volunteered their assistance to rekindle the fire, which had hardly been set light to, before one seized the bellows, and another the poker, and zealously extinguished it again.

Warm water was once more asked for, in a more impatient manner.

A female who lived at the extreme end of the town, wondered “if her kettle was on,” and ran off to discover, while others sent for the relatives of Michael, who soon crowded the apartment.

It was ten o’clock before Mr. Bunns was left by the medical gentleman, who, seeing the house thronged, gave very particular orders that his patient was to be kept low, and on no account to be disturbed by visitors.

Upon hearing this command so particularly insisted on, every one present felt an irresistible desire “*just* to wish poor Mr. Bunns good night,” and, after each had reminded the other what the doctor had said, up stairs they all went—on the toes of their iron hoofs to be sure—and found themselves two-deep round the sick man’s bed.

One wondered if the sufferer (who, as if desirous of quiet, lay with his eyes closed) retained his senses. The probability of this being the case was considerably discussed in whispers, till, to settle the question, a very kind old woman shook Michael by the shoulder, and asked,

“Do you know who I am, Mr. Bunns?”

Michael slowly raised his eyes, and answered “Yes;” then,

probably pained even by so slight an effort, he added, "Do, let me alone."

Looks significatory of discernment were exchanged, and a long pause followed, after which the company began, one by one, to drop off.

About midnight the house was quiet. Michael had fallen asleep. Car and Mrs. Bunns were sitting before the fire—the mother staring stupidly under the fender, and the daughter attentively inspecting her parent's countenance. Thus they remained for more than an hour, when Mrs. Bunns all at once remembered it was past the usual time for going to bed.

"Shall I say my prayers, mother?" asked the child, when she was undressed.

"Never mind, to-night," was the reply, as Mrs. Bunns quitted the room without the customary hug at parting.

The fact is, her mind was laden with heavy thoughts. She pitied Michael—felt for him—but she had fears in which my opulent reader will hardly sympathize. Still she was not a selfish woman. I never knew a more considerate creature; but all that night, as she lay awake, she could not help asking herself, "Where was the money to come from, if Michael continued long ill?"

On the following day, numerous inquiries were made after the postman. Many remembered him to have been a good-natured fellow, and few came to ask after him empty-handed. One brought a bottle of wine, a second a nice bit of bacon as a relish, a third a slice of baked meat and potatoes quite hot. It was in vain Mrs. Bunns told each of these well-meaning persons that the doctors had ordered low diet, fearful of inflammation; they all advised her that "there was no good in attending *too much* to what doctors said, for they didn't know better than others did sometimes; and, at all events, a *little of something* now and then could not hurt a babe." Many of the higher, or, as they are sometimes called, the *better* orders, also came to ask after the postman, and to soften the sick man's couch by timely donations; so that though Michael was long ill, and never earned a penny, yet during all that time the family were better supplied than ever.

The surgeon who attended Michael had not performed his operation so carefully, but a portion of congealed blood remained within the skull. This produced no immediate effect, and the postman was thought to be rapidly recovering, when he was one day seized with a violent fit. From this time he could never be left alone, and his daughter became his nurse and companion. Children certainly are welcome attendants in the time of distress. There is no ostentation in their pity. Our pride is never alarmed by their commiseration. Napoleon felt

this, who, when he returned from Waterloo, chafing under his defeat so that none dared approach him, took refreshments which were handed to him by a child. To Michael the presence of his daughter was a great consolation, nor did the girl ever grieve him by appearing to feel the confinement. She would lie by him on the bed, and busy herself with amusing importance with his pillows: if he ached, her little hand could rub and soothe, where a heavier touch had pained; and even her conversation was to him delightful, for she always talked of what was to be done when he got well; her heedless prate frequently made him forget the present in anticipations of the future, though Car usually ended these conferences by making her father repeat a promise he had given her concerning a new black silk spencer and a sky-blue frock.

Thus things continued for nearly fourteen tedious months, Michael growing worse rather than better, and his wife and child gradually becoming exhausted in means, and, from constant watching, in strength also. At length the scene appeared about to close. Amid death's distractions, the poor fellow still clung to his child; but when the latter saw her father struggling, and heard a nurse who had been hired speculating to her mother about "how long it would be before all was over," she comprehended the truth, and burst into tears.

The woman would have removed her, saying she disturbed her father; but Michael called out "No, no!" and seemed by his motions to wish her nigh him. Car slowly and timidly approached the bed. A momentary cessation from pain enabled him to speak, and, regardless of all else, he turned to his child and said, "Don't cry, Car—I shall soon be better off."

He had hardly uttered these words when he was again seized. He never spoke after. In ten minutes from that time, Michael Bunns was a corpse.

I shall notice the funeral no further than to observe,—we are accustomed to laugh and exaggerate about *Irish wakes*, while no notice is ever taken of the less pardonable and more disgusting feasting and revelry which wind up an English burial. To those who have witnessed an Irish wake, the remembrance cannot be unmingled with something of poetical wildness and solemnity. The stories current respecting it have some foundation, but are grossly untrue where they represent *drink* as the *chief* object of these meetings. *Charity* is the real purpose; for all deposit something towards the expenses of interment who attend a wake, which is usually prolonged or shortened according to the sum necessary, or the circumstances of the deceased. What excuse have the English for *their* funeral feasts? The joke, I think, ought to be reversed, if, indeed, this be at all a subject for merriment.

When "*the bustle*" was over, Mrs. Bunns was left alone for a week or two. Most people are afraid to be the first, even in a good cause. At last a neighbour recollected she should like a chest of drawers Mrs. Bunns had, and thought, under circumstances, she might wish to part with them. This began the widow's pillage. Many of the articles were sold materially under their real value, but some were bought above the most preposterous estimation. In the end, perhaps, the poor woman got what upon the whole was due for her goods; but there was one article nothing could induce her to sell. This was the old horse-pistol. *That she would keep*, she said, for Michael's sake. An odd kind of remembrancer the reader may think; but she had many associations in her mind attached to it; and those, perhaps, who would sneer at this trait in the poor woman, would stare with reverence should they see Nelson's cast-off clothes preserved in a glass-case at Greenwich. The feelings in both cases are the same.

At last, all was sold that could be parted with; then many asked, "What poor Mrs. Bunns intended to do?" Those who had supported Michael during his illness were probably glad of an excuse to discontinue their charity, or, at all events, could not be expected to prolong it to his family; however, after a time, a few friends took the widow's case in hand. The first proposition, of course, was the parish. Then came the hard struggle between shame and necessity, which ended in two shillings a week out-door relief. This was obviously not sufficient. Mrs. Bunns's health precluded the probability of bodily labour; she was constitutionally sickly. What was to be done? A day-school was voted an excellent idea; several mothers instantly volunteered their offspring, and terms were arranged. Threepence for general instruction, which included letters and words in one syllable; fourpence if "work" was expected; but sixpence for such as brought their dinners and were to be looked after all the day. To be sure, Mrs. Bunns could barely read print, and had not the remotest idea of deciphering writing; but that was no objection—half the scholars were too young to learn, and the rest too wilful to be instructed. The chief duties of such schoolmistresses consist in nursing four of the youngest at a time, and throwing a cane about, to frighten such of the juvenile Britons as incline to hostilities.

This nursery, which rose to thirty children, was held in the parlour, a room 10 feet by 12; it produced ten shillings weekly, and a constant running to the parish doctor. It would have soon killed a stronger body, but Mrs. Bunns was a rocking-stone—never steady, but never down.

Car added her mite to the family store; she found employment at sixpence a day in the shop of a neighbouring upholsterer.

I have often watched her tripping lightly to work on the sharp frosty mornings—thinly clad, with a handkerchief tossed over her shoulders as an excuse for a shawl, and her bare arms reddened by the frost. At night, too, I have seen her running home with her earnings—all happiness !

It must have been a hard struggle when Car left the upholsterer's to learn a trade at a straw-bonnet maker's ; for two years she could earn very little, though even during her apprenticeship she laboured to increase the widow's mite. A lady of an exceeding reputation for charity delighted in bestowing shirts on labouring men. Mrs. Bunns and her daughter obtained some of these to make at sixpence each. Often have they sat up long past midnight, stitching at these charitable trophies, till exhausted nature has compelled them to retire. I do not wonder that the girl became her mother's chiefest tie to this world. I have frequently seen the old woman—she was very ugly—gazing at her daughter with an affection that even the plainness of her features could not render uninteresting to me ; and she has sometimes told me, she did not know how it was, but she was afraid some harm would come to Caroline, *because she had so set her heart upon the girl*. Reader, there was nothing of prophecy in this ; such feelings are natural to the unfortunate.

Many of the gossips of W—— were equally foreboding in their opinions of the little straw-bonnet maker's destiny ; but for very different reasons. She was by no means a strict chapel-goer ; she never had attended Sunday-schools ; had actually refused to deliver tracts, or collect in aid of missionaries ; but she loved walking and talking—laughed and did not appear offended when she was complimented—had successively sported a new silk and a muslin gown ; and, as if in confirmation of the worst suspicions, had acknowledged to a very considerate and worthy person, who was speaking to her for her good, that she had no objection to a *gentleman* for her husband—if she could get one !

Now the town of W—— was, once in every two years, visited by a travelling company of comedians—as sorry a set of miserable aspirants as were ever above pity or below respect. These “ members of *the profession*” peregrinated under the commands of a Mrs. Wuggins, a little fat widow, who took snuff and her own money ; yet who, although in her sixtieth year, occasionally, as manageress, appeared in several “ pet parts.” I have seen her waddle through Portia, and whistle Helen Mac Gregor, ever and anon halting in the dialogue to count the house, or by-playing at the side-scenes with anxious inquiries concerning who was at the door. But it is not with this antiquated vanity I have to do ; I mention the dame only to give my intelligent reader a more perfect idea of the respectability of the concern to which my hero was attached.

Charles Wuggins, only son of Mrs. Clarissa Wuggins, by filial duty urged, undertook the active cares of the management; and, as a natural consequence, the representation of all the best parts. He was stout and coarse in his appearance, suffered his whiskers to luxuriate in bushy negligence, and always plastered a full fourth of his hair upon his forehead, in affectation of a lovelock. There are many such men;—fellows who wear thick boots and shooting-jackets;—who whistle to every cur they meet, but never shoot a sparrow; and who, because they are the pot-companions of grooms, imagine they must be competent judges of horseflesh. Mr. Charles was wholly without mind. The smallest emergency dilemma'd him; nevertheless, by the aid of a swagger, some village theatrical notoriety, the use of a few slang commonplaces, and continued smoking, this man managed to gain, and to keep, the character of a “talented person.” What a bubble is reputation!

The company having arrived, two of the players hired one room in the house adjoining that occupied by Mrs. Bunns; and these histrionic provincials chancing, while brushing their shoes in the back-yard, to see and speak with little Car, modestly intimated, that day at rehearsal, much that was more flattering to their own characters than to hers. Charles Wuggins listened till he felt himself grow curious, and that same afternoon he called upon the gentlemen to inquire, as manager, “what they had *studied.*” They walked together into the garden, where, as if fate had willed it so, he saw across the little fence, Car Bunns, and, having caught her eye, with becoming ease relaxed into a smile.

We ought to be a very good people when the simple act of smiling can be construed into evidence of depravity; but I am afraid Mr. Wuggins was not the only person who would have judged illiberally of Car, because when she saw him laugh she also, in the merry imprudence of a young heart, tittered as she ran into the house. The next moment she returned to the door to peep at the gentleman who had noticed her. Was there any thing extraordinary that a young woman should feel inquisitive about the personal appearance of a man who had bestowed on her his marked attention? I am sure many very virtuous ladies would have acted similarly, only with sufficient prudence not to have been detected. Charles Wuggins perceived the door move; conjecturing the cause, he kissed his hand, nodded his head, and finished these delicate attentions with a wink that made Car colour and retire.

Jealousy is not the only passion that hails “trifles light as air” (which, by the by, some meddling philosophers want to make us believe is particularly heavy) as “confirmation strong.” All bad passions are equally illiberal. Charles felt confident

that Car was anxious for his advances, and he resolved to visit her without delay.

When he entered the house he was somewhat disconcerted at seeing Mrs. Bunns there, who was busily employed putting the school-room to rights, the scholars having been but recently dismissed. The widow comprehended her daughter to be the magnet that had attracted her visiter, and not exactly feeling confident as to how she ought to behave, began to arrange the dirty books and letter-cards with a great deal of unnecessary precision. In fact, when any one dressed as a gentleman (and in the poor widow's idea Mr. Charles looked a perfect gentleman) enters the dwelling of a peasant, the latter always feels as though his authority were superseded, and looks about as if anxious for an opportunity of escaping; nor is this more than natural. There can exist no friendly sympathy between rich and poor.

"Should you like to go to the theatre?" at length inquired the manager, stretching himself upon a chair so as to make the owner tremble for its existence.

"Thank you, sir, I'm too old for plays," replied Mrs. Bunns.

"But your little daughter. My dear, you're not too old, are you?"

"Oh! I should like it of all things," said Car quickly; and then, fearful she had acted imprudently, she added almost in a whisper, "that is—if you please, sir."

"And I'm sure you'll look devilish pretty in the boxes," cried Wiggins, with a leer, as he began to write.

What a gull is a mother's vanity! A moment ago and Mrs. Bunns would have refused to allow her daughter to visit the theatre even in her company, and had been going to urge something about "a job being finished," as an excuse for declining the player's offer, when his silly compliment interrupted her, and she now silently gave her approval to Car's going alone.

The order was written, and the manager departed.

The straw-work was laid aside for the rest of the afternoon. The best dress was to be got ready. There was muslin to darn, and calico to stitch; collars to starch, and stockings to wash. The mother lost her temper; she was not pleased with what her daughter was preparing for; she wanted resolution to oppose the thing itself, but she bestowed numerous complaints on all that was needed to carry it into effect. "They should never be ready. Better put it off to another time. It was no use to try, it couldn't be done." But Car was of a different opinion. "A pin was as good as a stitch where no one could see; and those stockings would do very well; she never caught cold;"—and when she did trip off, arrayed in all her finery, her pride received

pleasure from the tribute paid by the ejected heads of the neighbours.

"That's Caroline Bunns; I know her; she works for Miss Stitcher," cried a little loiterer, as our heroine whisked by him, in all the turbulence of excessive excitement, into the long saw-dusted passage of the theatre,—at the further end of which sat the manageress, calmly contemplating a short six stuck into a ginger-beer bottle.

"Where did you get this?—Eh! *for the boxes!*" cried the old woman, the moment the order was presented.

"He put his name to it, ma'am," answered Car, somewhat sharply.

"Did he, my dear? We shall see.—Dearlove," shouted Mrs. Wuggins to a little pockmarked nondescript, "tell Bollingbrook I wants Mr. Charles;" and having spoken, the order and the bearer were by turns condemned to undergo a most unsatisfactory scrutiny.

Exposed to the inquiring looks of all who entered, and the rude remarks of the dirty vagabonds who loitered about the doors, Car was left standing in the passage which answered as a lobby to the theatre, while Mrs. Wuggins, in no suppressed voice, held a conversation with Dearlove and the female dresser concerning who our heroine was, and what claim she had to sit in the boxes of her establishment. An auditor of this humiliating investigation, Car began to feel ashamed of the fine clothes that had so lately exhilarated her, and could not make up her mind whether she should cry, remain and be insulted, or walk indignantly away. She was spared the pain of a decision; a plume of feathers was seen issuing from behind a side-door.

"Did you give this person an order for one to the boxes?" shouted Mrs. Wuggins, the moment she recognised her son.

"Am I to manage the concern or not?" was the rejoinder. "You know my writing, and I'll put a stop to this. Step this way, if you please, my dear," he added, opening the door to the boxes with one hand, while Car felt the other protectingly pressed near her heart, which beat quicker in acknowledgment of the attention.

Mr. Wuggins, like many others, considered the privilege of making a blackguard of himself with impunity as the highest proof of authority. He never missed an opportunity of endeavouring to gain public consideration by doing every thing in his power to forfeit public respect; and Car, when she made one of the audience, heard, in common with the rest, the following oration delivered with fervent emphasis:

"Once for all—this is the last time—mind that—that's enough—I'm blowed if I stand it. If I'm not fit to manage this concern, get some one else to fill my situation. I know my

business, and I'll suffer no one to call me off the stage just when it's time to ring up. No man could stand it. How do you think the lord chancellor could manage the laws of the country if he was to be called to by the king every time he was agoing to begin? I'm no muff; I'm not afraid of getting another situation. I ought to have been in London but for you. I'm the support of the whole concern, and you'll drive me away. You'll disgust the audience, you'll knock up the company, and ruin the town. I'll take off my things and go before the audience and explain all about every thing, if you refuse my orders at the door—mind that. I'm no fool, and you shall see it!"

The mother said not a word to her son, but, when he was out of hearing, delivered an essay on her ruin and respectability to her attendants.

After "the leader" had played a choice variety of solos on the violin, occasionally accompanied by the feet of the audience, the bell rang, up went the curtain, and Mr. Charles spouted forth, the delight of all beholders. He was a fine man; he wore the best dresses, and vermilioned his cheeks, corked his lips, and chalked his nose, till he made himself look quite unnaturally handsome. He was so brave too: he always ranted when he was *on* the stage, and he was always heard storming at the other players when he was *off* it; while between the acts he kept every now and then pulling the curtain on one side, and stamping his foot heroically at the fiddler.

Three weeks ago, Car had declined the fair half of a French-polisher's income; last Sunday she had refused to let a very proud young painter salute her. It was unknown the offers she had treated with similar coldness; but now came her hour of trial. What a hero must that man be whom all seemed to fear! As, full of wonder about "how they could do it," Car was leaving the theatre, Charles Wuggins joined her. The girl, flattered by his attention, looked smilingly at his face. The colour had not fled his manly cheek—"the *pure* red and white," as the novelists say, stood there unfaded; and, to add to these graces, he was habited in the identical buff boots and white spangled pantaloons he had exhibited on the stage.

A walk was suggested. "Oh, no!" cried Car, "I cannot think of such a thing, it's so late!" and, to prove the sincerity of her denial, she suffered the gallant Charles to conduct her out of town. To no purpose did the prudent passengers endeavour to warn her of the danger of proceeding, by giving mysterious whistles, or coughing ambiguous hems! She wanted moral courage to oppose by acts what she would not consent to in words.

A walk by moonlight is very beautiful in reading, but it is

very imprudent in reality. Car soon began to repent that she had indulged in the temptation ; but, nevertheless, Mr. Charles was doomed to find out, that those people who fearlessly trust themselves near the edge of a precipice, are not always such as get dizzy and fall. He learnt this lesson with dudgeon, and felt all the irritation of a little mind, treating the girl as though she had wilfully deceived him, when she refused to justify the ill opinion he had formed of her.

Mutually dissatisfied, they had regained the suburbs, when a party of night brawlers was heard advancing. Car crept nearer to her companion for protection. Of his courage she entertained no doubt ; she was only fearful, after the excessive display he had made of unnecessary ferocity in the theatre, lest he should be *too* brave.

“ Oh, Charley, old cock !” cried a drunken exciseman, “ is that you ? Oh ! hem ! you’re engaged—pleasant night for a walk, miss—very pleasant, particularly when company’s agreeable—ha ! ha ! ha !”

While the man had been addressing her, Car had in vain pulled at Mr. Wuggins’s arm, to intimate her desire of proceeding. The player would not understand her, but stood and grinned at all the exciseman said ; nor could Car’s most violent efforts distract his attention. Vexed at this, and hardly knowing what to do, she imprudently answered, “ Yes, sir, it is very pleasant.”

“ Soho ! soho !” bawled out one of the party, who had once had his ears boxed by Car for some impertinence : “ I’ll swear that’s Car Bunns, and if she don’t give me a kiss I’ll tell ;” and upon this he seized the girl in his arms.

It was in vain Car exerted her utmost strength ; her struggles seemed only to increase the glee of her assailant. In vain did she call on Mr. Wuggins for assistance ; her cries were mimicked by the revellers, while he to whom they were addressed studiously displayed how much they amused him ; and when at last she did escape, it was only to be captured by another, and compelled, with all the cruelty of drunken hilarity, to undergo fresh insults. As this man, who was standing near a lamp, forced the girl’s face towards him, he perceived a large patch of red paint upon her forehead, and glancing at the player’s cheeks, he shouted out, “ I say, Charley Wuggins, do you mark all your little lambs with ochre in this way ?”

“ Let me go !” cried Car ; “ let me go, I say.—You’re tearing my clothes, man !” as with a desperate effort she freed herself, when Charles Wuggins caught her by the sleeve.

“ My dear,” said he, laughing, “ never mind them. I’ll persuade them not to say a word about what has happened.”

“ I don’t care what they say,” replied Car, trembling with

passion, and hurrying away. Charles Wuggins looked after her for a moment, then, laughing as in pity of the poor girl's folly, he rejoined the brawlers with the affected ease of a man whose character had recently been exalted by some important discovery.

The rain began to fall before Car reached her home; and when she got there, to add to her distress, her mother had fallen asleep, nor could she be awakened by the loudest demands for admittance, though they disturbed every neighbour in the street. Mrs. Cowley, who rented the next house, thrust forth her head to inquire the cause of the disturbance. This woman was one of those who are pensioned as soldiers' widows. Not necessitated to labour, and by education made unmindful of domestic comforts, such females have a vast deal of time on their hands, which they considerably bestow on their neighbours' affairs.

From Mrs. Cowley's obtruded vision, Car shrank under the portal, and hoped, by not replying to her interrogatories, to escape detection; but the old soldier was not to be so easily manoeuvred: she descended to the door, shivering and puffing, candle in hand, complaining of the risk she was running all the while, and putting forth her head, exclaimed—

“ Bless me alive! Miss Bunns! how can you wake all the people in this way? What has kept you out so late? It's three o'clock (it was not one, but very *good* people, in a virtuous cause, will cheerfully make any sacrifice). And how you are pulled! That skirt's torn nearly off. So nice as I saw you go out! Couldn't help saying to myself, if you were a child of mine, I should be very cautious. The men get worse and worse. But do step in. I'm sure I would not refuse a cat shelter on such a night as this; and when we have put you to rights, and seen how things are, I'll rap at the wall for your mother.”

Car, vexed that she was recognised, refused the invitation.

“ You had much better be advised,” continued Mrs. Cowley. “ You don't know how your things are pulled! They can be no Christians”—here she turned up her eyes, and shook her head solemnly—“ who have used a poor girl in that manner. People ought to be made of money to afford it. It's too bad a great deal. And you've nothing but your character to depend on. They ought to be ashamed to keep you out so late! All decent people have been abed and asleep these six hours. I was just thinking of getting up myself when you woke me.”

The dialogue was interrupted by Mrs. Bunns inquiring if her daughter was there; and being answered in the affirmative, the door was opened.

“ I'm sure you'll want a light,” said Mrs. Cowley, who, anxious to acquaint herself with the full extent of our heroine's misfor-

tunes, was following, candle in hand, when Car hastily pushed the door to, and shut her out.

"Well, well!" she was heard to mutter, "tut, tut, tut! That speaks more than I'd have said without it. It's a decent return for kindness! No matter: them whose ways are dark, has no need of candles. Has they, Car Bunns?"

"What's the matter with Dame Cowley?" asked Mrs. Bunns.

"How should I know? Get to bed, mother: you'll catch cold standing there."

"No, I hope not. But you must be wet, Caroline. Had you been standing outside long? I can't think how I came to fall asleep: it's so unlike me. What's the time?"

"How should I know? Don't stand talking, but go to bed."

"Well, I will directly. But you'll want a light. Your supper's put by in the window."

"I'm not hungry. Pray go to bed, mother."

Our heroine passed a miserable night. While at the play she had often speculated on the pleasures of a theatrical life. To wander about the country seemed delightful to her, now full of youthful restlessness. To wear smart clothes—to act, and be applauded—more than concealed from her inexperience the poverty and contempt which gradually induce the self-abasement of the stroller's wife. Then she did not imagine it possible for Mr. Charles to think of her dishonourably—her who had refused so many that thought themselves his superiors. In a few hours all her thoughts how changed!

"I can't think what has happened. Something must be the matter, people are running about so. I'll step out and see"—said Mrs. Bunns, who, early the next morning, observed the neighbours paying and returning visits with communicative alacrity; but Car, who feared this gadding concerned her last night's adventure, prevented her mother's departure—and her fears found corroboration in the bold and inquisitive manner in which the people stared into the window as they passed the house. For a few days our heroine never quitted her work, and Mrs. Bunns was quite delighted with her daughter's industry.

Meanwhile Car hoped that her disasters were forgotten: the shock was therefore more felt when, having finished a very difficult job, Miss Sticher, her employer, informed her she had "no more work at present." To the mother, this was perfectly incomprehensible; she could in no way account for it.—It was the height of summer. The sun was using his warmest endeavours to make work for straw-bonnet makers, and no later than last Sunday the three Miss Grunts had complained to the minister of their feelings at being compelled to stop away from chapel because Miss Sticher had disappointed them. Car pretended many excuses to persuade her mother there was nothing

extraordinary in this lack of employment, but the old woman was, notwithstanding made so unhappy that she for the first time in her life attended prayer-meeting that night.

When Mrs. Bunns returned, she was unusually dejected. Car was fearful to inquire the cause; though she could not refrain from observing that it seemed somewhat strange, her mother had never once asked her about the play, or mentioned the late hour of her return.

Thus things continued, Car living at home, obtaining a few pence by "shop-work," that is making shirts and smock-frocks, but chiefly eating bread she had not earned. The dinners sometimes were scanty—then one or two of the most respectable scholars stayed away—and at last Mrs. Bunns lost her temper oftener, and exercised more authority than was natural with one of her quiet and retiring disposition. Car felt the change, and her heart grew heavy; her confidence deserted her; she avoided company, and betrayed by numerous little acts and arts that she was ill at ease. She knew that she was welcome to share her mother's crust; the old woman would have been grieved had she thought otherwise; but when she had earned 15s. a week, her mother never scolded her. Her mother was unhappy; there was something lying heavy on her mind, and her silence told Car what that something was. What could she do? She pondered long, and frequently her meditations were interrupted by tears. Ultimately, she determined to wait on her late mistress; and if the loss of work in any way concerned her conduct with Charles Wuggins, to confess every thing, to tell the whole truth; and then she thought Miss Sticher, who had heretofore behaved kindly, would re-employ her. But before she did this, it might be well to see some of the young women who had "seats" in the house; and watching the time when the hands left for their dinner, Car encountered her former companions. All with one accord pretended not to see her, and passed on. Willing to be deceived, Car spoke to one of the girls; the wench took to her heels, as though some danger had approached her, and at a short distance they stopped and grouped together in busy consultation, every now and then turning their heads to survey our heroine, who, after this unexpected reception, was afraid to proceed in her plan. Miss Pinner, the milliner, of Miss Sticher's establishment, ultimately left the party, and telegraphing to Car with her hand, signified she desired a conference.

What could this mean? Why should *Miss Pinner* speak to *her*? Reasons must be urgent when a *milliner* publicly condescended to address a *straw-bonnet maker*. How delicate are the shades of society! The bishop sneers in the presence of the curate. The physician makes not an equal of the general

practitioner. The Old Bailey Ciceros frown on their employers the attorneys. But the liberal professions are not the only ones that teem with illiberality. Milliners seldom congregate with dressmakers, and dressmakers keep straw-bonnet makers at a proper distance!

“Miss Bunns?”

“How do you do, Miss Pinner?” replied Car, timidly.

“I come to say,” haughtily continued the milliner, without deigning to notice her inferior’s civility, “that the young ladies wishes, as you doesn’t work for Miss Sticher now, that you wouldn’t think o’ speaking to none of ’em in the street.”

“Why?” asked Car, colouring, “I’m sure there’s no reason they should hold themselves my betters. I’m as good as them.”

“I dare say. We’ve heard nothing about you,” responded Miss Pinner, “If people said all manner o’ things, I’d not be one to listen. Only—to be sure—Miss Sticher mightn’t like the young ladies to talk with you, now you’ve lost your seat of work.”

“I don’t know what people can have to say about me.”

“No more don’t I. I’ve said nothing what people said. Don’t go and say I told you any thing. I’m not one to fetch and carry, for my betters even. Only the young ladies would be talked about, if they stood in the street with such as you now.”

Without waiting longer, Miss Pinner flaunted away, and rejoined her companions, who flocked round her, curious to hear the result of her awful embassy. Car was more hurt than offended; her feelings annihilated her pride. At another time she would have received such a message with more than equal spirit; perhaps would have boxed the ears of the messenger. Now, in the humility of suffering, she with difficulty refrained from tears. Once more she hesitated to pursue her original intention of seeing her late mistress; but fearing that so favourable an opportunity of finding Miss Sticher alone might not again offer, she, mastering her reluctance, slowly entered the house, and walked up stairs to the work-room.

“Come in there,” answered Miss Sticher, in reply to Car’s knock at the door. “Oh! It’s you Miss Bunns, is it? and the lady continued her dinner with increased appetite.

“She never called me *Miss Bunns* before,” thought Car.

The room in which Miss Sticher was discovered was a large dirty apartment almost unfurnished. Strings passing to and fro from the walls were thickly hung with misshapen articles of straw-work, waiting to be pressed into bonnets; in one corner stood a small deal table, on which was placed, beside a new and fashionable mahogany-framed looking-glass, a pint basin full of muddy soapsuds; no towel was perceptible, and the liquid

looked as if it had been in use for ages; beneath this was a cracked red pan half full of coals—but why need I particularize all the filth of that most filthy place, a straw-bonnet maker's work-room? There is a triangle on the mantelpiece, which, surrounded by tracts and china ornaments, will convey more to the imagination of the reader than the most elaborate description. One side of this triangle is composed of a contaminating horn comb, the next a mass of tallow, looking as though a candle had been sweltered up a chimney, which, touching each of these, so as to complete the figure, is a slimy half-sucked piece of barley-sugar. The reader may depend on it, this is no exaggeration.

Miss Sticher, notwithstanding it was the middle of June, was sitting before the fire with her face tied up, looking the imbodied essence of all the miseries of her occupation; her dinner rested on her knees, consisting of mutton-broth and cold beef-pudding; and on a chair by her side was placed a cabbage-leaf full of strawberries, and several pieces of gingerbread, waiting her attentions.

"I've called, Miss Sticher," said Car, "to ask if you wanted hands?"

"No—*besides*—no—no!" and to excuse her not replying more largely, the lady filled her mouth, so as to incapacitate her from speaking.

"I can't think, Miss Sticher, what I have done to offend you."

"Oh! you didn't offend me," replied the mistress; "*only*"—and, unwilling to explain her reasons, Miss Sticher repeated the delicate artifice she had before used so successfully.

"It's very hard on me," continued Car: "I was the oldest hand you had. I shouldn't have minded if it hadn't been the middle of the busy time. Every body's suited now: there's no chance of getting a seat any where, and I'm sure my work always gave satisfaction."

"I'd no great fault to find—*only*"—the plate was empty, and Miss Sticher, feeling that, in what her late journeywoman had uttered, there was something bordering on an accusation, roused to self-defence, no longer ended with the palliative—"only, I'm forced to be very particular about character," she continued; "I would not be spoken ill of for the world. It would ruin my business: so many young ladies as are under me—all respectable!"

"What have I done?" asked Car, blushing to the forehead.

"Ask your own conscience."

"My conscience is clear enough; I wish other people's tongues were so."

"Sure, Miss Bunns," cried Miss Sticher, with angry emphasis, "you can't mean to say people would talk as they do if you

had given them no reason. I can't bring myself to believe all would be so bad as to tell stories without some truth."

"I'll tell you all about it, Miss Sticher."

"You'd better sit down, perhaps, Miss Bunns;" and Miss Sticher motioned Car to take a chair beside her.

"Now, tell me true, didn't you go out with him?"

In reply, Car entered into a full and particular statement of facts as they occurred; she concealed nothing; she blamed her own imprudence, and lamented her want of caution; but entreated Miss Sticher not to believe that she had, even for a moment, thought of disgracing herself: and when she had finished, the simple girl looked up into her auditor's face, expecting to be received as one who had been wronged and was going to be redressed. Poor thing! she had pleaded her accuser's, not her own, justification; for Miss Sticher, while listening, never credited what she heard, but argued that if Car *confessed* so much, a great deal more even than people said *must have happened*.

"I'm sure I'm very sorry for all that has taken place."

"I hope you don't think hard of me *now*?" said Car, entreatingly.

"It's very difficult to judge any one nowadays," replied Miss Sticher. "I hope you've spoken the truth."

"Indeed I have—there's nothing I have told a story about, upon my word and honour."

"I am very glad to hear it. I hope you'll get work soon—but—"

"But what?" inquired Car.

"All people mayn't know you as I do—so you see I couldn't prudently think of taking you on again just now awhile."

"Then, in a little time, perhaps?" asked Car, unwilling that errand should be quite without effect.

"Why, yes. If things go on well, and nothing more is said between this and *next spring*—why—then—*perhaps*—"

"And what is mother to do through the winter?"

Quite overpowered, Car burst into tears, and was hurrying from the house, when she met the journeywomen returning from dinner, laughing and talking merrily. Their mirth seemed like an insult to her bitterness, which was increased by a suspicion that she probably formed the subject of their conversation. She did not pause, or look at, but passed them at a quick pace; and quitting the town, it was dark before she returned to her home.

Car daily became more and more dejected. For the first time, she felt a desire for death. Once she even walked to the river side; but there her courage failed her, hope suggested that better times were at hand; and the thought of what her mother

would endure for her loss, made Car hasten home, resolved never to think of such a deed again, but to work harder, so that extra exertion might supply the difference between present and former remuneration,—and she did work, till her strength suffered by continued toil—up early and down late. Still the thought would come that all was useless. Want would enter the house at last; and memory would paint the past, and imbitter the recollection with the consciousness that she had not deserved the present.

Even this state, miserable as it was, was too happy not to be disturbed. Once set the curs of scandal on the scent of a woman's reputation, and they will never cease to give tongue till they have run down their victim.

Mrs. Cowley knew a young man who had joked Mr. Charles Wuggins about Miss Bunns, and Mr. Charles could not say a word; he only laughed; he denied nothing. Nay, he even went further, for he gave his personal countenance to untruth by resuming his attentions over the wall:—he would spend his afternoons frequently with the next-door lodgers, watching for Car, who, though she never replied more than civilly to his questions, was spoken of by the neighbours with more illiberality than if she had displayed the most hardened depravity.

At length the school fell off to three children, and these three belonged to a woman of suspected character and dilatory payment. In those days when thirty scholars came every morning to be kept quiet, Mrs. Bunns had considered much whether these who now constituted her academy ought to be received. She no longer scolded—she sat continually looking up at the ceiling, and seemed, in the full sense of her misery, incapable of exertion either to combat or improve her fortune. At night, Car, who lay beside her, often knew, by the joggling of her mother's shoulders, that the old woman was awake; and if—as was now frequently the case—she started from her sleep, the bed was unoccupied by her mother, who was praying. Those prayers were to Car as bitter reproaches. She could not join in them, except to wish she had never lived!

The point at which misery ceases to be passive our heroine had now attained. She no longer hoped—she began to act; and if her actions seem strange, let the reader remember and make allowance for her situation. There is no rashness like that of despair—Car's dreamt that, after all, Mr. Wuggins *might* be desperately enamoured of her, and perhaps would marry her, if people would only let him alone!

Under this delusion, she became more talkative; and, notwithstanding her mother's repeated entreaties, was ever waiting about the back door. Charles Wuggins, mistaking this for a

desire to be his on easy terms, behaved with obvious coarseness ; which Car, educated in a sphere of life where love has little of the delicacy novel-reading young ladies delight in, understood as a desperate determination to wed her, spite of evil report ; and she thought it would be an excellent plan to invite the gentleman to supper—having got her mother out of the house—and then, when quite alone, if he did not anticipate her by a declaration, to ask him plainly what his intentions were. Amid these conflicting fears and wishes, my poor heroine often remembered her father with regret. The postman's boasted bravery, a daughter's memory never doubted. Had he been alive, people had feared to slander her ; or, at all events, he would compel the man who caused her distress by his evil vanity to clear her character by making her his wife : by no very violent jump of her ideas, Car asked if she might not herself protect her own reputation ? A pistol was as deadly a weapon in the hands of an infant as of a giant. Car took her father's neglected weapon from its resting-place ; she pointed it, snapped the lock, and felt certain she could use it with effect.

After a week of such wearing toil as women only are subjected to, Car finished as much work as entitled her to four shillings and sixpence : of this she gave her mother three, the rest she reserved for the preparation of her project. A new loaf, half a pound of fresh butter, a slice of the best cheese, and a pint of sixpenny ale, would, thought my heroine, constitute a very pretty supper. To procure all this her money was barely equal.

Her mother had gone out to nurse a neighbour, and Car, having finished her shopping, spread the cloth and laid the table so tastefully, that when it was done she was quite charmed with the effect, and felt more confident than ever in the result of her experiment. It was not eight o'clock ; the play, she knew, was never over before ten. As she sat watching the time creep on, she felt cold, and it occurred to her that perhaps Mr. Wiggins might like a fire ; whereupon she emptied her mother's coal-cellar. About nine she put on her bonnet and shawl, and, with a trembling hand, commenced loading the pistol. I wonder how she escaped, for, that all might be done correctly, she kept moving the candle about, and holding the powder to the light, as if desirous of an explosion. This was the last thing necessary ; and Car having done it as she recollected to have seen her father, placed the weapon with considerable trepidation under the window-blind for concealment. The time was rapidly approaching for action ; as it neared, her confidence became less firm—Car began to repent, and asked herself whether she should not seek her mother, and, by confession, prevent the possibility of proceeding—and doubtless she had not put her plot into exe-

cution had there appeared a fair chance by any less desperate means.

The clock struck ten. She trembled as the strokes seemed to fall upon her ear with ominous distinctness. The streets were quiet; and, as she sat alone, she gazed wildly round, or, starting up, seemed to expect the presence of—she knew not what. Her imagination was, in fact, fearfully excited, when she rose to depart.—Looking round her, the room seemed to assume an unusual appearance of comfort. The supper, carefully laid, gave to the place a look of cheerful happiness that made her think of the past, and hope for the future, till she wept like a soothed child; and, falling on her knees before a chair, repeated, confusedly, odd lines of hymns, and scraps of prayers, in which a listener would have found no connexion, but which calmed the suppliant to a feeling bordering on resignation.

The night was damp and dark; nevertheless, the loiterers about the door of the theatre recognised Car Bunns, and bestowed on her a series of low jests, more pregnant with coarseness than wit. Car heard their gibes, but they pained her not. She felt only the more resolved to act with decision; but when, on the people leaving the playhouse, an old friend of her father's saw her, and said, in a voice of compassion, she had better go home, her spirit seemed subdued, and she had left the place, but, at that instant, wrapped in an old plaid cloak, and carrying a bag of stage properties, approached the object of her anxiety. She had now neither courage nor composure to address him; but, as if fate favoured her scheme, Charles recognised her, and thus relieved, Car soon recovered a portion of self-possession.

The fellow proposed a walk. Car answered with her invitation to supper.

Those who know any thing of country actors will hardly need being informed that the invitation was accepted.

“Go softly—mother's up stairs,” whispered Car, as she admitted her gallant.

Oh, don't fear me—I'm down,” replied the player. “What, a fire!—well, it *is* rather cold—that's comfortable. My dear, you'll make a devilish nice little wife for somebody.”

Flattering truth!—Car's bosom heaved as she lit the candle; when Charles Wuggins, glancing at the supper-table, said to himself, “*Only* bread and cheese, a pint of ale, and no pipes!”

Insensible to the possibility of discontent, Car looked proudly up, and said,

“You've not a very good supper, Mr. Wuggins, but I'm sure you'll excuse it.”

“Any thing does for me. I'm not particular. Bachelor's fare!—hem!—bread and cheese and kisses!” said Mr. Charles

catching Car round the waist. "Why, what makes you tremble in this manner?"

"You'll wake my mother," answered Car, as she released herself from his embrace; and, placing a chair for him before the fire, took up her position by his side, so as to be between him and the window, at which she cast a hurried glance, before she proceeded to do the honours of the table.

Wuggins, during supper, said little, and seemed inclined to make up by quantity what his meal wanted in quality.

"Thank you, very little ale indeed for me," said Car, withdrawing her glass, before the bottom of it had been well covered—for she knew her supply was small, and was unwilling to interfere with her guest's gratification.

"There's nothing more wholesome for a man than good beer," was the delicate response. "The Saddlers' Arms is always in good tap. Where did you get this?"

"At Snelgrove's, sir."

"I don't like that house. I never use it now. Last season I was there every Sunday, and *gin-and-water* regular. He did nothing for my ben—sold two galleries—that's all! I'll lay he misses me this time—but he may whistle."

"If I'd known where you liked it best, I'm sure I'd have gone there. Shall I go and see if they're open now?" asked Car, knowing at the same time she had not the price of half a pint in her pocket.

"Oh, no—there's no occasion for that," answered Mr. Charles, but in such a tone as certainly conveyed an idea that he had a very exalted notion of his self-denial when he said it, "You shall comfort me, my dear."

The poor girl, full of thought as to how she should make her proposal of marriage to the player, and feeling the delicacy of her situation, allowed Wuggins to draw her towards him, and offered little resistance to his caresses, which rather gratified her, as they favoured the idea she had conceived of his affection.

"Should you like to be an actress?" he asked heedlessly, for the mere want of something to talk about.

"Oh, yes!" cried Car, seizing on the hope that he was about to propose.

"Should you? You'd look well. You've a good stage mug of your own. Next time we want any supernumeraries, you shall go on."

Car smiled, and hung her head. She did not understand what *going on* as a *supernumerary* meant; and, like all who are very anxious, she construed the doubtful favourably—persuading herself it could be nothing less than something most flattering to her project; and in this mistake she murmured softly—"But people would talk if I wasn't married first."

“Married!” muttered Mr. Charles. “Talk!—let them talk—who cares? I’m sure I don’t.”

Now Car thought she began to understand what his proposal to go on as a supernumerary meant, when he sneered at marriage, and told her to disregard the world’s opinion. Her anger rose; she looked towards the window, but felt that, if the light were strong, he might perceive and anticipate her movement, so she affected to snuff the candle, and purposely extinguished it.

The amorous actor hastily took her hand, and rapturously kissed it.

“Now my love, come to my arms! a chaste salute!”

“But you intend to marry me, Mr. Wuggins—don’t you?” asked Car in a slow firm voice.

“Of course. Whenever I marry, you shall be at the wedding.”

“But you are in earnest?”

“Of course.”

“You mean to marry me—on your honour?”

“Of course.”

“Then you’ll give it me in writing?—” and she produced pen, ink, and paper.”

Wuggins paused.

Gentle reader, Charles Wuggins’s word was as good as his bond;—it was impossible to say which was of the less value. No small practitioner, however desperate of fees, would have legalized such a fellow. He was an outlaw to all intents and purposes. Yet when it was proposed to this man to give his bond, he paused. It was a new mode of lying—the form was what appalled him—such is the influence of ceremony over those who hold morality as nothing.

“You’ll give me your written promise to marry, won’t you Mr. Wuggins?” repeated Car, in somewhat louder accents.

Charles Wuggins caught up the cat, and sought to concentrate his thoughts upon the animal in order that other ideas might not disturb him.

“You’ll give me your promise?” cried Car, in a voice almost authoritative.

“Hush! you’ll wake your mother,” whispered Wuggins with a grin. “The cat looks half afraid! Pretty puss! pussy!”

“You’ve been a bad friend to me,” said the girl. “You’ve done me all manner of wrong.”

“Pho, pho!” interrupted Wuggins.

“It is all on your account that people talk of me. Mother can’t sleep for thinking of it; the school children stop away about it; no one looks on me; I’ve lost my work; I’m almost starving; I’ve ruined my health; my character’s gone, and you must marry me.”

“*Must I,*” cried he, feeling that the arguments Car advanced on her side of the question were so many reasons to prevent his agreeing to the proposal. “Be hanged if I do then, my love!”—putting his hands into his pockets and shaking his head with theatrical knowing as he said it.

The manner of the man decided her: keenly sensitive of the insult conveyed, and goaded by it almost to desperation, she cried, “*You shall,* Charles Wuggins,” as, seizing the pistol, she levelled it at his head. “Give me your written promise or I’ll shoot you dead.”

“Is that pistol loaded? Come, come—no jokes—I’ll swear the peace—put it down: do you know what you are at?—you may murder me!”

“And I will, if you don’t give me your written promise. I never ran after *you*, you found *me* out. I must have been mad to walk with you; but you know well in your heart, I never forfeited your respect: then what right had you to *laugh*, when people made light of me? I don’t want you to have me; you’ll never be of good to any poor girl; but I’ll have your promise in black and white, that when people shall speak ill of me to mother, the poor old woman may be able to answer them, and not come home here and cry.”

Charles Wuggins was completely bothered—he had no courage—no cunning, except when at his ease; and there was something in the girl’s manner that fearfully disquieted him. He gazed at her; her bosom swollen—her face flushed—her features fixed; the pistol pointed at his head:—his hands moved instinctively towards that member, as if to defend it.

Car, when the man did not reply, but exhibited signs of ror, lost, strangely enough, much of that spirit which had hitherto upheld her. She felt that the business must be concluded quickly, if she were to be the means of its accomplishment. Her real emotion had evaporated, and it was a labour to hold to her resolve. In these circumstances, she thought that, could she utter something terrible, it might frighten the player into obedience, and with this intention, she cried

“You had better write directly, or I’ll *use an oath!*”

The latter part of the sentence sounded oddly, even to the actor’s confusion; but he was prevented fully recognising it by the new appearance that the girl’s countenance, immediately afterwards, assumed. To the feverish red, the sickly hue of death had succeeded; the eyes strained wildly; the mouth was tightly compressed; the neck exhibited a painful sight, from the convulsed starting of the sinews.

The actor, as he noticed, mistook the meaning of this change: he, used to stage delineations, thought it displayed nothing else than a fiendish rage; and fearful of delays with one so wrought,



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he hastily, by the firelight, scrawled the required promise. He might have taken the weapon from out the girl's hand. When he was most alarmed, she was, in fact, most incapable of injuring him. Her power of motion had deserted her. It was as though her body were undergoing some terrible metamorphosis, and changing to a living statue. All her nerves were fixed; even the faculty of speech was locked; but notwithstanding this, her mind retained its energies; that seemed to survive when her body was as if stiff in death.

"There, all's done!" said Wuggins, having written, and looking up with a smiling face, doubtless certain that the danger was past. "Come, put the pistol down now!"

Car saw him write: a sense of happiness seemed to warm her into life. All she had wished was accomplished: she should be respected again, and her mother would once more be happy. Perhaps—for vanity will mingle with the most opposite feelings—*perhaps* she might be induced to marry Mr. Wuggins, and turn actress as his wife. Car thought all this, unconscious that the pistol remained pointing at the head of the player: the power to remove it had not yet returned to her stiffened arm; but now that power began; recurring animation jerked as it were at her sinews: the extremities became slightly convulsed; her fingers twitched—the pistol went off!

Wuggins uttered a wild and fearful shriek, as he sprang from his chair to fall heavily upon the floor.

Car heard him cry and saw him fall: the truth suddenly shed its full light upon her mind. The man was killed, and she had killed him! She gasped for breath, and staggered back; and as she lay on the ground, the remembrance of her doings swam from her—for, on being questioned, she remarked that—*the linnet fluttered very much, and she wondered if it wanted water.*

Let me hasten to a conclusion. Of course, Car Bunns was taken up for the murder. I was present on her first examination before the magistrates of W——. I think a human being never appeared so lonely as she did at this time. All present seemed to widen by their looks the distinction between her and them. Towards the close of the proceedings, the old mother shuffled through the crowd and approached the bench. She had witnessed the trial, and remained in the background while the decision seemed dubious; but a mother's love made her disregard all else when her daughter's danger appeared to increase.

"Please, sir," said the old woman, in a querulous voice, "Caroline's my child, mayn't I sit beside her?"

The request being granted, Mrs. Bunns fidgetted to her daughter who seemed more pained than pleased by her presence.

"Why did you come, mother?" she murmured.

But after a little time the girl appeared cheered by her parent's attentions, and during that examination—which I have since thought was somewhat harshly conducted—the old woman cried the whole time, and played with the hand of her daughter.

At the sessions Car was tried and (the pistol having been proved to be incidentally on the spot) was found guilty of manslaughter only, for which offence she was imprisoned one year. I remember when the sentence was pronounced, the ladies of W. clamoured at its lenity. Are some women disappointed when a case is so disposed of as to require no display of desperate compassion? Such seem always the first to be discontented with mercy, and the first likewise to exclaim against severity.

The last time I saw Car was two years ago (her mother, they told me, had died before her child's release from prison). She was not pretty then, she was very thin, and careless about her person. The people of the place said she was "*strange*," and the lower orders sometimes out of charity, hired her to do their dirty work, for she had the character of labouring without apparent fatigue, and without choice as to the nature of her employment.

I was greatly grieved to see the change that had taken place in the personal appearance of the pretty little straw-bonnet-maker; and, with due respect for Public Opinion, reviewing all the circumstances of this history, I cannot but think it often a mighty tyrant when it interferes in private affairs. The lightest surmise is to it equal to 'the heaviest accusation—the meanest prejudices to the wisest laws. It judges without evidence, and condemns without appeal:—it drives away such as have sinned, and would return repentant. It hurries on those who otherwise would never have consummated folly by crime

THE CASTLE OF WODENHEAD.

THE last golden tints of a summer-day were passing away from tree and tower, and the cool light of the coming eve lay in gentle contrast to the glowing hues which still rested on the topmost turrets of the castle of Wodenhead, when Bernard de Walden stood, with folded arms, looking mournfully on the distant towers, as though his eyes were struggling to overcome the darkness which was gradually closing around, and, as if all the faculties of his soul had been removed from his body, and were held in the possession of some mighty enchanter, a dweller in the castle upon which he gazed.—Bernard de Walden was in love!

Having thus stated the most important fact in our hero's life, we will proceed, with the reader's permission, to relate a trifling incident consequent thereon—we mean his marriage, and the circumstances by which, to use a modern phrase, the same was "brought about."

The Lady Ina Morden was an inhabitant of the castle, through the stone walls of which the eyes of Bernard de Walden were making such laudable efforts to penetrate: she was the ward of its possessor, the Baron of Wodenhead, to whose care she had been bequeathed on a lost battle-field by her dying father.

The Baron of Wodenhead was a mighty man—fond of the world, and those good things of the same, which the mighty are apt to lay their hands upon;—unfortunately, next to himself, he loved the lands of his fair ward, and next to the lands, he loved the lady; now, the baron was not a man to be served after the fashion of a modern suitor, for as he could not boast of

"those soft parts of conversation"

which were considered so essential by the "jealous Moor," his manner of wooing was of that impetuous description which produces serious effects upon "the nervous and highly excitable temperaments" of the damsels of later days; moreover, he was descended from a long line of Saxon ancestors, and had risen to much power at court, where, indeed, the Wodenheads

always maintained an influence which has not been entirely lost by their descendants at the present day.

Bernard de Walden had been a wanderer in other lands; for he had mixed himself up with the political troubles of the times, and, amongst other delinquencies, had, by his attachment to the Lady Ina, incurred the displeasure of his then majesty's "trust and well-beloved" Baron of Wodenhead.

The youthful lover was meditating on these things, when a minstrel, who was both "infirm and old," crossed his path—the youth was dejected, for, as the reader knows, he was in love—the aged man was out of spirits, because, as the reader must be told, he was hungry; and suffering thus under ideal and practical inconveniences, perhaps they were attracted to each other by the powerful sympathy of suffering: there is a sort of freemasonry in sorrow, as all gentlemen who have been in "difficulties" are able to testify; and thus it was that, after a courteous salutation had passed between them—which was rendered, as I have said, sympathetic by their mutually miserable physiognomies—the lapse of a few minutes saw them seated on the glittering grass devouring, by the light of a brilliant moon, the contents of De Walden's wallet, in a manner not at all conformable to the received ideas of the digestive capabilities of a lover or a poet.

The acquaintance thus hastily commenced did not, however, suddenly terminate; and the fulfilment of that adage which vouches for the advantage occasioned by the employment of two heads in preference to one, was exhibited in the result of the scheme which was subsequently put into execution.

It was on the following afternoon that Bernard de Walden solicited and gained admission at the baron's gate—and here we must caution the gentle reader not to be surprised at Bernard's rashness or the baron's courtesy, seeing that previous to his appearance on this occasion the lover, on whom some years of travel had wrought much change of aspect, had taken the customary precaution of exchanging clothes with the minstrel, the poet, as is usual in such cases, profiting considerably by the transaction.

The baron returned from the chase tired and disappointed: the hounds had behaved ill, and some of his vassals had misunderstood or disobeyed his orders; this was enough to try the virtue of a Socrates, and it naturally ruffled the temper of a Wodenhead: but the baron was placable, and soon the cloud passed away from his brow, for having had the hounds lashed, and two or three of the refractory vassals invested in the stocks, he became much mollified, and sat down with calm enjoyment to his evening banquet.

The Lady Ina had taken her place at the "festive board," and, at some little distance, a wandering minstrel occupied a seat; the lady looked sad and careworn, but her dress was nevertheless tastily and carefully arranged, and as grief in moderation is highly becoming to features feminine, the Lady Ina looked brilliantly sad. The baron gazed upon her radiant charms, and as he was becoming rather tipsy and very tender, he called upon the minstrel for a song,—“And let a maiden's smile,” he exclaimed, “be the subject of your verse.”

The wish was complied with, and the baron listened to the following words:

“The stars are mirrored in the stream,
The gentle dewdrops press the flowers;
It is the time when lovers breathe
Their whispered vows in moonlit bowers.
The spirit of the dying day,
That shines o'er earth and sea,
Can bring no spell to calm this heart,
Unsmiled on, love, by thee.”

“I've wandered far thro' distant lands,
Where fickle fortune wooed my stay,
And life's best gifts of love and song
Scattered their roses round my way:
Yet hither come, impelled by fate,
Whate'er its doom may be,
For I can brave its utmost hate,
If smiled on, love, by thee.”

“Minstrel,” said the baron, stroking his beard with much complacency, “we are a lover, and therefore know what tenderness is; but we are also a warrior, and we have learned never to despair; and though thy song may be well suited to express the feelings of a distrustful and disconsolate gentleman, we would gladly hear something that savours of a more jocund mood.”

The minstrel seemed somewhat nettled, but he reined in his anger, and replied,

“Even as you will, my lord; and if it will please your lordship, I will sing you a lay founded on a merry conceit, which struck me no later than yesterday as I passed through a neighbouring town.”

“The baron he rode from his proud castle-gate,
With the glitter and pomp of a goodly estate;
And he smiled as he gazed on his princely domain—
But his smile was unanswered in village or plain.”

“The miser at nightfall he went to his board,
Where all of his happiness safely was stored;
With trembling hands counting his silver and gold,
He smiled on his coffers—his coffers were cold.”

“The minstrel he wandered from morning till night,
 With a heart and a purse that were equally light;
 Broad lands or full coffers for him had no wile—
 He smiled upon beauty—*she* also could smile.”

At the close of this song the lady arose, and, followed by her attendants, retired to her chamber—not, however, without giving a kind glance to the minstrel—it might have been in return for his melody; but the baron drew himself up as one who should say, “I have my suspicions!” and when the maiden had retired, he addressed the minstrel thus:

“The hour is drawing late, and we will dispense with further attendance. Chainwell and Grimlock, two of my most trusty serving-men, will convey you to your chamber, where, at all events, I trust that your repose will be sufficiently *deep*.”

Now the baron spoke the last word with an emphasis, as though he intended a joke; and, as it is a fearful sign when great men condescend to be facetious, perhaps the minstrel entertained some suspicions when the two amiable and well-favoured attendants appeared in waiting, to marshal him the way he was to go.

Our hero followed his conductors through the lighted halls that formed the habitable part of the Baron's castle, into chambers that had long been tenantless; where decayed furniture, rusty armour, tattered banners, and mouldy pictures were brought out into lurid and mysterious shapes by the light which proceeded from the flickering torches of the grim chamberlains by whom he was attended. At length, through long passages, they arrived at a flight of steps which led, by an almost interminable descent, to a cell which, to the consternation of the disguised lover, appeared to be strongly secured—on the *outside*! The baron's witticism was fully explained.

“Do you seek to make a prisoner of an unoffending man?” inquired the minstrel.

“We've no time for unnecessary civilities,” said one of the grooms of the bedchamber; “you'll know your own fate, and that is more than your friends, if you have any, are ever likely to do. So now, good night. Yet stay, I will just rid you of this toy,” he continued, as he took the harp from the minstrel's hand, “for I have heard that troubadours and poets, with the aid of such companions, can make light even of stone walls and iron chains.”

So the minstrel was thrown into the gloomy den, and he heard the bolts drawn, and the chains rattle, and saw the last streak of light fade away from the crevices of the prison-door. Horrible thoughts came upon him in his loneliness; but his solitude was not of long duration; for, ere he had passed an hour

in that murky cell, he received a visit from his very worthy host.

The baron was a man of few words. He put down the lamp which he had carried, and, holding a letter to the minstrel's view, he exclaimed,

"Stranger, I hold in my hand a proof of the treachery, as a reward for which you now occupy this dismal cave. I have discovered that it was yesterday conveyed to the Lady Ina, on the blunted point of a cloth-yard shaft. It is written in a fair and scholarlike hand. Wilt thou own to the authorship?"

The minstrel looked like a poet who has lampooned his patron—he saw there was no help for it, so he accepted the compliment and acknowledged the writing.

The scroll stated, that the author thereof was about to gain admittance into the castle, and that his object would then be to deliver a further letter from a true knight (his master) to the baron's ward, and, if possible, to obtain an answer thereto.

The baron waxed wroth, and demanded the letter in question, which was delivered to him by the minstrel. It was opened and read; an operation of some difficulty, as in those days our unhappy land had not been blessed by the labour of any "diffusion" society, and the unfortunate baron was consequently a stranger to the advantages of those publications which, in modern days, "waft from Indus to the Pole," the researches of science, and the names of—"The Committee."

This epistle bore the signature of the baron's rival. It urged upon the Lady Ina the practicability of an elopement; and, after a due proportion of those common places which by prescription belong to lovers, concluded with these words, "THE BEARER MAY NOT BE TRUSTED."

The baron's visage relaxed into a smile when he arrived at this point.

"Minstrel," he said, "we would, if possible, place trust in thee, for it seemeth to us that we have been somewhat mistaken: if thou wilt desert a master who, as a reward for thy services, has thus thrown a doubt upon thine honesty, you shall find us not illiberal; but have a care that we be not trifled with—the moat which you crossed upon entering this castle is of a sufficient width—*its depth is in proportion.*"

Now the minstrel knew that the baron was a man likely to keep his promise; and if he perished according to his lordship's hint, he should not have the satisfaction of knowing that his death would be avenged, but that, on the following morning, a score of serving men would bring in the satisfactory and unanimous verdict of "found drowned."

"Do you hesitate?" said the baron.

“Certainly not,” replied the minstrel, who had the mote in his eye.

The baron forthwith proceeded to expound a notable scheme, the outline of which ran thus:—The minstrel was to be allowed free access to the Lady Ina, to whom he was to present the letter in question, with the words “the bearer may not be trusted” carefully expunged; he was then to use his best endeavours to persuade the lady to elope with her lover, with whom, if she consented to the plan, an appointment was to be made; the minstrel was to let down a ladder of ropes, by which the luckless youth was to ascend to the chamber of his mistress, and thus throw himself into the trap which had been so cleverly laid.

“And when you have him in your power?” said the minstrel inquiringly.

“We shall see how he must be disposed of;—perhaps, however, he may fall from the tower and break his neck, in which case you will be saved some trouble.”

“Assuredly,” said the minstrel; “Our Lady is merciful, let us hope for the best.”

The disguised lover was forthwith released and honourably entreated, while every thing was arranged according to the plan with which the reader has just been made acquainted.

In the employment of the baron, and regarded as his most faithful adherent, was one Wilkin Whitelock—he was an old soldier, trusty and brave, and a man after the baron’s own heart—seeing that, in addition to a martial spirit, he was also possessed of a temperament so prone to the tender passion that, although the passage of eight and fifty summers had brought him to that period of life when gentlemen are pronounced “old enough to know better,” he was still regarded with feelings of terror by all the nymphs of the neighbouring village of Woden.

Throughout his life, the amatory disposition of Wilkin Whitelock had involved him in disasters, which he had nevertheless manfully borne, and which had never effectually reduced his chivalric spirit, thus,

“Still in his bosom lived the wonted fires,”

although the loss of one eye and the diminution of one arm had been part of the evils which resulted from his unfortunate habit of getting up “counter addresses” to damsels who had already been betrothed to happier swains.

Among those whose charms had attracted the glance of his “evil eye,” the waiting-woman of the Lady Ina was not the least conspicuous. Through many weary days he wooed in vain; but the reward of perseverance; though distant, is said to be always sure, and the long lane of his misfortunes, at length, found a

turning. Vainly should we hope to describe the joy which agitated his experienced heart, when the coy damsel yielding, to his suit, confessed the soft impeachment, and requested that on the following night he would come beneath the window of her ladyship's boudoir—where, prepared with a ladder of ropes, she would anxiously wait to receive him.

The moon was shining all chaste and cold upon a sleeping world, when in the castle of Wodenhead there were anxious hearts and a strange play to be performed: by the light of a taper sat the Lady Ina listening for the village bells to tell the hour of midnight; the minstrel was by her side, a suppressed smile playing on his lips, while outside, at the chamber-door, assisted by three or four sturdy domestics, stood the wily Baron of Wodenhead waiting for the signal with which the minstrel had promised to announce the ascent of the venturesome Bernard de Walden.

At length the bell sounded, and a somewhat "husky" cough was heard from beneath the turret-window—the rope ladder was silently lowered, and in a few minutes the bullet head of the luckless Wilkin was visible at the open window; no sooner had his little corpulent body reached the floor, than the preconcerted signal was given—the light was extinguished—in rushed the baron, furiously followed by his eager vassals: in a moment a huge cloak was thrown over the body of the unhappy soldier, and he found himself about to be borne away in the lusty arms of his unsuspecting comrades: he attempted to explain, and immediately a large portion of the woollen cloak was thrust into his capacious mouth.

"Ha! traitor!" exclaimed the baron, "art thou at length rewarded?—Should a wretch like thee seek the fair hand of the ward of the Baron of Wodenhead? Here the *mass* beneath the cloak attempted a sort of explanatory motion. "Struggle not, I know thy thoughts full well; yes, thou wouldst tell me that the Lady Ina loved thee,—such, alas! was too truly the case." Here another movement; "true, she was fascinated for a time by thy boyish eye and flowing hair." The luckless Wilkin was adorned with a head of grizzled black—"but that dream is passed away for ever, and she is now a witness of the punishment which thy temerity deserves; bear him away to the deepest dungeon of the castle! I will follow and feast upon his groans! Minstrel, to thy care at present I commit my ward: in a few moments, when I have seen to the safe custody of this unhappy youth, I will return and reward thy vigilance."

Confusion reigned throughout the castle; the miserable Wilkin was borne to a gloomy dungeon, while the baron was exulting in all the sweets of gratified revenge;—when his emotion had somewhat subsided, he returned to the room in which he had left the

lady to the care of the minstrel—the chamber was tenantless—a taper was burning upon a table on which a written paper was also placed; the baron rushed forward and seized it with eager haste—his astonished eyes rested on the following words:

“Thanks to the wit that could not trace
De Walden in the minstrel’s face;
The worthy baron sadly sips
A bowl he drugged for other lips;
And trusting to a traitor’s aid,
Finds to his cost himself betrayed!”

S.

THE COFFIN-MAKER OF DROGHEDA.

“They say this town is full of cozenage.”—*Comedy of Errors*.

THE few dreary hours of a misty December day were fast verging and darkening into the shrouding and moonless obscurity of nightfall, which indicated sleet and storm, when two weary and road-stained travellers passed slowly on foot down the steep long hill that circuits part of the old town, and forms an acute angle with the bridge, whose arches overhang the Boyne, as it ripples against the quays of Drogheda. The houseless, and desolate prospect of the country through which they had journeyed, as it lay fallow and dormant beneath the freezing breath of winter, increased the cheerfulness and comfort with which the clustering buildings of the town, now illuminated for the night, and resounding with the hum and bustle of their occupants returning after the past labours of the day, inspired in the hearts of the toilworn wayfarers—contrasting so powerfully with the wildness of the sea-shore road they had been traversing on their harassing march.

The appearance and garb of the men, as they stopped for a moment beneath one of the lamps, that was raised at the corner of a long lane of mean suburban cottages, and pointed a shorter and steeper road out from the eminence to the base of the hill, and which descended into the centre of the main street, were distinguished by strangely-contrasted marks of opposite callings and pursuits; one, whose tightly-built well-fitting clothes, though coarse and soiled, black stock, hair closely cut, (slightly silvered by years and foreign service), and high erect bearing denoted at once the veteran soldier—appeared anxious to separate from his companion, a low, pallid man, of ghastly complexion, attired in rusty black originally made for a person much above his height, whose company was evidently forced upon him,—and at the same time wished to effect his object with courtesy and quietness.

“Here then, I repeat what I have already stated, that it is full time, and fitting place, for us to part; for your society during

our journey, and information respecting our route, though unsought for on my part, I thank you; but as to housing myself for the night, and foraging for a supper, though absent five-and-twenty years from my native town, I am too old a campaigner not to be aware how to find a billet, without either your advice or assistance. So, once more, good night."

"But stay, you know not where to look," rejoined the other; "you will not find a single friend or acquaintance living or left; the character of the place is quite changed since you were last quartered here; and as you have cash and valuables about you, you will be robbed and plundered by the crew among whom you intend to trust yourself. I speak as a friend to you. Come home, and lodge with me to-night, and in the morning you can please yourself better, if you wish."

"What, go and lodge at a coffin-maker's shop—for of such a concern you have represented yourself to be the owner; with shrouds for my sheets, and tin angels for my companions? No, I would rather lie under that turf-clump yonder all night, with the sky for my quilt, and the wind to sing me asleep. But, sir, I dismiss at once you and your interference, you have fastened yourself upon me this day, insensible to all the hints I gave how unacceptable your company was; you wormed out of me the secret, that I had concealed about my person all my little stock of wealth, the earnings of my past service—and now you insist on being my pioneer in my private arrangements for the night. You, sir, see those two roads, this one I choose for my line of march, the other is your way; adopt it forthwith, or I shall be compelled to teach you a quick step, that will leave the remembrance of my drill on your back for the next quarter."

"Oh, captain, if you are afraid to trust me, though may I never screw down another ———"

"*Fear* you, you miserable shadow of an undertaker!—not if you were marching at the head of all the muffled drums in the Guards. Lead on there to your hovel, the entertainment cannot be so bad as the host."

The man who lived "by death's doings" turned away his face to conceal a low chuckle of satisfaction at the consent his last insinuation had wrung from the reluctant veteran, and, burying, his pale withered features in the high standing collar of his old-fashioned single-breasted coat, at the same time stooping low to escape the violence of a cutting shower that now began to fall, slanting full into their faces, intimated his readiness to proceed—and, followed by the soldier, crossed the Pont Neuf of the Boyne, and entered the "loyal and corporate" city of Drogheda.

As they passed through the streets, brilliant with the lights in the windows of the shops and hotels, and crowded with artisans,

sailors, grooms, labourers, and soldiers thronging to their barracks, the wanderer returned to his birthplace felt regret at so unwisely trusting himself to the guidance of one he knew nothing of, and seemed to dislike; and several times was on the point of breaking from him, and accosting one of the troopers as they passed him with a look that recognised him as a brother of the service, to request a direction to a decent lodging for the night; but his guide and his promise recurred to his recollection as often, to strengthen the silly resolution he had been nettled to adopt.

A fountain which may be stepped across is the source of the Nile—the actions that colour the course of our lives, are often dictated by some forgotten trifle.

Following his pilot in silence, and watching him narrowly, to detect any intercourse or concerted league with an associate who might be waiting for him near the locality of his abode, he was partially satisfied at finding him pass by the various groups on the way without either sign or word to denote previous acquaintance, and hold a direct course for the further extremity of the long principal street, until they came to a break in the line of houses, formed by a narrow lane (one of the outlets of the town), that branched down towards the river's edge, whose black discoloured current, stained by the floating lees and scum from an extensive manufactory, glided sluggishly past a row of mean, gloomy cabins built upon its brink, parallel to the line of the main street—and increased, while it harmonized with, the dreariness of the situation and prospect.

“Here we are,” said the artist of coffins, the last master of mortal ceremonies; “we are now near home, keep close to me through this passage, or you may miss me in the dark—we turn, mind you, to the left, along the river:” and darting down the “angiport,” he led the way to his retired abode.

Along the margin of the black silent flood they moved for awhile, like shades wandering on the banks of Acheron, until the traveller's guide suddenly plunged aside into a dark opening, which at first appeared like the yawning entrance to some subterranean excavation, and the soldier for a moment paused, and considered the prudence of following further the strange and mysterious track his companion selected.—“No matter,” he reflected; “it cannot be worse than a breach!” and hurried after.

Extending his hands cautiously before him, he discovered, by the damp footing of an uneven and broken flagway, (on which he often slipped and fell against the rough-plastered surface of surrounding walls), that they were passing through a long, narrow, partitioned hall, leading to a steep winding staircase, on whose lowest flight his associate waited for him, and grasping him by the hand, conducted him up to the landing-place upon the se-

cond story of the lonely and secluded building into which he had so unexpectedly been ushered.

“Here is the door of my own room—now do not feel uneasy, as my workshop is below stairs: I am glad to see, too, the fire is not quite extinguished—I must try for the key.”

The vigilant old veteran remarked, that although he very ostentatiously produced a large iron key, of curious and complex construction, the door, before a single ward of the lock could be turned, yielded to a gentle push, and had evidently not been secured. He entered the room, however, without noticing the device contrived to lull his suspicions: a few red coals were gleaming in the bottom of the grate, but threw out insufficient flame to illumine the furniture, or discover the extent of the apartment. He was able, notwithstanding, to reconnoitre the general bearings of the room with a hasty glance, and as he was now much wearied and fatigued, any sign or promise of rest and refreshment was eagerly welcomed.

The appearance of the room was small and confined; a number of household goods, and heavy unwieldy fixtures, large wardrobes, tall book-cases carved in old quaint figures and inlaid with brass discoloured by age and neglect, tables of brown mahogany, and old defaced Dutch paintings in tarnished gilded frames—all being of different styles and patterns, purchased at various intervals at rummage-sales of bankrupt brokers, were stowed and crowded together in most perplexing and promiscuous confusion.

The guest was much astonished at perceiving this goodly, though diverse and motley array of appointments massed together, so different from the squalid and impoverished mien of their proprietor—and throwing himself into a large highbacked chair, attempted to examine more closely the features of his host, who, as if unwilling to undergo a personal scrutiny, concealed his face, and commenced stirring up the sinking fire with a zeal and earnestness that too soon betrayed his purpose, as the embers, as if by accident, were entirely raked out and quenched.

“This will not do,” said he, as the quivering flame subsided, and at last totally expired. “I must get candles; my store is below stairs—I shall not be absent a moment.”

When he left the room, which was now quite dark, the soldier was positive, *that this time* the door, when it closed after him, was really locked, and the key withdrawn. Starting up, he rushed to the door, and pulling it forcibly, assured his senses of the fact.—He smiled, and quietly reseated himself.—“What can he mean? Does he fear I may rob him in his absence? or does he mean to try that trick on me? Let him if he choose! I have two friends here that I have not yet introduced to him, who will

not see me injured!"—and he grasped firmly a brace of pocket-pistols concealed beneath his coat, and waited patiently for the returning step of his extraordinary entertainer.

When Steevens was last dwelling in Drogheda, every house, street, face, and walk, was familiar and beloved as his own home and brethren. Twenty-five years, a fragment of a century, had gone over, and he was entrapped, confined in a base den in the purlieus—an unknown, disregarded alien, with distrust and melancholy fastening on his heart, in lieu of the joy and welcome from expectant friends he had vainly anticipated.‡

Successive trains of ideas were moving gradually more slowly and measured through his mind, from the absence of external objects to excite their corresponding images, and sleep began to steal upon his wearied frame, sealing up the fountains of thought and sensation, when a sound, as of a suppressed and regular breathing at the opposite end of the apartment, put to instant flight the approaches of repose, and like a trumpet blast, roused him to energy and action.

He sprang from the chair on which he had been sinking into slumber, and endeavoured to thread his way through the labyrinth of incumbrances towards the direction the sound seemed to indicate; but at that instant, a footstep was heard upon the outer lobby, the door was thrown open, and a glare of light, bright, powerful and sudden, as the uplifted footlights of a proscenium, kindled up every object in the room, and diverted his attention from further pursuing his investigation. His host had returned, preceding a domestic—an elderly, austere female, who carried a large tray, laden with glasses, wax candles, cold meats, and wine, served with more neatness and taste than the appearance of the dwelling would warrant, who set them on the table, and directing one look of peculiar searching meaning at her master's guest, silently withdrew.

"Come, now, and drink a glass of wine with me, after all the ill-natured things you said upon your way here; but I forgive you; my own appearance (and he looked round his room with some pride) is, I am glad to say, the worst of my possessions—your health, and welcome!

The soldier moved over, and somewhat cheered at the prospect of a good supper and old wines, sat down in the friendly spirit of the invitation, and pouring out a bumper, smiled at his host, who placed himself opposite him, and behind the light. "A promise of this bottle would have kept me closer than that lock twice bolted. By-the-by, what did you intend, when you left me just now, by turning your parlour into a guard-room? You locked me in."

"'Twas but from habit, then; I treat all my customers so; but



how like you your entertainment and lodging?—You are not eating, nor do you seem inclined to drink either.”

“Nay, I am freely employed at both. The style of your abode, and the repast you have served up, are such as I have seldom fallen in with; but the variety of articles here, all old and worn, look all like legacies bequeathed by the dead whom you have furnished with their narrow houses—grouped together in awful and solemn assembly. Are they really gifts from your departed friends?”

The proprietor gave no answer, and by his instant change of colour, seemed to disrelish the remark.

“But however, your extensive acquaintance with those who have gone before us on the last long march, may aid you in answering a question I wish to put concerning a very near relative, the only one, indeed, left me in this world, whose death I have heard reported; but the correctness of the rumour I have invariably distrusted.—Can you say with certainty, does William Steevens yet live in this town? You must have known him—Steevens, the draper, in the High-street? I hear he left the town long since, and fear he went to the bad.”

“I will consult my books, and inform you if his name be registered on my list.”

He arose, unlocked a large folio volume in black funereal binding, and running over his private alphabetical reference, turned to the given page, and without reading the entries on the leaf, marked the place with ribbon, and closed the book again, questioning, as he did so, his guest fiercely and abruptly:

“And so, you too are interested in this man’s life or death! Who are you—and what has brought you home?—What has brought you *here* at this unlucky moment? Are not you his youngest brother, the soldier—the life that I was told had long since dropped in the lease of Magallen, which the old Lord Dunlea made to your father—into the purchase of which farm I have been cheated?”

“My brother’s breath, if yet he draws it in this troubled world, shall not disturb you in possession: the ground you speak of has been too unfortunate to all our family ever to tempt us to re-settle on it. I have had a hard and rugged road myself to tread through life, ’tis nearly over now, and all I wish is to sink quietly into the grave without strife or contention with my kind.”

The solemn and quiet tone, in which the veteran confessed the gentle spirit of resignation that reigned in his heart, appeared to sink into the soul of the crafty and designing wretch who had enticed him into the house, and for an instant staggered the resolution that was beginning to gleam from his piercing and bloodthirsty eyes. “But how can the interest have reverted to Lord Dunlea, when you yet live? You are the third original

life, even admitting that your brother's has dropped, as your father's surely has, these some years back—and you his heir have now returned to dispossess me, man, I see it plainly. The title that I purchased on, from the scheming agent, is defective, and you stand between me and my right."

"You give me information of my own legal claim to my father's property that I have hitherto been ignorant of, for I was a boy when I enlisted and went abroad, and of course knew nothing of his affairs. My brother's mysterious disappearance from his home, an account of which reached me some short time before my father died, is yet no proof of his demise, and now answer me; how came you to challenge me for William Steevens's brother?"

"The likeness—"

"You knew him well then, you confess; what is your own opinion of his fate?"

"That your own may be similar; but come, we will talk of business in the morning, at present I am weary and feel disposed to sleep, you will find a couch within there, what say you to occupy it?"

"If it were as hard and narrow as one of your own 'wooden surtouts' I should stretch myself upon it willingly."

"Then we will try it; come—"

Holding one of the branch-lights, he led his guest to the end of the apartment next the window and most remote from the door, drawing down the thick double-blind of the former as he approached, and pointing to a sofa, intrenched between two ponderous and lofty presses, which afforded scarcely sufficient space to the traveller to extend himself at full length. He waited until he had lain down, and then opening the wardrobe beside him, which when lowered formed a couch, he extinguished the taper, and stretched his limbs to sleep.

The soldier, though fatigued, did not sink into that ready slumber which a consciousness of comfort and security so quickly lulls the senses, into he still distrusted his host; he had disliked him from the first, and the burst of passion into which he was betrayed, when on discovering the character and identity of guest, continued to excite and fan the flame of suspicion, that yet smouldered in the mind of Steevens. He listened, the room was dark, and still, and hushed; the breathing of his neighbour, was of one in the enjoyment of regular and tranquil repose, and yet, he was not satisfied; he examined his weapons, and the click of the spring, as he half-cocked each pistol, echoed through the room, with a report startling and doubly loud, from the intense silence and quietude of the place.

"I must remain awake," thought he, "and perhaps tis better. I can fancy myself once more an outlying picket."

Some three-quarters of an hour might have elapsed, when his vigilance was stung to its highest pitch, by distinctly hearing his host rise from the couch, and creep with silent pace, as if, like Lear's horseman, he was "shod with felt," to the far corner of the room whispering in accents that would be almost inaudible in the echoing gallery of St. Paul's cathedral—"Now!" The signal was responded to by a creaking on the floor, and a suppressed yawn, as when one struggles with slumber and a sudden summons to awake; and then there was a voice, another and a strange one, yet whose accents fell on Steevens's ear, with a dim transitory sense of being heard before, and in another place; but all continued murky and dark as midnight.

"Well, what's the go now, that you stir me up before I have half slept off that poison, nicknamed usquebaugh, you dosed me with last night? What foul trick is on the cards now, old black knave?"

"Only a turn, for which I hired you. You have done nothing lately to earn your peck. I have a birdasleep here, a *goldfinch*; his singing must be stopped—that's all."

"Heartless, merciless villain! must we spill more——"

"Silence! [Sing small, my canary, or you will twist the hemp for your own neck. Where is your gratitude? Did I not find you starving in the streets of London; shivering in a snow-storm behind the pillars of St. Martin's church?"

"Yes, the devil sent you to my aid, when I had no other prospect of help on earth; and the twelve months I had spent cab-driving and drinking at 'The King of Denmark' left me apt enough for your work. What have I come to! You knew me well, what I once was, here in my own town."

"Why, a runaway bankrupt woollen-draper was not a bad beginning, to——"

"End with turning out a common murderer. But I was honest and respected once."

Of this dialogue Steevens had been an earnest auditor; and, fully aware of his danger, and the odds against him, yet felt as tranquil and resolved as ever he did under fire at broad noon. He addressed a prayer of gratitude to Heaven that his assassins had not found him sleeping, and watched the slightest sound that give notice of their approach.

At this moment a faint gleam of light glided along the room, which for an instant illumined and revealed two figures, one of whom was raising a small trap-door in the recess beneath the window, while his confederate, who held a small sharp axe, was employed in turning the flame that flickered in a dark lantern, which was immediately covered, and the momentary brightness quenched.

The impossibility of rolling off the couch on either side was

evident to Steevens, escape being cut off by the lofty wardrobe that hemmed him in ; but no time was given now to deliberate ; he heard the breathing of his foes near him—and nearer—he sprang up, swerving aside from the levelled blow, that passed his shoulder, and guided by the *whiz* of his assailant's weapon, fired. There was a heavy fall—the soldier leaped through the smoke, after his second foe, who had retreated from his attack, and dashed him to the ground ; then seizing the lantern, he held it full over the face of the man who had fallen beneath his fire—it was his host—shot through the lungs, but not yet dead. He pointed to the other assassin, who was now endeavouring to rise, and motioned to Steevens to stoop and speak with him ; his conqueror did so. The dying man grasped him convulsively round the neck, and hissing into his ears—

“ Kill him too, for he is your missing *brother*,” fell back dead, his lifeblood gushing forth upon his slayer, as he gasped those thrilling words.

In horror and dismay Steevens now held up the light, and gazed upon the livid countenance of the trembling wretch before him.

“ Your name ? ”

“ Will Steevens.”

“ Of ”—

“ Magallen, formerly ”—

“ My miserable brother, indeed ! You might have been a fratricide ! ”—And the hand which a moment before had been raised in hostility, was now extended in friendship and reconciliation.

Long and speechless was the agony of the repentant criminal, as he wept over his strangely-found and long-absent brother. The thoughts of the years that had intervened since their first separation, and the event that coloured the retrospect with the sable hues of remorse and guilt—the memory of their parents now mouldering in the grave, their alienated home, and the startling change from the open innocence of boyhood to manhood's stern and world-worn character, swelled in the minds of both ; and the wild and thrilling yearning of their hearts, heaved forth at last in a deep sigh, melted into tears.

“ But, William, you must fly : the voice of justice will soon be yelling for you. To the magistrates here must I at once account for that miscreant's death. Take my purse—it is well filled with gold—begone, and seek a foreign country, where under another name you may earn an honest character, and the forgiveness of Heaven.—Farewell ! ”

“ Should I not rather stay, and on the scaffold meet the fate of the murderer's accomplice ? But our family, you would say ! Well, I will fly : yet before I leave for ever, let me confess—

though the tale is too hideous!—Beneath that trap-door a vault is sunk, deeper than the river's bed, whose flood has often swept into its sepulchre. Many a poor traveller, trepanned into this house by your blood-stained victim, has—oh, brother, pray for pardon for me!—I dare not ask it myself—”

He walked to the window, and letting himself down into the river that flowed beneath, dropping with a loud splash, swam the current to the opposite bank, and escaped into the mountains.

When morning dawned, the municipal authorities were apprised by Steevens of the transactions of the preceding night. The vault was penetrated into; some bleached and fractured human bones were discovered, which corroborated the accomplice's testimony, and explained the mysterious disappearance of several solitary travellers, who had been traced into the town, and never heard of after.

The murderer's corse was buried in unhallowed ground; his effects disposed of by auction, and the proceeds divided among the destitute of the neighbourhood—while, by universal acclamation, the house, the theatre of such treacherous and bloody deeds, was razed to its foundation.

Insufficient evidence being adduced to implicate the female servant in her master's guilt, she was discharged, but was obliged to leave the town, and seek a settlement in another country.

Steevens soon after recovered possession of his paternal property, and lived long, respected and beloved. Still his days, though peaceful, rolled away heavily, for he was alone; and often while sitting over his solitary hearth, sipping old port from a silver tankard, while the winter wind moaned without, he would sigh for the cheerful bivouac, and jest and flowing can of his comrades; and deemed the hardships of his past career more joyous and exciting than the ease and indolent enjoyments of his declining days, which he reckoned as too dearly purchased by the adventures of that night he spent with the COFFIN-MAKER OF DROGHEDA.

TWO SATURDAYS.

A SKETCH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE LOLLARDS," GEORGE GODFREY,
"THE SELF-CONDEMNED." &C.

I HAVE often thought that two well-remembered Saturdays, many years apart, on which my mind was occupied with affairs relative to the same individuals, were so remarkably distinct from each other, that they might be worth describing, and placing in juxta position.

Staying for a few days at the house of a friend in London, I one morning heard a gentle tap at my door, an hour or two earlier than my usual time of rising, and on demanding who was there, a female voice replied in a low but most significant tone,

"Do not be alarmed—it is Mrs. Hadley. I only wish to remind you that this is *Saturday*, and you know what is to take place to-day."

"Certainly, madam," said I. "You will see me below shortly."

And with most determined resolution, which by the way is necessary to launch a drowsy man from his warm bed at an early hour, into the bustle of a new day, I started up, performed my ablutions, and hastened down.

The day was really one of some interest, as Mrs. Hadley's only daughter was to be married; and I, in character of father, was to give the bride at the altar to my friend Rollins.

It was the whim of the parties, though all the world approved of the match, to have the ceremony managed as slyly as if there had been the regular dramatic array of avaricious fathers, snarling uncles, and indignant guardians, opposed to it.

Such being the case—breakfast over, we slipped out as if for a morning walk, made a pedestrian advance to the nearest coach stand, and were thence presently transported to a church in the suburbs, where, as I took upon myself facetiously to remark when the clergyman had finished, the young lady soon lost her good name, and Miss Hadley was no more.

Our retreat from the church was effected as quietly as our advance to it had been. We met at the dinner-table other members of the family who were not in the secret. The mother,

the bridegroom, and the bride, were excessively entertained by some allusions to the business of the morning which I ventured to throw out, and which must have been singularly clever, as they did not produce even a smile from the rest of the party, so nicely did I manage to guard against witticism being too obvious. We got through the day, in fact, without exciting any suspicion. On the next, the marriage was announced in due form.

Now for the second Saturday :—

“ Time, whose haste no mortal spares,”

passed on, and the population of Great Britain had been increased by some eight or nine boys and girls in consequence of the union above described, when, early in September last year, I received a note from Rollins, announcing the death of his highly respected lady, and requesting me on the following *Saturday*, to follow to the grave her whom, seventeen years before, he had received from my hands at the altar.

On the day named, I repaired to that same house from which, on the occasion of the wedding, we had stolen to the coach. To me, the scene was deeply affecting; and my sorrow was augmented by those youthful mourners who attended, of whom were present on the *former Saturday*. “ Could we have foreseen,” thought I, “ that such a train of weepers would have been produced by the event in which we then exulted, how greatly would our satisfaction have decreased!” Alas! human joy—so frail in its foundation—so evanescent in itself—could seldom endure for an hour if man were endowed with prescience!

Other individuals, met my eye whom I had not lately encountered, but whom I knew to be old friends of the family. Three of these, who were at the first-named period mere lads, now came before me as set men :—they were then giddy romping boys. One, now a barrister, exhibited all that solemnity of manner which passes among young practitioners at the bar for dignity—another, that steadfast, scrutinizing air which belongs to an officer of some standing in the excise; while the third, who was formerly a lathy stripling of a clerk, had by the lapse of seventeen years been ripened into a corpulent, well-disciplined attorney.

Hat-bands, cloaks, and gloves, were now supplied. I could not help remarking the celerity with which the medical gentleman put on his cloak, and the superior dignity and grace with which he wore it. To me it was quite evident that he had had very considerable practice.

We entered the coaches. I looked round to see the sable train. The nodding plumes on the horses' heads—the attendants with their black wands and batons on either side—and the crowd of

idle spectators—formed a striking spectacle. I reflected that we had no such display, and had attracted no such notice, on the former Saturday; and felt, in that moment, all the difference, between unostentatious mirth and the stately pageantry of woe.

Just as the procession began to move towards its destination the proprietor of a street organ thought fit to strike up “Home, sweet home!” I can scarcely define my feelings, but there was something in this accidental circumstance extremely touching.

In due time we reached the place of interment. We entered the church, and the clergyman commenced *his* part. The affecting service was so affectedly delivered, that to me it sounded quite ridiculous. The door was frequently opened by persons coming in while this was in progress, and the pulley being deranged, made a strangely inharmonious noise, which at first I really thought was the cackling of a gander. The reverend gentleman, I could half fancy, had the same idea, for more than once he looked angrily towards the door like one resolved to

“Bear, like the Turk, *no brother* near the throne.”

When we approached the grave, and the coffin had been lowered to its final resting place, my attention was arrested by the technical inquiry of the grave digger—who, having scrambled up a handful of earth, demanded of the undertaker if it were “a *brother* or a *sister*.” The proper answer was given, forwarded by him through the clerk to the minister, and the ceremony was completed.

I shall not proceed with the history of the second Saturday, further than to state, that we all, on reaching his house, attacked poor Rollins with such a series of consolatory speeches, that I think his fortitude must have been severely tried. Of that excellent quality he, however, naturally possesses a very considerable share, and it enabled him on this occasion to endure our comfort. I may, perhaps, be allowed to add, that he declared he should, unlike many who lose their wives, be in no haste to marry again. On the last day of November he still remained single. I shall not mention a report which reached me early in the ensuing month.

A WORD OR TWO ABOUT GEOFFREY GOOCH.

BY CHARLES WHITEHEAD,

AUTHOR OF "THE CAVALIER," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

THERE is a street a considerable distance down Oxford-street, on the right hand, in which the number of shops bears no proportion to the quantity of private houses. The old established shop for the sale of hosiery and woollen goods—a shop rendered noticeable by a gilded sheep suspended from its spine over the threshold—had been for many years carried on by my father; and in this street, and in this house, on the first of November, and in the year of the scarcity of bread, did I, Geoffrey Gooch, first see the light—or rather the darkness—of existence,—the son and heir, and as it afterwards appeared, the only child, of Mr. Gregory Gooch, and Mellicent his wife.

I am no fatalist, and extend no faith to the doctrine of necessity; and moreover, I cannot concur in the belief expressed by a certain unfortunate wight, that, were he to turn hatter, people would be born without heads: and yet I cannot but think, that Fortune, who so often smiles upon the undeserving, as frequently casts malignant leers at some more worthy creatures who do not happen to have any small change of luck about them.

Even from my birth, a special gloom overhung my infant pericranium. My earliest lamentations portended future cause for them; and old Roger Hine, the optician and astrologic experimenter, after probing, and poring, and perplexing himself over my horoscope, pronounced the configuration of the stars to be decidedly unsatisfactory and "queer;" and upon being pressed to furnish further revelations, turned restive and snappish, and dumb-founded the querists by discharging a volley of cabalistic occultations.

A straw thrown up will show which way the wind blows. Even so the lesser casualties attendant upon my infancy were, I doubt not, typical of my trials in reserve. I turned more summersets down stairs than were ever grinned at the theatre. I was put out—extinguished—or, to speak technically, I was "got

under" I know not how often. If any one was to be scalded, Geoffrey Gooch was always at hand, and my fingers knew the relative degree of sharpness of every knife in the house.

Let me not be prolix concerning puerilities. What could have induced my father to cause me to be apprenticed to him, is a matter that was never correctly ascertained. Why he should have plunged me, as it were, into indentures to himself, is a mystery that no time will unravel. The ostensible object of apprenticeship is to learn a business; but in this case there was no business to learn. We neither carried on business, nor were carried on by it. Some persons, indeed, were complacent enough to whisper about the neighbourhood that we did a snug trade; but it must be confessed that it was so ultra snug, that we had it all to ourselves. The fact is, our shop was one of those old established concerns about which people had long established a determination not to concern themselves. It lacked the spirit of the age. It had no life about it. There was a listless, supine, flabby, preterpluperfect look about our hosiery, which contrasted most disadvantageously with the spick-and-span ready-money air of the same articles in Oxford-street. In a word, our shop had degenerated—lost caste—and had now become one of that class of shops which are kept open solely for the convenience and instruction of casual foot-passengers, who enter to inquire the way.

I have said that in the street of my nativity there was no proportion kept between the shops and the private houses, the latter being greatly more numerous.

Some might naturally have surmised that our end of the street was much beholden to the more aristocratical portion. But, lord! there could be no greater mistake: ours was one of those numerous streets at the west end of the town with an almost interminable vista of houses—octogenarian edifices—always occupied—never to be let—handsomely furnished, and yet the tenants whereof no human eye had seen. Domestics were sometimes visible; but whom they served men saw not. It was said that the rent lagged not in arrear, and that the taxes were forthcoming, but whence the funds were derived was a problem that admitted not of solution. The first renters of these tenements were the originals of the portraits to be seen in the brokers' shops near Soho and Newport-market; and the sedan still preserved at the corner public-house was an evidence that the street had fallen into desuetude.—The neighbourhood was Hogarthian.

In due course of time (for even old Parr himself was compelled at length to pay his long out-standing account to that inexorable scythe-proctor), my mother gave up the ghost, and was quickly followed by my father, who rendered up the sprite also. And it was at this juncture, when I came to look into affairs that were

now properly my own, that my respect for the estimable qualities of the old gentleman very sensibly decreased. Yes, I must confess that if I had in the first instance contemplated a marble tablet in the parish church to the memory of my deceased parent, the appalling state of the accounts, as now for the first time disclosed to me, must have checked any extreme impatience on my part to issue orders for such marmorean memento. His querulousness at quarter-day was now readily accounted for; as well as the rigour with which of late years he had advocated the repeal of the assessed taxes, and the blaspheming energy (when the water-rate was called for) with which he was wont to anathematize Sir Hugh Middleton and his descendants in a right line for ever. What a prospect was now opened before me! It is true, I was well aware that the old gentleman had not hoarded much of late years, but I naturally expected to find some available and come-at-able assets, the fruit of former seasons. Let me hasten over the sickening details of this selfish and prolonged proceeding. Suffice it, my father, who had been considered warm during his life, was discovered, when he died, to be otherwise. The truth is, he had been living genteelly on his capital for some years past: during this period he despatched his meals, smoked his pipe, drank his grog, and performed all the functions of humanity with much apparent pleasure. The day came, and was provided for.

“He slept the next night well,—was free and merry;”

and thus, Gregory superseded Geoffrey, and the balance in the hands of the latter, when all liabilities were paid, was found on the demise of the former to be so inconsiderable, that Geoffrey could not but be impressed with the conviction that his father had died in the right time.

My determination to retire from a business towards which I had never extended much regard, was confirmed a few months after my domestic bereavement. I had engaged a most respectable person as a foreman—partly to watch the counter during my absence, and partly to give the world assurance of reviving energy in our establishment. This person, it would seem, had received advices from a Transatlantic friend, that a small capital, judiciously managed in the city of New York, might be speedily converted into a large one. In accordance with this friendly intimation, my enterprising assistant retired one night from my service, burdening himself with my cash-box and the contents of the till, and leaving on my desk an extremely neat and well-expressed letter of apology, with regrets that he was compelled so suddenly to take my money and his own leave.

The contents of this letter decided me. I instantly disposed

of the lease, fixtures, and stock (I charged nothing for the goodwill), and taking apartments on a second floor, retired for a while from what is termed active life, to muse over my future prospects, and on the trials that awaited me for the time to come.

CHAPTER II.

There is nothing in this life more difficult, when a man's means are rapidly melting away, than to support the quiet dignity of a private gentleman. So many things occur to ruffle one's temper, and to cause one to discard Chesterfield from the memory. It is then, also, that we perceive the almost exclusive worship that is paid to mammon, and discover that, of whatever faith a man professes himself to be, the religion of nine-tenths of mankind is *£ s. d.*-ism. For my part, although my finances were on the wane, I had too much pride to apply to friends who would do nothing for me. Besides, I was young, and sanguine, and thought of relying on my talents (for I had acquired a literary turn), of standing on my own merits, and, in a word, of living by my wits. Alas! I have since discovered the truth of Dryden's assertion, that

"Great wits to madness nearly are allied!"

And I believe the relationship is never so close, as when they expect a livelihood to issue through the fissures of their moon-distempered skulls. A short experience, I say, taught me the futility of these expectations; and as the physical machine must by no means be suffered to stop, I was under the necessity of inserting several advertisements in the leading journals, wherein I expatiated on the completeness of my moral fittings-up—dilated on my many and various intellectual acquirements, and requested to be installed as private secretary to some private gentleman—whether going abroad or staying at home.

There is nothing more to be deprecated than the senseless apathy of the metropolitan public. Will it be believed that the many times repeated announcement of the existence of a modern Crichton, ready and willing to condescend to the wretched routine of the desk, was treated, if not with scorn, with neglect; and that the journals containing so thrilling a piece of intelligence were filed at the coffee-houses with an ignorant calmness by the besotted waiters, and ruthlessly de-filed by the vulgar vendibles of the cheesemonger?

But accident accomplished what my own exertions had utterly failed of obtaining. My landlady, with a prescience peculiar to "lone" women who keep lodging-houses, had deemed that I was not likely to prove for the future so unexceptionable an inmate

as heretofore. She had, as it were, "smelt the battle afar off," and knew that a species of monetary warfare must inevitably take place between us, if I tarried longer in her premises. She was, indeed, inclined to give me credit—for the most upright and honourable intentions; but, for any thing else, she was very sorry—but; [I hate this *but*-end of a plea—there is no reasoning against it. To proceed, however.]

It was with no ordinary complaisance my landlady gave me to understand, that a gentleman in the neighbourhood was desirous of securing the services of some expert and amiable amanuensis. She was certain I was just the person to suit—she was confident that the gentleman would be too happy to engage me—and although she should very much regret the loss of so quiet and correct a lodger, yet, that regret would be much increased if, from any momentary feeling of selfishness on her part, I lost so valuable an appointment. So saying, the good lady bestowed upon me one of her most elaborate courtesies, handed me the gentleman's card, and with a generous and gratuitous smirk retired.

It was with no slight feeling of trepidation that I went forth to encounter the visual scrutiny of the erudite Mr. Uther Pendragon. Report had predisposed me to quake at the imposing outline of his mysterious person; whilst surmise had been busy in extending the scope of his learning beyond terrestrial bounds. Nor was the primary glimpse of this studious scholar, which I ventured to snatch on my first introduction, calculated to allay the alarm with which I had been impressed. Mr. Uther Pendragon was a tall, gaunt, flap-eared individual, with a nose like the beak of a raven, and a mouth which, of more than sufficient natural width, was momentarily drawn to a frightful length by some habitual or nervous action, disclosing a set of elephantine teeth, whose unearthly whiteness set off to the worst advantage the dingy darkness of his sallow jaws. He was clad in sable of more than ordinary blackness, and the creaking of his shoes was of itself portentous.

"Ha!" cried he in a loud prevailing voice, as I sneaked into the room, having previously despatched an aged female domestic to announce my name and business—"Ha! you are the young man of whose character and acquirements Mrs. Flint (an unexceptionable female) enunciated so laudatory a synopsis. Make yourself sedentary. A chair is proximate."

I obeyed with fear and trembling.

"The individual by me desiderated," he continued, "should, in the first place, be an expert chirographer: you write legibly? Cadmus would not cavil at your performance, were he still extant?"

I ventured to hope that he would not.

“Good,” cried Pendragon. “Have you a lofty and comprehensive soul?”

Here was a question with which I felt some difficulty in grappling. I mumbled, however, my conviction that my soul was of a somewhat expansive turn.

“A spirit cast in the heroic and chivalrous mould?” added my examiner.

“The days of chivalry are past,” said I deferentially, “but”—

“Oh! no,” cried Pendragon, through his set teeth, and shaking his head, as one who speaks from authority.

“But,” I added, “I recognise something in me of that fire—spark at least.”

“Then, is there a congeniality—a homogeneity of sentiment that augurs favourably of our future intercourse. And why,” he added, starting to his feet, “should I not incontinently make you cognizant of the onerous duty you will have to fulfil? Behold!” and the speaker drew from a closet a huge folio volume, and approached me; “here is the congenial labour of twenty years—take it;” but as I stretched forth my hand with a view of grasping the precious manuscript (for such it was), the author suddenly withdrew it, and shot his bullet eyes into my very soul.—“Perpend one moment, I implore you,” said he, “what you are about to undertake: here is the veritable, credible, authentic history of King Arthur, of his Knights of the Round Table, and of the Round Table itself; a work, the similitude of which the world’s eye shall not again speedily light upon: be it yours (for I am one of those erratic and eccentric spirits to whose inspirations, grammar, orthography, yea, sense itself are oftentimes sacrificed), be it yours to repair these trivial lapses—be it yours to clothe in graceful and succinct vernacular the literary giant I have created; so shall you become, as it were, the granite pedestal to my marble statue—so shall you be the subservient tool of me, the predominant artist. Be it notified unto you, that I am lineally descended from my hero: the masculine parent of King Arthur was cognominally furnished like myself—he also was a Pendragon.”

Having concluded this elaborate speech, the scholiast luxuriated in one of those longitudinal grins peculiar to him, and laid with much solemnity the invaluable deposit before me.

“Be assured, sir,” said I, with appropriate feeling, “that my humble talents shall be tasked to the utmost to give you satisfaction in this most important labour.”

“I believe it,” said Pendragon condescendingly: “but mark me, Geoffrey, and listen to me, Gooch; I would not for the worth of spheres unknown tarnish that pure spirit of thine with much of the filthy dross which philosophy abhors—a little of which is not seldom too much for virtue and for peace. Know

you not, that my Lord Bacon has averred that 'money is the counters of wise men, and the money only of fools?'"

"He has so said," cried I, slightly aghast at this prospect of a restricted issue of specie; "but you must remember that his lordship was not alert at the practice of his own doctrines."

"True, true," exclaimed Pendragon with a grin, "a frail Mammonite. Bacon is, so to speak, a beacon to all youthful financial voyagers; and you must expect also in my domicile," he added, suddenly changing the subject, "the daily enforcement of a rigid temperance in diet worthy of the best days of self-denying philosophy. The hermit's root and crystal from the spring—"

I started, and I think, laid my hand upon the stomachic regions.

"Nay, nay," said my patron, with a grimly amiable smile, "I spake figuratively: we live, and that too, sufficingly, and shall, doubtless, strengthen in friendly concord. Go, therefore, and transport hither your wardrobe. I am about to take my diurnal ambulations."

As I proceeded towards my lodging, I could not but set down in my own mind my recent acquaintance for one of those benevolent originals who affect a backwardness of purse and provision in order that their generous tendencies may shine with a more brilliant, because with a more unexpected lustre. Fraught with these favourable sentiments, I returned my most grateful thanks to Mrs. Flint for her humane introduction of me, and taking leave of that excellent woman, obtained a shilling's worth of physical power in the shape of a brawny porter, and soon found myself at the threshold of my new abode.

"I'll tell you what, young man," said the aged female domestic whom I have before mentioned, and who, having followed me to the sleeping-room allotted to me, committed herself to the doubtful stability of a crazy chair in a corner of the apartment. "I'll tell you what, young man, you come into this house with a smiling countenance—but I'm thinking, you'll look more pleasant when you leave it."

"What do you mean, my good woman?" said I carelessly, unloading my trunk with much activity.

"Why, I mean," said the garrulous antique, "it's impossible for you to stay here for long. Master's the stingiest old file as ever spoilt another man's knife to skin a flint with. You'll get no vittels here, I can tell you, nor nothing else as is worth having. Ah! you may stare," continued the sibyl, taking a pinch of Scotch snuff from a tin box, "but you'll find it's as I say. Why, Lord love you, he gets his own dinner at the eating-house in next street, and every afternoon he gets something out of a bottle which he keeps in the parlour closet. As for the things

he sends in for us, you never see the likes of 'em. I thinks of going back to the work'us. I can't abear this no how."

The sympathetic reader may imagine the state of extra-mystified stupefaction into which these disclosures threw me. Seated motionless on my trunk, I had no power to return verbal reply to the ancient woman's narrative of iniquity. Judging that my silence was the effect of unsatisfied curiosity, the old domestic thus proceeded in a low but distinct whisper.

"Now, listen you 'here for a moment, Mr. Gooch. There was a young youth as come here some months ago, with a cheek like a rose, and a smile on his face, just as you might have had when *you* came. He was to copy out some fool's nonsense as master has been a scribbling about King Arthur and his round table. (I hope he put more upon it than old Pen does upon his, eh?) Well, from that moment he set foot over the threshold, he fell away, and pined, and lost all his colour, and grizzled (he had no friends), and took to his bed; it's a queer 'un for any one to take to—there it is, you're to sleep in it if you can—and when they put him in his coffin, I'll be upon my oath, no one would have known him to be the same lad. There, now, what do you think of that?"

This recital, I need scarcely remark, made a deep impression upon me; and yet for three months did I, day by day, suffer the truth of the old woman's statement to be practically exemplified and enforced upon my person. I found that Pendragon was, indeed, a stingy old file. I discovered that he did browse luxuriously at the adjoining eating-house, and his post-meridian potations in the closet were duly noted and mentally commented upon. And, oh! the "last infirmity" of slender and vapid broths to which I was subject, and to which "master" himself, to save appearances, sat down; and the anomalous messes, nameless stews, made of apocryphal beef, with which was consorted take-it-for-granted or *petitio principii* mutton—these must never depart from the mind, "while memory holds a seat (or even is permitted standing-room) in this distracted globe."

Nor had I reason to object to the critical exactness of the aged domestic when she designated Pendragon's literary labours, fool's nonsense. They were truly such wild and disjointed rhapsodies as none but a maniac should have been employed to reduce to paper and fitting order.

At length, when I came to that chapter of Pendragon's history which treated of the diameter of the round table, and began to reflect upon the chapter of accidents, and measure the circumference of my own body (two spans and a half), I decided in my own mind, that this merely life-lingering state—this state of animation in suspense, which threatened suspended animation, must cease—must end. It was one day, after a Barmecidal

feast, outraged by the name of dinner, which, not to speak of physical disturbances, always raised a degree of cholera within me foreign to my nature, that I proposed to inform my patron that Uther Pendragon and Geoffrey Gooch must henceforth be dissociated. Methought he lingered longer in the closet than usual, and when he stepped out of that convenient refectory, the smack of his lips was followed by a more than ordinary reverberation.

“My good Geoffrey,” said he, with one of his accustomed grins, “you have been now for a considerable period domiciliated beneath my roof. I opine, nay, I think I may certify myself, that you have indulged in a continuous gyration, in an unceasing round of felicity, during that space. You have, I cannot doubt, found every thing to your mind.”

“I have found,” I returned with some asperity, “very little that was acceptable to the body, and I must say, sir, that your mode of living is altogether repulsive to organs which are commonly called *digestive*, but which, in my case, may properly be termed *suggestive*—since they have done nothing but intimate to me the purposes for which they are especially fitted.”

“Dietary indulgences,” quoth Pendragon, “are not only sinful, but pernicious, and should by no means be yearned after; but if hitherto there has been an undue defalcation in the prandary department, that deficiency shall no longer be permitted to insult the domestic board. I have said it: but hearken unto me. You have frequently by me been called upon to transcribe sundry epistolary missives to a certain Parthenope Puddicombe, a lady for whom Hymen has never yet been invited to kindle his inflammable torch. You are of an incommunicating habit of soul?”

“Remarkably so,” said I, much marvelling at this unaccustomed turn of discourse.

“Then thus it is with me,” continued my companion; “I am one of those who loathe lucre; but a perfect lack of it breeds, believe me, ('tis human nature!) a perfect love of it. I am one of those who, like the young fellow in the old play, have not landed property enough to furnish a salad for a grasshopper. But, Geoffrey Gooch, this well-portioned Puddicombe has acres; dirty, perhaps, but productive, certain. Consols, also, that vegetate in the Bank, of which, and in which, the owner takes an interest once a quarter. Now, Gooch, I am beloved—I feel that deeply—but I have a rival; a mean, contemptible, but a most assiduous suitor. Him must I despatch!”

“How?” said I, in considerable alarm: “Despatch him?”

“What! think you, base-born transcriber,” cried the historian, “that Uther Pendragon will wave his amatory claims in favour of Simon Pimpnel,—a drug-dispenser, a blister-

spreader, a pestle-pounding apothecary? But down, down, thou ancestral *animus*! My spirit is too turbulent for these degenerate days. Bear this challenge, worthy Geoffrey, to this presumptuous druggist. He will not venture to encounter a trial by battle. Last night I weighed his valour and found it wanting. Last night this glance caused him to quail with very terror. Last night these brows bent him into a hound-like slinking from her and from my presence. He will relinquish his preposterous aspirations. I shall cause the heart of Miss Parthenope Puddicombe to capitulate. You shall in no fractional degree participate in my prosperous fortune; and with song and dance—with madrigal and corants—shall our wedding be illustrated!”

“But suppose,” I ventured to suggest, “Mr. Pimpernel should—”

“Extravagant suppositions,” interrupted Pendragon, “indicate a defeat of, or a deviation from, reason. Pimpernel, be satisfied, is not pugnacious. He will eat the pie of humility—he will, in due time, quaff Lethean waters; and, however much he may now dote on Miss Puddicombe, he will be enforced, with some strong oblivious anti-*dote*, (a pun, Geoffrey,) drawn, perhaps, from his own simples, to wash her from his memory. Begone, therefore, with this summons to the realms of death.—A Pendragon here defies him.”

At the conclusion of this knightly sally, the speaker slowly raised himself to his full height, and marching towards the closet, buried himself therein for a considerable period.

Lifting the almost combustible epistle from the table, I sought my hat without further expostulation, and forthwith carried the letter to its destination, flattering myself by the way with the prospective advantages held out to me by the puissant, but penurious Uther Pendragon.

CHAPTER III.

“Well, our trusty and well-beloved squire,” cried my patron, with a romantic air, as I entered his presence, having fulfilled the martial behest committed to me; “and you have flung our defiance in the teeth of this besotted person?”

“I have, sir,” said I; “and I have now the pleasure to place in your hands Mr. Simon Pimpernel’s answer.”

“Ere I glance over the abject withdrawal of his ill-advised pretensions,” exclaimed Pendragon, “satisfy my auriculars with a description of the manner in which he received my mortal communication.”

“I will do so, sir, as briefly as may be. I found the gentleman at home, seated in his back parlour. He broke the seal of your letter hastily, and, methought, as he perused its contents, he changed colour.”

“Ho, ho!” exclaimed Pendragon, “a parsnip pallor—an ashen hue—a plaster-of-Paris tint?”

“No, sir, a bright scarlet, with a dash of lurid lightning.”

“Eh!” mumbled the descendant of King Arthur.

“When he had arrived at your imposing autograph,” I continued, not heeding the interruption, “he turned towards me, and inquired my name and quality; and being informed that I was your private secretary, politely handed me a seat, and retired to a contiguous closet.”

“To fortify and reinforce the inward Pimpernel,” exclaimed Pendragon with a grin of triumph; “transparent subterfuge—diaphanous design!”

“Nay, sir,” said I, calmly, “not so: your own practice has caused you to misunderstand your rival’s retreat into that recess.”

Pendragon looked blank at this home squeeze of the neck of his spirit-bottle, but I presently continued—

“Issuing from the closet, he bore in his hands a mahogany case, which, on being opened, discovered a *gemini* of pistols—a brace of—barkers, I think I have heard them called. He examined both minutely, and then, with much deliberation, pulled the trigger of each. Believe me, sir, the click of those deadly instruments jarred upon my very brain-pan.—But you are ill, sir!—Has aught disturbed you?”

“Nothing, nothing,” gasped the other, with a transitory smile such as idiots most affect: “go on, go on.”

“Taking up one of these patent death-dealers, he soliloquised thus:—‘It is now fourteen years since, with this pistol, and by this hand, he fell to rise no more! Poor Woodcock! But they all told me that he drew his fate upon himself. And now another victim! Why am I cursed with this unerring eye?’ And then, sir, he apologised to me for his sudden abstraction, and hastily scribbling the answer which I have handed to you, genteelly bowed me from the room, saying emphatically, as I left the door, ‘Be pleased to inform Mr. Pendragon that I shall be punctual.’”

I have observed during my life many contortions of the human face, and I know the infinite varieties of expression of which the physiognomy of man is susceptible: but it never was my chance to behold such sudden and such rapid deviations from regularity of feature, and to recognise so many nicely-different shades of white, as during the foregoing recital the visage of Pendragon presented. I must confess I was unprepared for this grim spectacle; but as I gazed upon him, I remembered the poet’s lines,—

“For men will tremble or turn paler,
With too much as too little valour!”

and I fondly imagined that our doughty champion was at this moment struggling with the excess, and not suffering from the deficiency, of that commodity.

I was, however, wrong in my conjecture. The clammy dew that settled upon his forehead; a fearful knocking together of the knees which threatened the dislocation of those serviceable joints; and the piteous groan with which, after a lengthened silence, the words "poor Woodcock" issued from his jaws, betokened that he was now wellnigh "distilled to jelly by the act of fear."

"Had you not better read Mr. Pimpernel's reply to your challenge?" I ventured to inquire.

"I will do so, Geoffrey," returned the wet quaker—for so might the perspiring Pendragon be called.—"Pardon me; I had forgot; I was thinking of something else;" and tearing open the seal with a desperate energy, his eye devoured the contents.

"He tells me," cried he, with a painful chuckle which inspired a momentary sympathy, "that he will meet me at Chalk Farm to-morrow morning at six o'clock.—I must meet him!"

"You must, sir: honour beckons."

"I *must* meet him, I say, Geoffrey!"

"Without question. The claims of honour are peremptory. Do you remember, sir, with what subtlety Falstaff sounds the depths and shallows of honour? and where he says 'Honour pricks me on; but how if honour prick me off when I come on?' Daily experience proves the forethought of Sir John in broaching such a contingency."

A grin of more than common extent and duration served as a reply to this malicious sally, and once more did Pendragon have recourse to the closet, from which a bottle was, as if by miracle, suddenly caused to appear.

"I prithee bring two glasses from the sideboard yonder," said Pendragon, "and let us imbibe a portion of this foreign spirit:" and so saying he seized one of the glasses ere I could well present it to him, and despatched a bumper, which although of a foreign spirit, methought he swallowed as one "native, and to the manner born."

"I could well have wished, were it a matter of my own ordering," resumed Pendragon with more calmness, after disposing of another glass, "that the joust or tournament were still a practice amongst us. I am prone to predicate that, cased in complete steel, armed with a lengthy and sharply-pointed lance, and mounted on a fire-snorting charger, I could speedily overthrow, even to the mastication of the dust, that corpulent impersonation—that human kilderkin, Simon Pimpernel. But now, of what avail is valour! Courage and cowardice may walk arm in arm. Lead will not, nay, does not stay to discriminate; and the bullet of the

recreant may lodge in the fleshly tenement of a hero. Shall I meet him, Geoffrey Gooch? shall I grovel to an equality with him? Mine honour shouts into mine ears, No!"

"And yet, sir, it must be," I urged in a tone of remonstrance; "you yourself have invited the encounter, and cannot now recede with decent grace or dignity. Reflect, sir; your reputation is of more value to you than life itself; and even should you fall, you lie in the bed of honour."

"A bed," exclaimed Pendragon, "in which I have no present ambition to slumber:"—and here the cognac was again called into requisition.—"Counsel me, I beseech you, how I may break through the mesh in which I have involved myself."

"Your only course, Mr. Pendragon," said I solemnly, "is to take the field; to receive your adversary's fire; and should his ball (and his unerring eye will probably cause it to do so) derange some vital function, be it yours to die as befits a man of courage and of high descent. Why, sir, King Arthur would have fought a duel across his round table, and have thought very little of so mere a trifle."

"The fiends fly away with King Arthur and his orbicular table!" cried Pendragon; "was not Hector himself seized with panic when Achilles was at his heels; and may I not indulge a private qualmishness of my own? I'll be no prey to the pistol of Pimpernel—that's flat—as I should be were I to engage in this unequal combat. When I must discharge the debt of nature I will; but I'll not pay my shot to-morrow morning, depend on't. To sum up all with alliterative plainness—I have neither pleasure in this business, pistols to undertake, or pluck to perform it."

At this juncture the candid dastard became moody, thoughtful, and disturbed; and guessing that my presence was not required, I betook myself to the kitchen to while away the lingering hours till bedtime; and having taken part in a long and interesting conversation (touching the poltroon above stairs) with the aged domestic, I bade her good night, and retired to my couch, in which (for habit will even convert flint stones into feather beds) I soon fell into a deep sleep.

It was about midnight when, rudely grasped by the shoulder, one of those dreams of well-spread boards was dissipated—one of those tantalising visions which never visit any but hunger-bitten men, and then only to mock with unsatisfactory illusion;—and starting up in vague alarm, I beheld the spectral form of Pendragon hovering over me vulture-like; his rigid and cast-iron countenance pinched into an expression of repulsive and paltry woe perfectly contemptible. His left hand grasped convulsively a chamber candlestick, whilst the bird's claw digit of his dexter paw beckoned me to resume my perpendicular.

“Arise! arise! my faithful Geoffrey,” said he, “and that too without paying deference to any unnecessary formalities of toilet; I have a midnight commission for you, which you will, I feel, readily undertake. I have been grievously indisposed since you retired to your somniferous recreations, and require, and speedily, Esculapian aid.”

“Indeed, sir, I am grieved at your sudden illness,” said I, snatching up my stockings, which I soon succeeded in getting on, being a mile too large (part of my late stock, and I believe a mis-fit of Daniel Lambert when he was last shown in London), “wait with patience for a few minutes, and I’ll soon bring Dr. Drench to your relief.”

“No, no, not Drench—Pimpernel,” cried Pendragon, hastily, “he is the skilful leech best qualified to oppose himself to my complaint; progress yourself, therefore, instanter, towards the dwelling of Pimpernel. You will observe a night-bell on the right-hand doorpost. Salute him with a tintinnabulary clatter, such as would astound the ear-drum of a mummy. Away, worthy Gooch, away.”

“Well, but, my dear sir,” said I, following him down stairs, “you would not surely think of calling in a gentleman whom you have only this afternoon called out.”

“That witless vagary may be explained,” returned Pendragon, grinning on the landing-place; “only succeed in bringing Pimpernel hither, and a *douceur*, such as your eyeballs have not lately been fixed upon, shall be your reward.”

So saying, he retired into the dining-room, and I heard the cork screwed from the bottle, and the gurgling of Cognac, as it tumbled into the wine-glass.

For my part, albeit I felt reasonably sceptical touching the financial promises of Pendragon, I trotted away to the dwelling of Pimpernel; arrived at which place, I had recourse to the night-bell with a vigour that my patron himself, had he heard the sound, and he might almost have done so, would have approved. A head speedily projected itself from the second-floor window, enveloped in a nightcap, the tassel of which I could barely distinguish swaying to and fro, and the voice of Pimpernel made itself audible, crying,

“Hilloah! whose mare’s dead now? what’s the matter?”

“You’re wanted, sir,” I cried, in a key which might have opened the porch of a deaf man’s ear, “a gentleman dying in the next street—and he won’t die without a doctor—he thinks it shabby.”

“And very proper, too,” cried Pimpernel, as he shut the window. In less than five minutes the door opened, and the doctor appeared, buttoned up to the chin, his hat on his head, his cane in his hand, and perfectly ready to accompany me.

"Now," said he rapidly, "who's the patient? what's the complaint? who are you?"

"I am the person, doctor, who delivered a letter to you this day from Mr. Pendragon."

"Well, sir?"

"That gentleman is much indisposed, and requested me particularly to summon you to him without delay."

"Hem!" said the the doctor, "strange, queer. If he had waited till six o'clock, I'd have given him a pill which would have quieted him pretty soon. What ails the pedantic old buffer?"

"He did not enter, sir, into a particular statement of his disease, but—"

"Well, never mind," interrupted Pimpernel, "we'll see what's the matter with him in a crack. Come along."

"I say, my good fellow," said he, as we hastened onwards, "if the governor should require medicine, you'll return with me for it, will you? My boy is, by this time, as fast as a church without a clock to disturb it. He never wakes in the morning till I have given him a good threshing."

"Strange, sir," said I.

"Yes, strange, isn't it?—queer, queer."

By this time, we had arrived at Pendragon's door, and proceeding up stairs without delay, the doctor, closely followed by me, marched into the drawing-room.

The sight which at this moment presented itself, being such a one as is not always to be witnessed, may be aptly termed unusual. The learned historian was standing in the middle of the apartment, in an attitude closely resembling that of the effigy of our late king, which, a miracle of modern mud-work, may at any time be seen on the top of King's Cross, at Battle Bridge. The empty brandy-bottle lay upon its side on the table, and the chair had probably fallen on its back as its owner raised himself upon his legs. And now fixing his eyes upon the doctor, he burst into a cachinnation so loud, so prolonged, and so discordant, that it might verily have scared the zoological society itself.

As it was, the doctor appeared in some confusion, and I must confess myself to have been in no slight degree appalled. But this wild laugh, it seems, was but the prelude of some ingenious scheme, which its author had taken upon himself to carry out.

"Sit down, Pimpernel, sit down," cried he: "you received my letter, eh? thought it a *bonâ fide* summons to war, did you? You goose, not to see through the pleasantry. I received your answer, didn't I, Geoffrey? Chalk Farm, at six o'clock. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Fire and fumes! sir," sputtered the choleric doctor, springing to his feet, "and am I to be the subject of your jests—to be called out of my bed at midnight, under a pretence of your

being dangerously ill—to be made your plaything—to be—
d—— it sir, what do you mean?" and so saying, he sprang to-
wards the other with his finger and thumb extended, and, I
conscientiously believe, had I not interfered, would have divested
the rueful wretch of that centre of gravity his nose.

"Patience, patience," insinuated Pendragon over my shoul-
der: "I did not mean to trifle with you—it is a mystification of
unpropitious circumstances—a combination of untoward—a—"

"You are a coward, I see that plainly, sir," cried Pimpernel,
"and dare not meet me to-morrow morning. But this, sir, you
shall do ere I leave you," and he drew out his pocket-book, and
wrote something on a slip of paper; "here, sir, sign this—in
this you renounce all claim to the hand of Miss Puddicombe."

"What, sir," cried Pendragon, "a renunciation of claim to
the left-hand fourth-finger of Miss Parthenope Puddicombe?
Impossible, Geoffrey!" and he turned towards me, "Geoffrey
Gooch?"

"Nay, sir, you are in Dr. Pimpernel's hands."

"Wait, wait," cried Pendragon, as the other was observed
handling his cane in an ambiguous, or rather in an unambiguous
manner, "I will give effect to that documentary slip. After all,
she is not worthy of Pendragon's love; an ungainly female,
who, when she visits her estate, will need no scarecrows on the
land—Puddicombe! Puddicombe! obnoxious cognomen!"

"No reflections on Miss Puddicombe's person," cried Pim-
pernel, sternly, as he placed the slip of paper in his pocket:
"for her name, it will not long offend you—" 'twill soon merge
in that of Pimpernel. Good night."

"It was not worth while to chastise the vulgar villain," said
Pendragon, when the door had closed upon his rival, "or I
would fain have done so."

"Oh! no, sir," cried I in abrupt disgust, "you know you dare
not have attempted it. You forget that I know you."

"Eh?" cried he in amaze, and suddenly seizing a candle;
"we shall meet to-morrow, sir: I wish you a very good night."

On the next morning, Mr. Uther Pendragon descended to the
breakfast-parlour (so called by courtesy) in a very dignified man-
ner, and seating himself at the table, despatched his frugal meal
in silence. It was about an hour after the table had been
cleared that he condescended to break the ice of his reserve.

"Geoffrey," said he, "if you could with mortal ken peep or
glance into my inmost heart, you would then behold the affection
I bear towards you."

I bowed.

"I think you were hinting yesterday, my dear young friend,
that you were not altogether comfortable—that the simplicity
(akin to meagerness) of my fare—that my humble roof—"

“Were not the thing: I was, sir.”

“And you would alienate yourself from my domestic hearth, and rush into the wide world, there to begin a different, perhaps, a more resplendent career?”

“I would, sir.”

“And when?”

“This instant.”

“Would I could implore you to tarry with me, but circumstances have recently transpired--let me make a mental calculation. You have sojourned with me during a space of three months; the salary which has in that time accrued, has amounted to the sum of four guineas. Let me make it five.”

“Oh! sir,” I exclaimed, “you are too generous.”

“I have been so,” sighed Pendragon, “and even now—but let me not boast.”

“Farewell, sir, I will send for my trunk.”

“But softly, my dear Geoffrey—my amiable Gooch,” cried Pendragon, laying his hand upon my arm, “of and concerning all that was transacted yesterday—not a syllable, eh?—*mum*, as modern vulgarians delight to express themselves. Be, I implore you, a disciple of Harpocrates with respect to that disciple of Hippocrates.”

“Be assured, I will not breathe a word.”

“My excellent, my worthy youth!”

“Again, sir, farewell.”

“Now, all the powers in, on, above, and under the earth have you in their keeping, young man!” said Pendragon with fervour. “Begone, begone, lest, should you linger, I lapse into lachrymatory weakness. Begone, begone.”

And as I left the presence of this singular individual, early in the morning as it was, I blush to say, I heard the door of the closet creak on its hinges.

CHAPTER IV.

Having parted company with Uther Pendragon, flushed with my hardly-earned five guineas, I made many earnest resolutions never again to place myself at the caprice, or subject myself to the tyranny, of a second master. Some recent friends whom I had acquired improved this determination. They pointed out to me many agreeable prospects, sundry level and spacious paths leading directly to twin temples of Fame and Fortune, which glimmered (they said) at no great distance before me. But how often does this well-intentioned egging-on cause a man to count his chickens before they are hatched! for, indeed, long before an egg was laid, my sanguine imagination had created a whole poultry-yard of full-grown fowls. I may add, since I am in the ornithological vein, that my money soon made itself wings and

flew away; and that experience speedily taught me that the most popular literature is a sort of barnacle, which, dropping from the tree of knowledge into the current stream, swims away in triumph, and yet is but a goose after all. Was it my fault that monthly magazines were blind to my merits? was I to blame because hebdomedal editors were obtuse? could I be chargeable with the deafness to the voice of genius evinced by proprietors of the diurnal broad-sheet? I was beyond my age.

At length, one of my friends, more moderate in his expectations of my success, or perhaps more zealous for my welfare, presented me to the notice of a school-agent, who in due time introduced me to the Rev. Mr. Sleek—a gentleman who, having catechised me pretty closely respecting my qualifications to undertake the office of rifleman to “the young idea,” engaged me at the rate of fourteen guineas per annum—to enter upon my duties in “Paradise House,” at the commencement of the Michaelmas quarter.

Physiognomical impressions are too frequently erroneous; and yet I did not like the totality of features with which nature had supplied Mr. Sleek. Apart, they might have satisfied the ideal exactness of the artist, but conglomerated, the effect was hard, and cold, and without repose. But then the name “Paradise House,” suggested felicitous associations, and its locality, some score miles from London, promised a constant supply of country air. Besides, I should enjoy no inconsiderable portion of time free from interruption, during which I might put together and set a-going sundry clay creations, into which I could easily infuse my Promethean heat.

I almost blush to proceed in my narrative, and yet I must once more hurry through this short passage of my life—this blind alley in my inauspicious existence.

It was about nine o'clock on a cold, drizzling October night that, having alighted from the coach, and left my luggage till next morning at the Blue Lion, I waded down the long and dreary lane in which “Paradise House” was situated. After some delay, caused by the withdrawal of bolts, and the uncircling of a long chain attached to a kind of gigantic corkscrew, I gained admittance into the house, and was ushered with almost solemn ceremony into the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Sleek.

It could not be a merely nervous fancy which induced me to suspect that I had made my appearance at a most inopportune time. The huddled interchange of mumblings between the pedagogue and his partner as I was about to enter the room; the almost savage seizure of my hand on the part of the former; the frightful man-trap sort of grin with which Mrs. Sleek saluted me; and the sudden disappearance of that lady from the room—all these were calculated to excite suspicion.

I sat myself down, however, with much composure, to await the result of whatever might chance to transpire.

"You have taken supper, I suppose?" cried Mrs. Sleek, who, having returned to the room, had been gazing at me for some time with no friendly eye; "the young gentlemen have retired to rest, with whom (it is our rule) the usher always takes his meals."

"I have not supped, certainly," said I, "but I can dispense with supper to-night."

An awkward silence followed; and once, as I chanced to turn my head, I detected the Rev. Mr. Sleek (who affected to be perusing a bulky quarto) in the act of looking at me from under his spectacles, with a baleful expression altogether inexplicable.

This silence, this horrid pause, was *outré* and distressing; but a sudden strange wheezing in the corner of the room seemed to afford a peg on which to hang a remark, which I now ventured to make.

"Your dog," said I, "seems to be suffering from the effects of a bad cold."

"Our dog, sir?" cried Mrs. Sleek: "we keep no dogs in this house, I assure you. Good God! sir, what do you mean?—our infant—Trismegistus—did you hear, Mr. Sleek? can you permit, do you allow—?"

"The crying of an infant in the cradle," said Mr. Sleek with dignity, "bears but little resemblance to the whining of a hound."

"I beg pardon—I was not aware—how could I mistake?—an infant—dog—ha! ha!" and here, in my confusion, I made a laugh of a matter for which, might I judge from the countenances of the two, they would willingly have consigned me to the gallows.

It was during a second pause that followed this whimsical circumstance, whilst I was looking towards a painting which it was impossible to see, and gazing at the cornice of the ceiling with apparently the minute scrutiny of a bricklayer and plasterer, that I overheard Mrs. Sleek thus appealing to her husband:

"They'll be done to death; give him a hint to go."

"I will," returned Sleek.

"Mr. Gooch," cried he aloud, "you must be wearied with your journey—here is a bed-candlestick," and he rang the bell, "the servant will show you your room," and ere I had barely time to utter "good night," I was bowed and courtesied from the room, conducted down a long passage, in which I encountered the cook with a brace of partridges done to a turn, and ushered into a small bedroom—from the size and shape of which, and of a pair of old shoes under the bed, I could almost have sworn to the identity of my predecessor.

It was a beautiful clear morning when I arose. The birds (one or two at intervals) hopped about the trees in front of my window with a joyous alacrity which communicated itself to my own spirits. I descended to the play-ground, there to submit to the timorous scrutiny of the "young gentlemen," who approaching by degrees nearer and nearer towards me, feasted their upturned eyes upon my person; and then ran away to compare their first impressions of my appearance.

It was chance that caused me to put my hand in my pocket. There was still a small sum remaining to me. The sudden remembrance of this fact set fire to a train of reflections, which I had not thought, and perhaps ought not, to have indulged.

It was clear, from the occurrences of the previous night, that I had got amongst ultra-Pendragons—beings of the most intense and inhuman selfishness. Pendragon was bad enough; but had he been matched with a female of the same tendencies, could I have borne his household? No.—My luggage had not arrived.—Yes, Pendragon was infinitely preferable to Sleek. Why, therefore, should I—? Exactly so. What if I—?

At this moment the bell rang for morning prayers, a ceremony at which I was aware I must attend, and perhaps officiate. I made a sudden rush towards a door leading into the lane.—The name of Gooch—at first a murmur, then rapidly growing into a defined sound, and at length taken up by the whole academical squadron, decided me. Like bloodhounds the urchins appeared yelping at my heels, as I stumbled and scrambled up the long lane, which appeared to have no turning; nor did I slack the fury of my speed until the last trembling "Goo-," and the final and faint "-ooch," died away upon the air.

Dashing into the Blue Lion, I secured my trunk, and mounting a stage-coach—in three, the happiest hours of my life, found myself once more in London.

Would the reader take the trouble to reflect upon the extent of intellectual resources a man must possess who undertakes to sing the praises of blacking—to discover daily new virtues in oils for the hair and washes for the complexion—and to pass infinite eulogiums upon patent razor-strops, his admiration of me would even transcend his pity.

To discover similitude in dissimilitude—to contrive that the most far-fetched conceits shall appear to spring spontaneously from a fertile fancy—to insinuate the virtue of Macassar in an apologue, or the triumph of blacking in a fairy tale—these are emanations of genius that it is not given to every man to exhibit.

Nor do I think the present remuneration for my labours (in this golden age for authors)—averaging, as it does, half-a-crown a-day—more than the wants, or beyond the deserts, of Geoffrey Gooch.

DAVY DICKSON'S COAT; OR, COATLESS DAVY.

BY ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

“WHERE have you been these two hours, and where’s your coat, you young villain, you?” said little Davy Dickson’s father to little Davy Dickson, as he saw him approaching the house in his shirt-sleeves, with hanging head and rueful countenance. “I say, sir, where’s your coat? Where have you left your coat?” The boy, blubbing, replied, that he had been bathing in the river, that he had thrown his clothes for safety on the branch of a tree that projected over the water, that his coat not having been fairly lodged on the branch had slipped down unperceived by him into the stream, and been carried off by the current.

“Oh! you infernal little rascal, you. You idle, good-for-nothing scoundrel!” said Davy’s papa, laying a stick with very marked emphasis on Davy’s shoulder, and eventually belabouring him in a way perfectly unobjectionable when viewed as a specimen of parental castigation. “Where do you imagine I am to get coats for you to lose in this way?”—It was the second coat within a year with which David had parted company in a similarly abrupt manner, without previous intimation from either party.—“You careless, regardless villain; you——Where am I to get coats for you to throw away in this manner?” continued the indignant father as he laid the chastening rod on his coatless son.

But, pray, who or what was Davy Dickson, and who or what was Davy’s papa? Nothing is easier than to give this information, and it may be done very efficiently in a couple of lines. Davy Dickson, sen., for the father’s Christian name was the same with his son’s, was a small farmer in the parish of Meiklebothram; (for some interesting notices of which see *New Statistical Account of Scotland*); and the younger Davy was a little, wild, curly-headed, dare-devil boy of about twelve or thirteen years of age: and this, good reader, is all we have to say about them as regards the couple of queries with which you just now so politely favoured us.

Davy, jun., having received due castigation for his carelessness in losing his coat, went into the house, seated himself by the fire, and there sat blubbering and occasionally rubbing his shoulders, for, as nearly as we can calculate, about an hour and a half. At the end of this time, however, Davy regained his composure and began to feel a sensible diminution of the uneasy sensations in his back. This being the case, he commenced moving about the house with his usual alacrity, and even taking an interest in some of his little, ordinary, innocent recreations; such as singeing the cat's whiskers, drowning flies, &c. &c. In short, but that Davy was still coatless, you would never have dreamt that there was any thing wrong. Coatless, however, Davy remained for three entire days; for he was obliged to wait—confined all the time to the house too—till another was ordered and sent home.

For about six months or so afterwards, Davy's life was unchequered by any remarkable event. About the end of this time, he joined in a spirited expedition with some other youths of excellent moral principles and prepossessing appearance, against a certain neighbouring farmer's fruit-trees.

The enterprise, which was one of great difficulty (rendered so by local circumstances), was conducted with singular skill and intrepidity. The time chosen was night—daylight being, as is pretty generally known, unfriendly to such recreations. The victim's garden was entered, and a splendid, richly laden tree selected. But who will venture up into it to pluck the tempting fruit? On this point there was a consultation amongst the young marauders. None were fond of attempting the dangerous pre-eminence, and for want of a stout heart to undertake this daring duty, the whole enterprise threatened to become a complete failure. Seeing this, Davy at length stepped forward and said,

“I'll go up, Tom,” addressing a dear friend who stood near him in the shape of a little ragged rascal of about his own age: “hold my coat;” and Davy instantly pulled off the garment he named, that he might climb with more freedom. In a twinkling, he was in the heart of the tree, and had just stretched out his hand to seize a huge monster of an apple that hung temptingly within his reach, when, lo! the rattling of a dog's chain is heard at a short distance.

Davy paused in his operations. His colleagues below stood aghast. Again the appalling rattle of the chain is heard, but now accompanied—horror on horror!—by the hoarse voice of a man. The voice is the farmer's, the dog is the well-known and much-dreaded Jowler. There can be no doubt that an unfriendly interference is about to take place, and under this impression *Sauve qui peut* becomes a general sentiment amongst the party at the bottom of the tree, and off they scamper in all

directions, leaving their unfortunate forlorn-hope, coatless amongst the branches. Here, however, Davy did not now remain an instant. Being as fully impressed with the impropriety of awaiting the threatened visitation as his colleagues, he sprang to the ground and took to his heels, but not before he heard himself thus flatteringly distinguished from his fellow-fugitives.

“I see you without the coat, there. I’ll mark *you* without the coat.” Heedless of this special notice, and these encouraging hints, Davy continued his flight, and, together with his companions, whom he had overtaken, eventually escaped at the expense of a severely fractured arm, which he received by falling into a deep ditch. This accident, however painful as were its consequences, did not prevent Davy’s recollecting his coat, for which, when the party had got to a place of safety, he asked the person to whose care he had confided it, and was answered, that it had been left at the foot of the tree, with an expression of surprise that the inquirer could have expected any thing else. The custodier of the coat had thrown it down on the first alarm, in order to facilitate his own retreat. The coat, therefore, there was no doubt, was now safe in possession of the enemy.

A state of matters this, highly satisfactory to Davy. His coat again lost—worse than lost; for it would, to a certainty, be used as a means of identifying him, and of consequence lead to conviction and punishment; and his arm fractured. Again Davy returned home in his shirt-sleeves, and again the cudgel was applied to his denuded shoulders by his loving papa. As might be expected, in the inquiries which the farmer, on whom the attempted robbery had been made, set on foot, the boy without the coat was a marked object; and the farmer being in possession of the article in question belonging to Davy, he was at once traced; and, but for the interference of his father, would have got, in all probability, six months of the county jail.

Davy’s father, at the time we have taken up Davy’s history, was a widower; but he now bethought him of taking unto himself another helpmate, and he did so. For a time Davy and his step-mother got on very well together; but after she had fairly taken root in her new quarters, and began to feel her own strength, she commenced a series of proceedings against Davy, of which he by no means approved. She, in short, began to use him very ill; scolding, abusing, and threshing him most unmercifully for the most trifling faults, rendering his life altogether perfectly miserable. Several times was he on the point of running away, and leaving his father’s house “for good and all;” but he knew not where to go; and it was this consideration alone that deterred him. To leave it, however, sooner or later, he was resolved; a determination

which circumstances ultimately hurried into execution earlier than he had calculated on.

His step-mother, rushing like a fury into his bedroom one morning, just as he had got on all his clothes except his coat, seized him by the hair of the head with one hand, and laying on him with the other, armed with a hearth-brush, accused him of having spilt a quantity of lamp-oil on her best gown. Davy denied the fact, as lawyers say, but to no purpose.

“Get out of the house, you worthless rascal, you good-for-nothing villain you, or I’ll be the death of you. Out of the house, this instant, I say;—out of my sight!” exclaimed the termagant; and she pushed and battered Davy towards the outer door.

“Well,” said Davy, coolly, now determined, come of it what might, to submit no longer to such treatment,—“give me my coat! let me get my coat, and I’ll leave the house this instant, never to return to it again!”

“Go and get a coat where you can, you villain,” replied the fury, at the same time thrusting Davy out at the door, and immediately after locking it on the inside.

Flesh and blood could not stand this. Coatless as he was, Davy determined on immediately endeavouring to find some other quarters; and after thinking for a moment, set off to a farm called Woodfoot, distant about four miles, the tenant of which knew his father. Davy felt a little embarrassed from the want of his coat; but he resolved on taking by-ways, and thus avoiding observation. This, then, he did; and arrived at Woodfoot without encountering any one. The farmer, a Mr. Sommerville, was a little surprised at seeing Davy without his coat so far from home, and laughingly asked him what had become of it. Davy related the facts as they really stood; and concluded by requesting Mr. Sommerville to give him employment as a farm-servant, as he said he was resolved never again to return to his father’s house.

Compassionating the lad’s situation, Mr. Sommerville at once took him into his service, and on the instant furnished him with another coat; one that happened to be lying about the house. It was not a very accurate fit; but it was infinitely better than none.

With Mr. Sommerville, Davy remained happy and contented for four years, during which time he had grown into a tall, stout, well-made, and remarkably fine-looking fellow. About the end of this period, Davy was desired by his master to cut down a certain field of grass, which lay next the highway. It was an exceedingly hot day in June; so, before commencing operations, Davy threw off his coat; but having the experience

of former losses before his mind's eye, he was particularly careful as to where he should put it; if near the road, it might be stolen—he therefore took it to the furthest end of the field—a considerable distance—where he left it, and returned, to begin cutting at the end nearest the highway.

Having previously sharpened his scythe, Davy now fairly commenced; but had not made above half a dozen sweeps, ere he heard the sounds of a drum and fife; and no sooner did he hear these sounds, than he threw down his scythe, and leaped on the wall which separated the field from the road, to see what sight it was that was thus heralded. It was a recruiting-party; and when they came up to the spot, Davy recognised amongst them several of his acquaintances who had enlisted; and, amongst these acquaintances, a very old friend whom he had not seen for a long time. This warrior, who had been several years in the army, had been extremely fortunate in the service; having, by his own unaided efforts, attained the rank of corporal. On recognising so many of his friends, Davy leaped on the road, when a cordial shaking of hands took place, especially between him and the corporal, each being greatly rejoiced to see the other. In the mean time, however, the recruiting-party kept moving on to the music of the drum and fife; and Davy, engrossed by the tales of flood and field, which his friend, the corporal, was, with great volubility, pouring into his ear, kept moving on with them; but, startled at length by observing the distance he had thus unthinkingly come, Davy all at once stopped short, and was about to shake hands with the corporal previous to returning, when the serjeant, who had been eyeing him for some time, and no doubt thought he was a very "pretty fellow," came up, and slapping him on the shoulder, while he tipped the corporal the wink, said,

"What, my lad; you're not going to leave your friend in this manner, in the middle of a dusty road, without tasting something together? There's no saying when you may meet again."

"Why certainly, serjeant," replied Davy; "I should like very much indeed to have a drop of something with my old friend here before parting, but there's no public-house at hand."

"No," said the serjeant, "but there's one half a mile on, where I intend giving the lads some refreshment at any rate. Now since you have come so far already, you may as well go that length with us. I'm sure you shall be heartily welcome to a share of what's going."

"Thank you, serjeant," said Davy, "looking smilingly a this shirt-sleeves, "but you see I haven't my coat."

"Oh, hang the coat!" exclaimed the serjeant; "what the

deuce does that signify! You're better without it such a hot day as this; besides, you won't be kept any time: so come along my lad, come along."

The corporal added his entreaties to those of the serjeant, and Davy was finally prevailed upon to step on, coatless as he was, as far as the public-house.

Having arrived there, the corporal, serjeant, and Davy retired to a room by themselves, and a liberal allowance of both ale and brandy having been ordered in, they soon got exceedingly merry. The serjeant and corporal talked much of the joys of a soldier's life—of its honours and glories, and of the promotion which a steady active young fellow was sure of obtaining in the service. At length the former, watching a fitting opportunity, when he imagined Davy sufficiently mellowed for his purpose, fairly popped the proposal of his enlisting—the corporal at the same instant grasping him by the hand, and swearing it was the best thing he could do. Davy thought for an instant, then returning the corporal's grasp, said with great dignity and determination, "By jingo I will! but I must first go back for my coat."

The serjeant knew better than to allow him. "Never mind the coat!" he again said. "Let it go: it isn't likely to be worth much, and I'll find you another. I'll get you a slop jacket in Moffat, man, where we are to stop for the night, and you'll travel there all the lighter without one." Then putting a shilling into Davy's hand, "There, my smart fellow," he said, "there's the beginning of your fortune—the foundation-stone. I knew there was game in you the moment I clapped eyes on your figure. You are, and I'll say it to your face, as pretty a fellow of your inches as need be, and as sure of a commission as if you had it in your pocket."

In a short time after, the party resumed their march—with Davy conspicuous in the centre from wanting his coat—to the sound of military music; and in due time reached Moffat, when the serjeant, faithful to his promise, procured a slop jacket for his new recruit. Next day the party reached Edinburgh Castle, where Davy was subsequently drilled into a regular soldier, and finally stuck into the ranks.

About a twelvemonth after Davy had assumed the musket, being one evening in the town, he went into a public-house to refresh himself with a pot of ale, when two half-drunk fellows came staggering into the box where he was, and without the smallest provocation began abusing him. For some time Davy took no notice whatever of this insolence; but his forbearance having the effect only of increasing the impertinence of his assailants, he at length lost patience, and seizing one of the fellows by the breast, swore he would knock his brains out against

the wall. At this moment, however, the landlord thrust his head into the box, and said that he would permit no fighting in his house, but that if the parties *would* fight, they might go out to the court-yard, and take their fill of it there.

“*He* go out!” said the fellow whom Davy had collared, contemptuously; “he hasn’t the pluck in him to do it, for all his red coat.”

“Havn’t I?” said Davy, who felt his own particular honour, and the honour of the cloth, touched by this allusion to his coat; “we’ll soon see that—Come along with you,” and he stepped to the court-yard, followed by his antagonist, and the whole of the occupants of the tap-room, who turned out to see the sport.

A ring being formed round the combatants, “Now, you boaster, you,” said Davy, “you said I had no pluck in me for all I wore a red coat; but I sha’nt disgrace that coat by threshing such a fellow as you in it.”

Saying this, he threw it off, and handing it to a by-stander, requested him to hold it till he had “peppered the lot;” and this he certainly did in great style, and in a very few minutes.

Having battered his opponent till he could neither stand nor see, Davy turned round and demanded his coat.—“Where’s my coat? Who has my coat?”

The people knew nothing about it: they had seen him give it to somebody, but being wholly engrossed by the fight, had paid no more attention to it. Both the coat, in short, and the person to whom it had been confided, were off: they had disappeared, nobody knew when or how!

Under these circumstances, there was nothing for it but for Davy to walk up to the castle in his shirt-sleeves. This, then, he did; but on presenting himself in so extraordinary a condition, he was immediately pounced upon by the serjeant on guard, and conveyed to the black-hole. His case was reported to the commanding officer, and he was next day ordered to be paraded in his coatless condition before the whole regiment, as at once a punishment for his negligence, and a warning to others. The sentence was rigidly executed: Davy was walked up and down the regiment on parade in his shirt-sleeves three or four times, and then planted opposite the centre to be deliberately gazed at. The exhibition over, Davy was furnished with a new coat, and cautioned to be more careful in future to whom he entrusted it. A hint, too, was thrown out, that if he lost another coat, the opportunity would perhaps be taken of tickling his back with a certain animal (see Linnæus) of the feline species, with nine tails.

Davy’s subsequent good conduct, however, which was, in fact, exemplary, regained him the favour of his superiors, and obtained him the reputation of being one of the steadiest, cleanliest, and best soldiers in the regiment.

Some time after this, the corps to which Davy belonged was ordered to England; and in 1762, it joined the expedition against the Havannah, under Lord Albemarle and Sir George Pocock. On the way out, on this occasion, a very unfortunate accident occurred aboard of the transport in which Davy was embarked. A fine fellow of a serjeant, belonging to the regiment of our hero, leaning, one day, too far over the ship's bulwarks, lost his balance, and fell into the sea. Davy, who was standing close by the unfortunate man at the moment, on seeing the accident, instantly threw off his cap and coat, and without the slightest hesitation, plunged in after him. The ship was going through the water at the time at a considerable rate, and thus both Davy and the serjeant were soon far astern. The former, however, being a first-rate swimmer, buffeted away manfully after the drowning serjeant; but, alas! his noble and generous exertions were vain. Two or three times he got hold of the unfortunate man, who, at length, however, went fairly down, and was never again seen.

The ships's way having been by this time stopped, and a boat lowered from her, the latter came up to Davy's assistance just in time to save his life—that life which he had so gallantly periled to preserve another's. Exhausted and benumbed, he was now dragged into the boat and conveyed on board. His colonel, who was in the same ship, and on deck at the moment, had seen the whole transaction; and being highly pleased with Davy's noble conduct, the latter had no sooner come on board, than that officer approached him, and said, "You are a gallant fellow, Dickson: your conduct has been noble; and I think I cannot do better than appoint you serjeant as a reward for your bravery in the room of the unfortunate man who has just now perished. You may therefore consider yourself as now promoted to that rank, and your pay shall commence from this date."

Davy having expressed his gratitude in the best way he could, went down below with his coat (which he had now taken up) in his hand, in order to shift himself—being perhaps, the first man who had ever been dubbed a serjeant in his shirt-sleeves. Davy, however, did not think, neither, we dare say, will the reader, that his new honours would sit a bit the less gracefully on him on this account.

In due time the expedition landed; and in due time also, or, as some who were there on this occasion thought, rather prematurely, fighting commenced, and at this sort of pastime Serjeant Dickson proved himself a superlative hand. In two or three instances he greatly distinguished himself by his bravery; not only doing marvellous things with his own hand,

but by his example encouraging others to stand to their tackle. No man could have exhibited a more noble disregard for the safety of his own brains, or held his legs and arms in more profound contempt, than he did. Serjeant Dickson, in short, "covered himself with glory;" having, in the very first battle, made with his own hand, two widows, three orphans, rendered three families childless, and other two destitute; all at as many blows, or shots, we are not sure which, nor is it of much consequence; for, we should suppose his merit is not the less, of whatever kind may have been the agency by which these feats were accomplished. But the temerity of the serjeant during the fight, was attended with its all but inevitable result in such cases. He was hit, severely wounded, and was numbered by his comrades amongst the dead, although the arithmetic, as will subsequently appear, was not perfectly correct. In the mean time, however, Serjeant Dickson kept his length and breadth of the field as quietly and composedly as the most decided corpse amongst them; and being left there, he was encountered, after the battle was over, by a picket of the enemy—one of whom, stooping down, began to *peel* him, and in a twinkling relieved him of his coat, which was a "spick and span" new one; the owner, as the reader will recollect, having been no time in it, owing to the recency of his promotion. In this unshelled condition, Serjeant Dickson was some time afterwards found by a party of his own regiment, who discovering signs of life in him, had him instantly conveyed on a litter to head-quarters, and put into the hospital.

"Ah!" said the surgeon, on seeing the wounded man brought in without his coat, "who the deuce has been taking the rind off this poor fellow? Where's the man's coat?"

Being unable to answer for himself, his bearers answered for him, saying that they had found him thus lying on the field, and he had, of course, been stripped by the enemy.

Bad as the serjeant's wound was, however, surgical skill and a good constitution, placed him again upon his pins in less than three weeks; the surgeon, at the end of that time, declaring him in a perfectly fit condition to be shot at again whenever his superiors chose. Being of this comfortable opinion himself, Serjeant Dickson, having got another coat, resumed his duties, and soon after had an opportunity of again distinguishing himself.

It was resolved to storm the Moro fort, and the Moro fort accordingly was stormed; but before being stormed, it was battered, in order to breach it. This breach having been effected, the British troops gallantly advanced to carry the place at the point of the bayonet. The company to which

Serjeant Dickson belonged was the first to advance to the breach, and Serjeant Dickson himself; the first man that entered it. Having speared some half-dozen Spaniards, he gained the top of the wall, where he would have given the world had he had a flag, or British ensign, to unfurl to the breeze, to announce that the ramparts had been gained. But Serjeant Dickson had no flag—nothing of the kind. In an instant, however, a happy idea struck him on this subject, and was as promptly executed.

Stripping off his coat, he thrust his halberd through the two sleeves; thus projecting the tails like an ancient pennon—that is, when it was put in motion,—and waving it aloft, he called out in a loud voice,

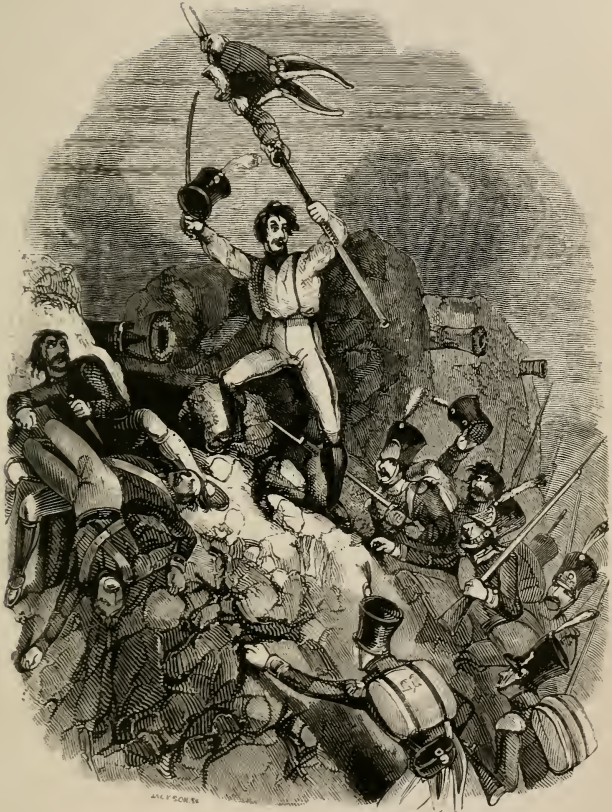
“There, my brave boys; there is the British flag,—deny it who dares!”

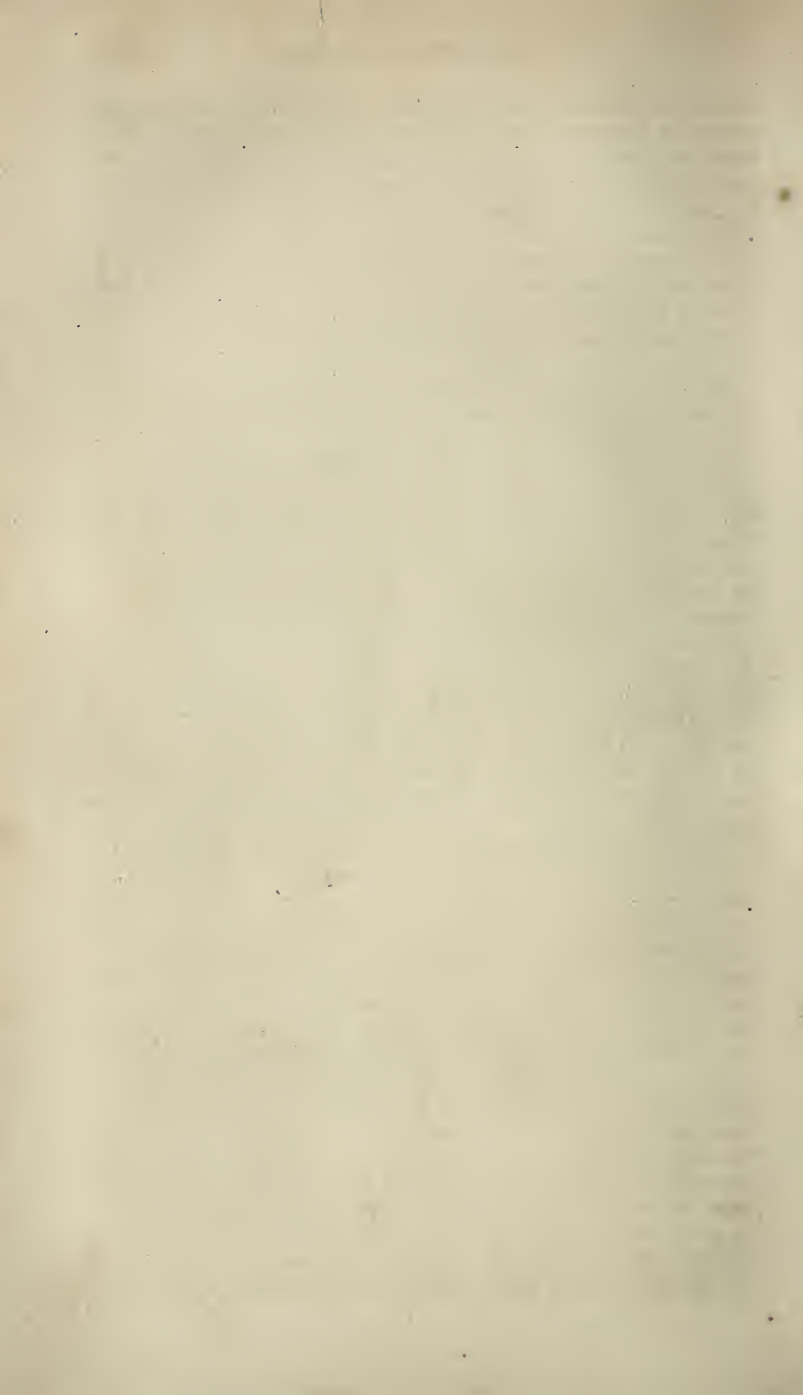
The device was an admirable one. The men below who were fighting their way to the ramparts instantly acknowledged the serjeant's red coat as a legitimate substitute, under all the circumstances, for the British flag, and applauded the non-commissioned officer's ingenuity by frequent thundering cheers. The coat, in fact, exhibited in this manner and situation, had an electrifying effect upon the troops. It re-animated the flagging, and redoubled the ardour of the forward. It restored that thirst for glory, which the heat of the action, contrary to the effects of heat on all other descriptions of thirst, had in many cases allayed rather than increased, and to all it gave an impulse which nothing could withstand.

To reach Serjeant Dickson's red coat became an object of proud ambition with the young soldier, and to the veteran a landmark, which it was his duty, if possible, to gain. In short, if the serjeant's coat was not actually the sole means of gaining the fort, it certainly was the means of accomplishing that end several hours sooner than it would otherwise have been accomplished, and, by consequence, of saving a vast effusion of blood.

It was at this proud moment for Serjeant Dickson—we mean when he was standing on the enemy's ramparts in his shirt sleeves, and his coat serving a noble purpose, at the top of his halberd, which halberd he held in his hand—that the Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment came up to him, and said,

“Serjeant, your behaviour to-day has been most praiseworthy. Glorious, my brave fellow!” exclaimed the colonel in the enthusiasm of the moment, “and it is my duty, and well does it comport with my inclination, to reward your bravery. You shall not require, serjeant, to use your coat as a flag on the next occasion of your gaining the walls of an enemy's fort. You shall have a real one, serjeant. Ensign Hickeryface has been killed, and I appoint you to succeed him.” Having said this, the colonel took the late Serjeant Dickson kindly by the hand,





and wished him joy of his promotion. His officers, one after the other, did the same thing at the colonel's special request; the latter being desirous to make the circumstances of his installation into his new appointment at once as formal and gratifying as possible. This ceremony over, Ensign Dickson took down his coat and put it on.

Continuing to conduct himself with the same propriety, and when opportunity presented, with the same bravery which had hitherto distinguished him, Ensign Dickson shortly after obtained a lieutenancy, and ultimately acquired the rank of captain.

At the conclusion of the war, Captain Dickson retired on half-pay to his native place, where he took up his residence in a nice little cottage on the banks of the Nith.

The situation of the captain's cottage was an exceedingly pleasant one, and the society around him excellent. The captain, in truth, had only one decidedly bad neighbour. This was a huge black bull belonging to an adjoining proprietor. He was a most ferocious animal, and the captain had complained to his owner of the circuitous route which the bull frequently compelled him to take in order to avoid a more intimate acquaintance, to which the animal seemed very much disposed. The reader, however, must not imagine that it was altogether fear that induced Captain Dickson thus to avoid him. Not at all. He had courage enough, as his conduct at the taking of the Moro fort sufficiently proves, to have faced the animal—but he did not see that there was much credit to be gained by fighting a bull; and it was on this ground, and on this ground alone, he declined the combat.

The complaints alluded to, of Captain Dickson, however, to the owner of the formidable quadruped were made in vain; for he was, there's no denying it, though a bad character, an exceedingly handsome brute. There was not his match within, perhaps, a hundred miles of him. So plump, so sleek and glossy—so black, so curly-headed—so thick-necked, and such a pair of horns! He was a perfect picture, and from a window of three stories in height, or any such safe elevation, could not be viewed but with pleasure and admiration.

We have spoken generally of the annoyance which this bull gave to Captain Dickson; but a particular case was when he (the Captain) went to a certain favourite pool in the Nith to bathe, which he did every day. On this occasion the animal's vicinity was especially annoying; and it was so, because the captain had then, unless he would go a mile round, to pass through the field in which the bull was kept. When he went to bathe, the captain used to watch until the bull had got to a safe distance in the direction of the upper meadow, his own way lying by the

lower. He would then wait until he saw the animal so employed, or so situated, as to render his escape practicable, when he would make a rush across the field—showing the bull the best pair of heels he happened at the time to have in his possession. But it was not Captain Dickson alone who was in the habit of taking the “Bull’s Park,” (as the piece of ground appropriated to that personage was called), as a short cut. Others did the same thing in traversing the romantic banks of the Nith, at that particular spot. But it was one not by any means unattended with danger, as the reader will readily believe, and as we will immediately show.

One day, as Captain Dickson was dressing himself after bathing in his favourite pool in the Nith, and just as he had fastened the last button in his waistcoat previously to resuming his coat, he was suddenly alarmed by the most fearful screams and cries. The tones were those of female voices, and their proprietors at no great distance. Such sounds as those alluded to could always call Captain Dickson to the rescue; but on this occasion he was most especially prompt, as he had no doubt that his old friend the bull was at the bottom of the business. Impressed with this idea, and struck with the horrid and imminent danger he had no doubt the parties were in, the gallant Captain, without taking time to put on his coat, rushed to the scene of alarm—and there, to be sure, found his worst fears confirmed. He saw two ladies standing screaming in a corner of the park, and the bull confronting them: he had driven them in there, and there he seemed determined to keep them. Without a moment’s thought or hesitation, the hero of the Moro Fort, armed with a huge piece of railing, leaped into the park, and stoutly took up a position between the ladies and the bull; when the latter, shrinking before the bold front and gallant bearing of the Captain, suddenly and very unexpectedly sported the white feather and beat a retreat, though certainly not a hurried one: he retired composedly and in good order. On his departure, the Captain advanced to the ladies, one of whom was an exceedingly pretty girl, and having conducted them to a place of safety, smilingly apologized for appearing before them without his coat.

The apology was certainly a very unnecessary one, considering the circumstances; but the Captain was naturally an exceedingly polite man, and especially decorous in his conduct towards the ladies. There was, however, assuredly no breach of decorum in this case—at least, none that was not wholly unavoidable—and the ladies told him so. The Captain bowed, and said if they would have the goodness to wait for an instant till he went for his coat, he should with much pleasure accompany them home. They told him they were residing with one of his neighbours, naming the gentleman at whose house they were on

a visit. Captain Dickson accompanied the ladies home, found the younger an exceedingly pleasant and agreeable creature, and what made matters no worse, with a trifle somewhere about five thousand pounds. Affairs standing in this position, the Captain, like a gallant soldier as he was, laid immediate siege to the little heart of Miss Arabella Gardenstone (the young lady's name), and in three weeks after, this same young lady's visiting cards intimated calls from Mrs. Captain Dickson; and in that capacity a very excellent and amiable person she proved.

"Bella, my dear," the Captain used to say to his wife frequently, many years after this, "do you recollect that the first time I saw you I was without my coat?"

The Captain might have added, and we do not know that he did not, that he had not only got his wife coatless, but almost every thing else; and that every one of the most important incidents in his life was marked, as the reader well knows, by the same peculiarity. The instance to which we have just represented his alluding was, however, we believe, Captain Dickson's last public appearance in his shirt-sleeves.

THE LOVER'S SEAT.

BY JAMES OLLIER.

THE coast of Northumberland, rugged and iron-bound as it is in various places, yet presents along its extensive range many a spot of picturesque and sometimes even of luxuriant beauty.

We have at present, however, to speak of a romantic, and somewhat wild-looking hollow or valley, disembodying itself towards the sea, and hemmed in, as it were, by lofty masses of cliff on either side, while the back-ground is formed by a sweep of bold unclothed hills. In this valley, thus surrounded and sheltered, lies a little village, which we shall call Seaford. Although but few verdant groves are found about the place, and there is little to challenge admiration from the lovers of rich landscape, yet a contemplative mind would rarely desire a calmer or more befitting retreat. The world might seem to be altogether excluded from it; a sense of deep tranquillity arises from its survey, as well as of repose and comfort; and the inclement winds that bellow from the piercing east can scarcely penetrate across the rocky barrier.

The spire of the ancient church formed a prominent feature, and an ornamental one too, at the time the writer saw it, amidst this deep solitude ; and when the bells tolled on each successive sabbath, to call the rustic population to the house of prayer, their sounds swept with such gravity along the vale and over the waters, as to resemble a summons from all the cares and employments of life.

In this secluded hamlet lived, not many years since, a young couple who had learnt of each other the sweet lesson of love. The girl had, in childhood, been deprived by death of her parents, and was brought up by a maiden aunt. The youth, whose friends were among the most respectable of the place, had early manifested a strong disposition for a wild and venturesome career. Often had he left his quiet homestead to engage in some coasting voyage, or to pass whole days and nights at sea in the pilot-boats that look out for foreign vessels, in order to conduct them into harbour.

As Edward Raby grew up, these predilections became more and more strong, notwithstanding they were earnestly discouraged by the anxious parents of the young man, and equally so by that gentle maid who had placed her happiness in his keeping. He at length became connected with a party of smugglers (the retired nature of the coast favouring the pursuits of these men), and was supposed occasionally to join in their enterprises—which, lawless as they were, possessed, for a roving adventurous character like Raby's, a peculiar charm. At the time we refer to, there was not so much restriction (particularly in remote parts) set upon this traffic as nowadays ; and the existing enactments were frequently put in requisition to no purpose against individuals whose number and tact enabled them either to elude or defy the prohibitory regulations.

Often—her eyes filled with tears—did poor Mary entreat her lover to abandon these hazardous courses, and gratify the wish of his friends by adopting some creditable calling. He would promise to attend to her request ; would vehemently protest that his *next* contraband excursion should be the *last*, but that fidelity to his comrades, and regard for his pledged word, forbade his abstaining from the approaching rendezvous.

Alas ! Edward's promises were kept to his lawless associates, and broken (from the force of habit rather than intentional ill-faith) to her who had the best right to claim their fulfilment. In fact, his native hamlet could no longer detain him, when perchance a vessel heavily laden tempted to enterprise. The boat that bore his comrades and himself would quickly be alongside the Indiaman, all eyes sparkling with delight as the bales of voluptuous silk were spread, together with other products of distant lands. A French ship, too, occasionally yielded a silken

harvest ; while at other times appeared a galliot loaded with the finest spirits. Frequently, at night, echoed the peaceful sands with the sudden noise of rolling casks, which were primarily deposited in adjoining fissures of the rock.

The natural consequence of Raby's participation in such deeds at last manifested itself. They could not be carried on without some peril ; a slight skirmish or two took place with the revenue officers ; and Edward having distinguished himself therein, became a marked man. He therefore felt it necessary to abandon his home, and trust wholly for support to the precarious trade he had chosen.

Nothing, however, could subdue poor Mary's long-cherished affection for the rash adventurer. All efforts—and they were lavishly made—proved unavailing to erase his image from her heart. She bore each gibe and sneer with unreplying patience ; and now that Edward no longer returned home, kept tryste with him at a particular place on the neighbouring cliff.

Upon this spot, which was not reached without some difficulty either from the shore below or summit above, Nature had hewn in the rock a rough kind of seat, whereon the devoted girl would, gazing over the watery waste before her, await her lover—secure, in that almost inaccessible place, from overlooking or surprise. Here would she sometimes linger till evening, and even night approached, in the hope of seeing her betrothed, and confident that, while he respected little else, he still respected her. Here, too, when all around was wrapt in profound silence, and labouring clouds invested the firmament, she more than once heard a wild harmony arise upon the waters, fitted to words such as the following :

THE SMUGGLERS' CHANT.

When darkness shrouds the heavy sky,
And prosy mortals snoring lie,
On the wide sea, awake are we,
Each sinew strung to industry.
Our minds with busy hopes are rife ;
Ho, ho ! bravo ! for the smuggler's life.

No moon, no moon!—with prying light
To put to shame the friendly night ;
Sworn foes of day, we only pray
For deepest shade or faintest ray.
We court not, though we fear not, strife ;
Ho, ho ! bravo ! for the smuggler's life.

Our freight full many a maid shall share,
And thirsty sculs that laugh at care ;
Our silk 's a dower, our kegs of power—
We must not lose the lucky hour !
Expects us many an anxious wife ;
Ho, ho ! bravo ! for the smuggler's life.

Now—pull, my lads! the well-known creek—
 With muffled oars its entrance seek;
 Ashore, and we—our cargo free—
 Shall soon exult with triple glee.
 How sweet the joys the daring know;
 Huzza! for the smuggler's life, bravo!

The ill-starred maiden would sigh as these strains, with a sort of half-checked uproariousness, reached her ear. They would probably, from the distance, be unmarked by any other; but in Mary's case, every physical sense was wound up to a pitch of intense acuteness. She had most likely, too, heard the wild ditty hummed by her lover while they were in company together, and hence easily recognised it. Alas! it spoke to her of aught but joyousness: of peril—of shame—of death!

Meanwhile, a considerable alteration became evident in the young woman: the proportions of her well-shaped person had lost their becoming roundness and symmetry; she grew thin and haggard. Her manners, too, were changed: from the laughing, open-hearted, confiding girl, she had passed into a morose, suspicious, despondent individual, in whom the principle of hope seemed rapidly waning; and in consequence of dwelling continually on one idea, there was reason to apprehend that her intellect would lose much of its original activity and sharpness. During the day she worked hard at her needle, and every evening, as the sun gilded with his last rays the expansive ocean, repaired to her favourite seat upon the cliff.

How powerful is love!—which could lead an otherwise timid girl daily to brave not only the loneliness of the situation, but the labour, from which many shrank, of the ascent. The ledge of rock whereon the level slab is situated, was then gained by a kind of gully resembling a water-course; though since (as the spot has become much visited), a sort of winding stair has been formed in the face of the cliff. Once reached, the little rocky nook, with its far-stretching prospect (itself almost hidden), amply repays the toil of the ascent.

One evening, when Mary had for some time taken her usual post, she fancied that, as a darker speck on the dark waters, she could perceive the smugglers' vessel. Gradually it became more and more apparent: the customary strain was wafted across the billows, and, as the boat neared the shore, died away, and was succeeded by deep silence. Mary listened, as was her wont, in almost breathless anxiety: a few minutes longer, and she trusted to hear the wanderer's well-known step and voice, and to have an opportunity of renewing her solemn assurance that, though she never could be another's, she would not consent to unite her hand to Edward's till he should relinquish his illegal courses.

She was startled from her abstraction by the report of a pistol;

she sprang from her seat—another, and another fatal sound succeeded—she shrieked with terror. It was too obvious that the free traders were again intercepted. Mary rushed rather than clomb down the gully. As she approached the beach, she became fully aware of the nature of the scene: the smugglers were hotly engaged with the revenue officers. Mary, however, had thought and eyes but for one. The flashes of the pistols threw an unearthly though intermitting radiance over the conflict; and by that glare, just as the hapless girl was emerging from the lowest point of the cliff, she beheld her Edward first bound into the air, then fall like a plummet upon the sands;—he had been shot through the heart!

Mary was found, on the cessation of the contest, stretched upon the earth in a state of stupor. She was conveyed with humane care to her abode in the village, where the assiduous exertions of her friends succeeded after awhile in restoring her to sensibility, —but reason had for ever fled. She roamed about from that time—dependent upon the charity of the neighbours—without any ostensible object; but never missed her daily resort to the well-known spot, to look out for her betrothed across the waves.

She continued thus to expect Edward Raby's return even till the hour of her death, which, however, was mercifully not long protracted;—and the fishermen and others who ply upon that part of the coast, have ever since been accustomed to point with interest and emotion to that lofty crag, which has, from the circumstances we have related, obtained the denomination of **THE LOVER'S SEAT.**

A LEAF FROM THE LIFE OF ALCIBIADES BOND.

It was a November evening—and an agreeable fog, relieved by a healthy and animating drizzle, seemed to establish our generally admitted claim to purity of atmosphere, which (with the exception, perhaps, of the soft skies of Italy), is the sweetest and loveliest in the scope of Europe. Coaches and cabs were every where in motion—the lights burned dimly in the shops—and a moving roof of umbrellas, shining with wet, and hung round with ever-dropping drops, added an active interest to a scene eminently calculated to suggest to the mind of the philosopher or the philanthropist a train of calm and benevolent sentiments. It is only, indeed, on such an evening, when some huge hand seems, as it were, to be grasping the spongy clouds, and squeezing them deliberately over the heads of our mercurial citizens—when a yellow mist, breathed from the cadaverous jaws of old father Thames,

hangs in the air like an universal fit of the jaundice—when a pleasing sense of suffocation swells in the throat—when the soft slush under foot affords easy treading to the weary pedestrian—when rattling wheels bespatter you with mud-spots—and the points of some beneficent creature's umbrella direct their disemboguing waters down the channel of your neck—it is only on such an evening that the sweets of London can be enjoyed in all their perfection, in all their matchless luxury; provided always that the epicurean voluptuary is unencumbered with any cloak, or overhead disqualification, and is exposed without impediment to the free and independent action of the distilling element.

Now at the time of which we speak, with that stolid indifference to the beauties of nature which strongly characterizes a great proportion of the sons of men, had Mr. Alcibiades Bond immured himself in his chamber, situated in the rear aspect of a noble mansion somewhere in the vicinity of Fleet-street; or, in other words, in the third floor back—to communicate with which, Mr. Bond's visitors were solemnly enjoined to ring the second bell on the right hand twice. This direction was not altogether superfluous, since there were three other agents of intercourse on the same side of the door; one announcing its readiness to summon "Thomas Buckle, Bootmaker," another, "Miss Elizabeth Piff, Dressmaker," while the remaining two modestly performed their duties anonymously, the lower invoking our friend Alcibiades, leaving to the upper the task of notifying by many and mysterious signs, to a whole tribe of distinct tenants who occupied the more exalted apartments, the presence of some person requiring their appearance below.

With other thoughts than those of this world was Alcibiades sitting, with his hands upon his knees, and his legs outstretched and resting on the sides of the fireplace.—With other thoughts than this sublunary nature can inspire was our hero etherealizing, when a knock came at the door—and casting aside his redundant locks, he strode to the latch, and admitted a person of tall stature, with a hat on his head, and a desperate instrument in his right hand, which, upon more minute inspection, proved to be nothing else than a walking-stick. His nose was long and pointed, and firmly established in the middle of his face; his eyes were set at equal distances on either side of his nose, and his mouth seemed capable of executing terrific deeds upon the mangled victims of the culinary inquisition. There was something in the expression of his eye that denoted a brooding spirit, and the basiliskish gaze of the sagacious physiognomist might easily have discovered in the workings of his countenance a disposition not patiently to endure what it was possible to avoid; while the no less acute phrenologist might have perceived the fact, that there were few circumstances powerful enough to pre-

vail on him to decline the gratuitous offer of a five-pound note. Dark and various passions beclouded his brow; a deeply-rooted disrelish for things he did not like, and a bitter antipathy to every thing that did not agree with him. He was evidently one of those moody spirits that make the best of a bad bargain, and wrap themselves up in the wild theories of that neoteric philosophy, that considers the miseries of human life the least agreeable part of it, and entertains the curious hypothesis that there is something more than chimerical in the mysterious fascination of a boiled leg and trimmings.

Such was the man who now introduced himself to Mr. Bond; but since, as far as we know, he has nothing whatever at present to do with the narrative before us, we shall leave him in the enjoyment of his own obscurity, and return to our hero, merely remarking, that the name of the individual was Grimshaw—Gabriel Grimshaw, and his profession a fancy flower manufacturer.

Alcibiades Bond, to affirm the truth of him, was diligent in a calling requiring very great manipular dexterity to keep together the animal functions, yet a calling of some consequence in the world notwithstanding: he was a law-writer; and somewhere in the neighbourhood of Quality-court was to be seen occasionally exercising his skill with much avidity, marking down, between the intervals arising from a sheet completed and another to be begun, the fractional sum to be set to his account, partly with a view of acquiring consolation for the past, and partly of encouraging himself for the future. The sallow visages of the persons around him appeared to have extracted their hue from the parchment over which they were stretched, and which presented about as much of the woolly commodity that had once adorned it, as the forlorn vestments of the several occupants of this legal lazaretto could unitedly have contributed. But it was evident from the smile of self-satisfaction that flickered every now and then upon the cheek of Mr. Bond, that his spirit was by no means concerned in his employment, but that some other thing or creature was engrossing his attention while he was engrossing the deeds and instruments. Some little light might be thrown upon this mystery by reference to a sheet of foolscap that lay beside him, serviceable as a medium through which the particular character of a pen might be instantly determined, but much defaced by flourishes and scrawls, suggested apparently by the caligraphic genius of the imaginative Bond. It was to be observed that the words “dearest,” “fondest,” “sweetest,” “love,” “hope,” “madress,” and the like, were the prevailing choice of his quill, and that an attempt had been made to commit a sonnet, but the muse having suddenly withdrawn her patronage, the author had proceeded no further than—“Oh! my heart”—

The fact is, the too susceptible Alcibiades had been beguiled by the irresistible charms of a young damsel into the Serboian

bog of love, where he was just then hopelessly and recklessly floundering about, to his own discomfort, and the infinite entertainment of his friends. To chance was he chiefly indebted for the pleasing torture of the divine passion; for one day, as he was hastily moving one leg before another in the south-western suburbs, his whole frame was suddenly electrified by the appearance of a terrestrial seraph, who, leaning from a window, was innocently absorbed by the romantic gambols of Punch and Judy, that were executing their intensely-interesting feats before her very door. A smile was meandering over her cheek, and the rosy hue of sweet delight beamed from her inexpressibly beautiful countenance. Her eyes were earnestly fixed upon the entrancing spectacle, while her fingers beat time to the melodious duet of tabor and of pipe. Alcibiades was struck with astonished admiration at the sight of the bewitching sylph, superintending, as it were, the merry festivities of her woodland spirits, and he gazed and gazed till his heart received the unavoidable impression of her looks—and he loved!

“What were the world, with a being such as that to cheer and solace one,” thought Bond;—“a paradise! Yes, nothing could distract the even current of my way if she were mine. I could meet the opposition of malignity and hate with a resolute front, and cast aside the impediments of life.” He was about to proceed with his cogitation, when, turning suddenly, the point of some massive substance came violently in contact with the extremity of his nose, and a cry of anguish, loud and shrill, burst from the bosom of Alcibiades, as he raised both hands to the damaged member with a view of determining the actual amount of injury sustained by that organ.

“Mind your eye; hope I didn’t hurt you!” cried a fellow with a ladder on his shoulder, casting a leer at some persons who appeared to be enjoying the joke.

“Hateful barbarian!” murmured Alcibiades Bond, not deigning a reply; and looking up at the same moment, he detected his angel in the first floor in the act of incontrollable laughter, and evidently *at him*.

Merciful heavens! could it be that a creature so fair was really entertained at the misfortunes of her fellows? The very shadow of such a suspicion turned the heart of Alcibiades sick within him, and he proceeded on his way with feelings of mingled hope, despair, delight, and mortification.

The ways of love are strange, and marvellous are those springs that put into action the mental fantoccini of hopes and fears that dance about the bosom of a bewildered innamorato. First comes a little figure all bedecked in gaiety, and that is Hope, and it springs and capers about the regions of the heart with uncommon diligence, until, in the middle of its fun, in comes a grave character, and that is Despair, and the latter forthwith

knocks the former personage on the head, and commences another scene of fantastic madness. Fancy, in the turning of a thought, trips up the heels of this old beldame, and up she gets and hobbles into invisibility, leaving the stage open to the performance of a troop of heterogeneous and particoloured ruffians, half begotten of confidence, half of uncertainty, who begin to kick and plunge about after such a frantic and curious fashion, that the unhappy wretch upon whom they are billeted stands an excellent chance of becoming as mad as they, unless, with timely resolution, he dismisses the capricious deity of love himself, and soon will then depart his vexatious attendants.

Thus was it with Alcibiades Bond. He feared that the object of his flame was hard-hearted, yet he hoped she was not. He, nevertheless, determined to see her again; and on the following evening, having bedizened himself to the best of his ability (a matter that required no little ingenuity), he sallied forth, and directed his steps to the vicinity of his fair one's dwelling. He saw her, yes, he passed the house several times, and she noticed him, but not with that emphatic glance that put beyond doubt the fact of her reciprocated ardour. Alcibiades, however, knew the ways of women too well to expect an unmistakable demonstration of her affection at that early stage of their connexion.

Again and again he glided by the door, and stood at the end of the adjoining street; till, at length, he bethought himself to make an experiment on her feelings. Pretending to be going, therefore, he hastily turned the corner, but shortly returned, and watched the effect of this manœuvre. It was most successful; for in a minute afterwards, a head was slowly projected from the window with cautious curiosity;—and looking anxiously towards the spot where Alcibiades might have been supposed to have vanished, like the evening moon, fresh and beauteous, was his mistress displayed to his delighted vision. The next moment the head was suddenly withdrawn, and all was dark again.

Every thing was now in an altered situation. The world began to appear to Alcibiades a place of blessedness and delight, and with what exultation of heart he tripped home again, we leave to the imagination of such of our readers as have revelled in the ecstasy of similar sensations. Doubt and fear received full marching orders; and love and joy, with colours flying, took easy possession of the garrison of Mr. Bond's bosom. The slight protrusion of that head changed the whole face of things. The event was of momentous interest. How could there be a more unequivocal symptom of unrestrainable regard?

Filled with that rapture which a lover only knows, Alcibiades hurried through the streets, so wrapt in his own fancies that he noticed neither place nor person. He leaped, he ran, he flew; he seemed to rise above the earth, and to walk upon the unsteady footing of the air. His soul was too full for words, and he

longed to throw forth the feelings of his heart upon a sheet of Bath post, gilt-edged, and dedicate them to the amiable origin of all his happiness. A letter was forthwith concocted, and, on the morrow, with feet more light than the flying heels of Mercury, he stuck his epistle in his pocket, and hastened to his "ladie love."

Fortune was, in every respect, in his favour; for scarcely had he reached the romantic street, when he perceived the angel herself just entering the gate that opened into a sort of little garden before the fairy palace of her abode. With the velocity of lightning flew Alcibiades to possess her of his amorous note, but with a sudden start she fled precipitately within the protection of the railings, and drew the bolt after her.

"My sweetest!" exclaimed the impassioned suitor, placing both his hands upon the top of the gate, and gazing at the maiden like a love-sick kangaroo—"my sweetest!" But his tongue refused to articulate the dictates of his soul, and he remained, with his mouth half-open, in the attitude of one deprived suddenly of the faculty of speech.

"Oh! go away. Mr. Thompson don't live here," said the damsel, nodding her head significantly: "there's no such person here."

"Mr. Thompson!" gasped Alcibiades in a cloud of bewilderment—"Mr. Thompson!"

"Yes, it's no use, I know you," added the incomprehensible virgin.

"No use—know me?" stammered Bond, as the closing of the door apprised him that the fair mystery had escaped into her habitation. "No use! This is remarkably strange; what *can* it mean? Sly rogue, it's some trick of hers, I know it is;" thought Alcibiades, attempting in vain to pierce through the misty secret that enveloped the proceedings of his love. But his troubled spirit was soon relieved by the appearance of his enchanter at the window again,—and his heart began to beat with renewed impulses of satisfaction, when he reflected upon those strange agencies by which deep attachments endeavour to communicate their passion, and the inscrutable methods by love adopted to make known its sufferings and hopes. With these thoughts he started into a kind of canter, and running through the exquisite melody,

"Oh! there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream,"

he disappeared in the distance, and was lost to the eyes of his enamoured mistress, who doubtless pined in the same gentle melancholy as did Ariadne for her runaway Theseus.

Of little avail was it that for many hours Alcibiades sought the god of sleep on the night of that eventful day, for that ca-

precious deity unequivocally declined the most pressing invitation to visit his restless pillow. His mind was oppressed with many and conflicting meditations. "Mr. Thompson *don't* live here." What *could* be the meaning of that? Could it be she was married, and her husband happened to be one of those convenient gentlemen called a traveller? a description of persons who add to their migratory dispositions the marvellous gift of total invisibility, being never to be seen on any occasion whatever, but who seem to enter into the holy state of wedlock for no other reason than to accommodate the lady-folk with a matronly name. Bond shuddered at the thought. Married! his heart palpitated with apprehension at the bare suggestion, and he grasped the bedclothes with convulsive agony when he contemplated the possibility of such a disaster.

No, it could not be so, and events proved his alarm unfounded; for more than once on his subsequent pilgrimages to the shrine of his affection he saw a tall, lank, elderly personage admitted within the precincts of the fair damsel's dwelling; and the long iron-gray locks descending from his hat behind, indicated experience and years, and left no doubt in Bond's mind that this meager but highly respectable individual was her happy parent.

It cannot be expected Alcibiades was betrayed into none of the frantic symptoms of that idiotic visitation called love. On the contrary, he walked about with a vague and staring countenance, his eyes gazing on vacancy, and his limbs absurdly arrayed in incompatible articles of apparel. His reason wandered far away, and, without thought, he thrust his misguided shanks into the armholes of his coat instead of his pantaloons; brushed his hair with a pewter spoon; shovelled up a pair of kittens, and consigned them to the furnace instead of coals; shaved off one side of his cheek instead of his whisker; and was observed to cram into his mouth (so lost was he in the mazes of fancy) a slice of the very best yellow soap instead of a fragment of a French roll.

These feats may serve, possibly, to manifest the pitiful condition into which our friend was thus plunged, but he had given way to the soft tyrant too far to admit of his reassuming the reins of self-government. The faithful stars were silent witnesses to his truth; for every night he circumambulated about the citadel where his fair one was confined, and made the echoes clamorous with his sorrows. His heart was racked with a continual earthquake, and sighs burst forth from his agitated bosom, as do, in our childish days, pellets from a popgun.

But with all his griefs (and he had many), inexpressible joys were sometimes his companions, and his rapture may be imagined, when, in one of his nocturnal wanderings, he discovered

a passage leading to the back part of the house, and revealing to his enamoured eyes the sacred regions of Miss *Thompson's* bedroom. A light was burning in the apartment, and on the curtains a shadow was to be seen as of a human being employed in some ingenious occupation. The arms of the person, whoever it was, were being thrown about somewhat wildly, but the agitation of the limbs soon abated, and a more composed action was to be observed. "Surely, it must be my love curling her hair before she retires to rest," cried Alcibiades, heaving a sob of delightful anguish, and looking up to the chamber-window; "it must be," and another sigh broke through his bosom, like the north-east wind through a turnip-field.

Oh! with what quick and sensitive fancy did he picture to himself the sweet divinity imprisoning her beauteous locks in the soft bondage of whity-brown, her eyes half-closed by the fingers of weariness, and her mouth occasionally disported by pleasing pandiculations. His mind became gradually excited to a spirit of enterprise, and he surveyed the paling that stood between himself and an easy access to his darling's presence with the eye of a hero meditating some desperate exploit. He looked again, and difficulty fled affrighted.

"Could I but speak one word to her now," thought Alcibiades Bond, peeping through the railings and attempting to discover what agents of assistance might probably present themselves, should he succeed in scaling the first impediment. "One word would explain every thing. A moment would serve to throw my bleeding heart into her lap, and I would tell her to let it live or die in her love or hate—be happy or miserable as her decision was kind or cruel. She has never heard the profession of my attachment yet. I will essay it; yes, I will invite the best or dare the worst at once!" and he sprang from the earth, and was soon on the other side of the preliminary obstacle; not, however, without sustaining a severe disruption of his nether habiliments, which catching some evil-intentioned spike, were mortally rent in the most vulnerable part.

Such casualties, however, are nothing to the valiant, and he forthwith projected further schemes to elevate himself to the point of his impassioned hopes. A sort of small kitchen with a slanting roof was yet to be surmounted. Where was the method? Once so far, and he could reach the darling window with his outstretched hand. The water-spout, in this emergency, with praiseworthy promptitude, volunteered its assistance, and silently and stealthily Alcibiades coiled himself about it, and crept upon the tiles with the skill of a marmoset. Joy and exultation began to flutter in his soul, for he was already within a hair's breadth of his beloved. His heart beat tenderly, and he felt delight even to his fingers' ends. A few steps, and the prize



would be won. Sweet thought! entrancing contemplation! and he moved one foot forward; but,

“ Oh! who can tell how hard it is to climb”

the sloping surface of most treacherous slate? He moved, but at that moment the malignant house-dog set up a hideous yelping, and startled him from his purpose. Too truly,

“ It was that fatal and perfidious bark
That sank so low that sacred head of thine !”

for, taking fright at the detestable clamour of the vociferous beast, a panic seized him—his legs and the tiles gave way together—his courage went one way, his hat another—and with a shriek of terror that carried dismay to the utmost caves of night, down he came huddling from his imperious eminence, and pitched into a water-butt. Up went Miss Thompson’s window; forth from his watery repository struggled Alcibiades Bond; fear was in the eye of the former—unfeigned grief, mortification, and madness in the countenance of the latter.

“ O mercy! papa, papa, it’s the man, it’s the man!” screamed the angel of Bond’s idolatry, as she fled from the window, leaving the enamoured Alcibiades in the act of tearing over the palings, with the same heedless velocity and total abandonment of every thing like grace and decorum that sometimes characterizes the motions of one pursued by a mad bull, or urges into amazed activity the lagging paces of some night-wanderer suddenly saluted by a bony ghost or importunate spectre.

Drenched and disheartened, our hero arrived at his lodgings, his limbs shivering and his teeth chattering with the cold lamination to which he had been so shamefully subjected. The fire was out, and the tinder refused ignition. A complication of miseries seemed to set in against him, and he slunk into his pallet a melancholy, wretched, and unfriended man.

The morning arose in all its beauty; the hope and courage of Alcibiades arose with it. “ I will have an explanation,” said he. “ I will see her father, and reveal to him the agony of my heart. If he reject me, I’ll strive to forget her: yet *that* can never be: O never! I’ll die, die, die, and my last breath shall sigh thy name, unkind, unjust, ungenerous Miss Thompson! Die? No, no; I’ll live, and revenge her flinty-hearted obduracy by marrying a duchess. There are many that would have me, *I* know;” and he cast a glance at himself in the glass, which reflected back a physiognomy little calculated to lead to any such desirable end, but apparently quite satisfactory to Alcibiades himself.

Calamities, however, still followed close at the heels of the sensitive Bond. By accident he met Mr. Thompson, the parent of his marvellous mistress. “ Mr. Thompson, I believe,” said

Alcibiades, approaching him with a bow; but instead of answering him with that courtesy which the manner of his salute demanded, the face of the ancient gentleman underwent the most ghastly distortions, his eyebrows raised themselves as well as his hands, his eyes became wild and fixed, his mouth stood ajar, and his low tremulous voice, rising gradually into a shrill and whistling note, broke out at length into a cry of utter wretchedness and despair. "Eh! oh! I'm ruined," exclaimed the old man, and turning his back upon Alcibiades, he took to flight with such wondrous precipitancy, that the rapidity of his motion was not less perplexing than the cause was mysterious.

"Poor man! he is, mayhap, insane," said the benevolent Bond, "and may do injury to himself. Let me pursue him, and restore him in security to his fair daughter's arms, and, by that means, open a way to the same asylum for myself;" and with the light and bounding activity of an antelope, Alcibiades set off at full gallop after the distraught parent of his too inflexible Dulcinea. Away went Mr. Thompson, glaring behind him, his antiquated limbs stretching themselves over the land with curious dexterity, and his hands upraised in panic and amazement. At no great distance came Alcibiades following, crying aloud, "Stop him, stop him! He is mad, he is mad!" But the world seemed deaf to his shouts, till a baker, rushing from his shop, seized the old man, and was about to render him up to his pursuer, when suddenly, something having passed between them, he released the maniac again, saying, as the miserable parent went, "Go it, go it!"

"Go it!" meditated Alcibiades when he reached his home. "For what was I designed but to be a butt—a target for the shafts of fortune. An inscrutable doom attends me—a persecuting riddle. Ten times happier should I be if I could make out the meaning of all this. An explanation, however, I will have, if I die in the attempt!"

Soon came an opportunity;—there was Mr. Thompson as sure as a gun; and who—yes—Miss Thompson at his side: they were taking an evening walk. Alcibiades felt assured the moment was at length arrived to make or destroy him for ever. "I will accost them," said he; and he did.

"Mr. Thompson," commenced Bond, advancing towards them.

"That's my name," replied the old man, with a benevolent smile on his face.

"I am sorry," pursued Bond, "that a circumstance"—

"Oh, no matter!" interrupted the old man; "it was your duty, you know: don't distress yourself."

"My duty?" exclaimed Alcibiades with some astonishment, mitigated, however, by his conviction that the old man was hopelessly insane—and casting a sagacious look towards the young

lady, intended to convey his perfect understanding of her father's complaint—"My duty, sir?"

"To be sure; to be sure! Every man to his business. But let me tell you I have settled with Mr. Huffleborough."

"Mr. Huffleborough!" cried Bond.

"Bill and costs!" said the old man triumphantly.

"How melancholy!" whispered Alcibiades aside; adding aloud, "I am glad to hear it, sir."

"Yes, yes; no doubt; but however much I might relish your society in any other capacity, I hope your visits to my house will everlastingly cease. I have done with you, thank Heaven."

"You reject me then?" groaned Bond.

"With the greatest pleasure," replied Mr. Thompson.

"And your daughter?" sighed Alcibiades.

"Will gladly find herself relieved from the disagreeable ubiquity of a bailiff," returned the father.

"A bailiff, sir! Heavens! a bailiff!" vociferated the lover. "Sir—sweet girl—is it possible you have mistaken me for a bailiff? Misery, misery!" and he took off his gloves, and wrung his hands in agony.

"Are you not?" inquired the parent.

"Oh, ask not the question! No—no—I am not! Can I believe those sweet attentions I once thought—fool, fool—the sweet effects of love, sprung only from the vigilance necessary to counteract the stratagems of—oh! the word! I cannot speak it.—Farewell—farewell—for ever—for ever!" and he turned away hastily, and was quickly out of sight.

"Buy a piping bullfinch, sir!" was the first series of sounds that awoke the heart-broken Alcibiades to a sense of external nature; and on surveying the individual from whom the words emanated, he perceived a person with a bird on his finger, who repeated forthwith the same interrogatory.

"Bullfinch! d—— your piping bullfinch!" replied Bond with unaccustomed violence, pushing by the personage disdainfully. "The world is against me!" soliloquized he as he went: "I am a doomed one, and the only alternative left me is an appeal to the razor!" and this train of thoughts brought him to the door of his lodging.

"Ah! Bond," said a voice as he entered his room, "I have been waiting for you;" and Alcibiades was not long in discovering that the voice was the hereditary property of his acquaintance Grimshawe.

"I am going to be married," continued the same person. "True love—runaway match—will you give away the bride? Famous dinner, and so on."

"Any thing," replied the distracted young man, sitting down

and commencing the history of his griefs, which were not destined to terminate there.

An appointment for the following morning concluded the audience between these two worthies, and at the time specified Alcibiades stood upon the fifth step leading to the church-porch, one hand resting with a melancholy air in his bosom, and the other buried in his breeches-pocket. The quarters chimed one after the other, but the bridal party arrived not. The rattling of a hackney-coach aroused our hero from a deep reverie, and the arms of an individual thrust from one of the windows, and shortly afterwards a head distinctly visible, convinced him Grimshawe and his love were approaching. In another moment the vehicle drew up, and the shrill sounds from within, with the additional evidence of ribbons of all hues, demonstrated the presence of ladies.

"We are here, you see," said Grimshawe, handing out a fat female, with a green shawl and light-blue gown. "Perhaps you will look to this lady, Bond."

"With pleasure," answered Alcibiades, conducting the lady up the steps; and the happy couple followed.

The company was soon arranged with the proper accompaniments of clerk, pew-opener and sexton, and the service commenced. The expedition of the movements of the party between alighting from the coach and presenting themselves at the altar, had precluded the possibility of Mr. Bond's obtaining an introduction to the bride, and the ceremony had proceeded to that point when it became necessary he should bestow the lady to the future charge of the anxious swain, ere he caught even a glimpse of her. But sad was that glimpse! A sound of a piteous nature was heard echoing through the church. The parson ceased—the clerk looked over his spectacles, opened his mouth, and marvelled—the bridegroom started—and all was astonishment. Alcibiades stood confounded; his heart beat trebly quick; the whiteness of his face put his shirt collar to shame; he was a ruined man. That sound had burst from his bewildered heart—for the lady was none other than—Miss Thompson!

Let us not dwell on the miseries of a fellow-creature. Alcibiades Bond still lives; but though he wears a gladder countenance now—does justice to the usual complement of meals (for he has advanced in the world since this early blight)—sings now and then as he passes along the street—and appears generally as contented as a mortal can expect to be,—the inward worm feeds doubtless in his bosom; and though he gives promise of existing for many a long year, he will carry, we think, even to the grave, the memory of that disaster. Poor fellow!

THE MODERN IACHIMO.

To the trunk again, and shut the spring of it.

CYMBELINE.

THE church-bells of Nottingham were chiming the last quarter to midnight, and the gates of the Crown Hotel had been closed until the morning, when a German phaeton, with curtained windows, flaming lamps, and a fresh relay of horses was lashed by the well-appointed postilions up the steep dark hill, that slopes up from the extremity of the town, and blends with the main road to the capital,—a dense cold mist floated like a sea over the country, and the lights of the city, as they fast retreated behind the whirling of the “chariot-wheels,” gleamed palely forth from the shrouding fog, like far-off stars through banks of clouds;—the traveller was partial to nocturnal marching, and felt disappointed at the dreary journey the appearance of the scene precluded; for the rich cultivated landscapes of England, and old towns, hallowed by history and dramatic interest, wear a solemn and Gothic character, if shadowed by the darkness and quietude of a night, when the calm blue azure of the sky throws brightly out the celestial signs and constellations. He drew his furred cloak tightly round his throat, unlocked his pistol-case, caressed his spaniel, who was slumbering on the cushion beside him, and charging the postilions not to abate the present high pressure of speed they forced the horses to, lay back in the vehicle, and tried to forget in sleep both the monotony of the drive, and the importance of the course that was urging him on so rapidly to London.

Mr. Cathcart was a graduate of Oxford, and had recently succeeded to considerable estates, by the unlooked-for disposition of an uncle’s will, who had disinherited an only son, in return for a long career of profligacy and disobedience; and had appointed William Cathcart his heir, conferring only on him a life estate, with remainder to his son’s children, if the executors considered his course of life sufficiently reformed, to inherit the reversionary benefit and indulgence; otherwise he nominated the governors of a public charity his residuary legatees.

Mr. George Cathcart, the man thus disinherited, was more fa-

miliarly known in the halls and saloons of the metropolis, and the Palais Royal, than in the courts of the profession to which he was called. The corps of Legs and Duellists had "marked him as their own;" and his temper and disposition, in which wit and irony, mirth and cruelty mingled, being never veiled or suppressed, William had been frequently warned against his jealousy and deadly enmity. Hitherto the relatives had never met; a legal summons had been served on William, requiring his personal attendance in Chancery upon the following day, to be examined in a suit, instituted upon the will; business of an urgent nature had detained him in Nottinghamshire until the last moment whereto he could procrastinate his departure, and he was now posting express to arrive within the appointed hour, which would punish and chastise his absence by a decision fatal to his rights.

In some little alarm, lest some perverse accident might retard him on the way, or disappoint his hopes of expedition, he had parted from his friends and set off. He might have dozed for an hour (for they had changed horses in the interval), when the sudden change of rate he was moving at disturbed and awoke him—he started and looked round; the fog had drifted off and the clear night revealed the guiding stars; a light breeze had sprung up and added a refreshing coolness to the air, which he permitted to enter through the opened window; from the man who drove the wheelers, he inquired the reason of the slow pace they travelled at. The official of the post touched his hat and gave some evasive answer, in confused and low tones, whose meaning William could not collect,—he looked again at him, and perceived he was not the same individual who had rode the preceding stage, but an ill-countenanced and awkward horseman, who evidently was unaccustomed to the business he was at present employed in, and seemed anxious to conceal his features from Cathcart's view. To a question concerning the reason for this alteration, his interlocutor replied, that the former driver had left at the last inn where they had changed, being taken suddenly ill. "Then why did he not come to me for his fee?" There was a pause. "He did not wish to disturb you, sir, as you appeared asleep."

He began to suspect there was more mystery and motive in the movement, simple as it was, than they wished him to know or imagine; and determined, without further observation on the occurrence, to watch their conduct and mutual correspondence vigilantly. Some five miles further were rolled over, when the carriage was abruptly pulled up, and both postilions dismounted together—one of the leaders had picked up a sharp flint, which had cut the hoof deeply and lamed him. "We are but a mile from Uppingham, sir, shall we walk on quietly?"—"Unlink your leaders from the traces, to remain behind: I will move on with the pair; and mind you, sir (pointing to his brace of patent

'locks') no tricks, or double play, with me, or I shall pay you at parting in metal you may not expect. Mount, sir, and spur on, we are losing time too fast." The vehicle was again in motion, and the dismissed postilion, exchanging a look with his companion, that might be translated "all right," gave a loud whistle from his whip-handle, and galloped down a wooded by-road, that branched into the country, from the high turnpike thoroughfare.

With diminished speed William proceeded on his route, often in anxiety consulting his repeater, and urging with mingled promises and threats the lagging driver; the night had reached its zenith of darkness, as if asserting one parting effort at supremacy before it abdicated to the day, and the horses, breathless and wearied, with difficulty pulled on the increased load which the defalcation of the leaders obliged them to draw, through a stage exceeding the ordinary number of miles. When near the hamlet of ———, at that point where there is an intersection of different roads, opposite an ancient parochial church, he remarked the small lozenge-shaped panes of the windows illuminated, as if reflecting flashes of light which were gradually approaching, and occasionally glancing off their surface. The effect was beautiful and novel; as the interior of the building, monuments, gallery, and altar, would momentarily be mirrored to the view like a phantasmal picture on a wizard's glass, and then suddenly vanish into the thickest and darkest shadow. Turning to observe whence the light proceeded, he saw that the lamps of a high stanhope, which was driven rapidly down one of the narrow roads, and was now alongside of him, explained the phenomenon and refraction. Two men sat in the gig—they pulled up—their horse was jaded and blown, and had been severely pressed; the servant, who held the reins, inquired if the night mail had past them yet. The postilion answered in the affirmative, but Cathcart was unable, from his own knowledge, to contradict the falsehood.

"Are you certain? quite sure?" inquired the second stranger, in accents of deep disappointment—a gentleman arrayed in a huge many-caped coat, and intrenched behind a meerscham.

"Yes, sir: the Rocket is now some miles before us, you can never come up with it."

"Then, what on earth am I to do? I shall be ruined."

Cathcart could not avoid asking the cause of his distress, and offering his assistance.

The gentleman, with many apologies for troubling and interrupting him on his journey, informed him, that he had driven a long way from his own residence, to meet the London coach, calculating to be in time to catch it as it passed that angle of the road; that the distance and his horse's paces had deceived him, and that he was more uneasy at being detained at so late an

hour, in that wild part of the country, on account of having in his gig a large trunk, containing valuable property belonging to a friend about to sail for India, than being disappointed himself of a seat—as he had charged himself with its personal escort up to town, and feared that if it did not reach London by the next day, the lady would be compelled to sail without it.

“What! is there a lady in the case then? If so, we must extricate both you and the trunk. Franklin, look to the size of the chest; is it above bandbox calibre?”

The valet reported it to be the largest and strongest he ever saw packed.

“But can we have it up behind? for you, sir, Julian—my canine friend here—will, I am sure, vacate his seat. Travellers must not be ceremonious, and I shall be happy to have your society.”

The stranger was most liberal in his thanks, and pressed Cathcart to accept his share of the expenses. This was as liberally declined; the trunk was slung up, and the new acquaintances, in high goodhumour with each other, gave the word and away.

“You see, sir,” said the stranger, “that travelling brings a man acquainted, not only with strange bedfellows, but also with new postchaise companions. A circumstance somewhat parallel to this meeting, occurred lately to me, when going down from town to Matlock. There was a person sitting in the coach, opposite me, whose appearance and manners at first created a strong prejudice in my mind against him, and I repelled all his attempts to open a conversation; gradually, however, his animated discourse won upon me, and thawed away my dislike. I discovered he was intimately known to some of my friends at Matlock; that night we were formally introduced, dined together, and the hotel being very crowded and scant of accommodation, I actually offered him a share of my room, and my new friend and I slept together, as if we were Nisus and Euryalus revived.”

“Well, sir, without foreboding so somniferous a conclusion to our adventure, I must congratulate myself at having met so entertaining an ally.”

The stranger bowed, and Cathcart thought he heard him softly soliloquize, “You may know me better, too, before we part.” He treasured in his memory the ambiguous saying, and without manifesting any suspicion, scanned his words and actions closely. The tone of good society was certainly perceptible in his address; but there was also a boasting arrogance, and a deceitful sneer, which betrayed a connexion with the vicious and abandoned. He put many questions to Cathcart respecting his hurried trip to London, and began to affect great interest in his arriving there in time, and to express his fears that the difficulty in procuring fresh horses along the road would throw them out; minutely accurately the space gone over, and stimulating the

postilion to added speed. "Come, Dixon, my luggage is no small weight to keep us back.—Do you find it so?"

The postilion turned round on his saddle, and with a peculiar glance of the eye, merely answered, "No, sir," and resumed his employment.

Cathcart started—there was an evident understanding between the parties—he deliberated for an instant, and suppressed a fierce emotion of anger that was throbbing to break forth. "Then you know the man, sir; his name is familiar to your lips; why not openly recognise him before?"

"Is there any thing strange at my not recollecting, until this moment, a person who may have driven me some time since?"

"No matter, sir, but take care; I can assail as well as assist." And to this strong hint no reply was made.

By the dawning twilight of the morning they could see that the road now wound over a barren common, on which stood a low single-storied house, where poor wayfarers might stop to rest and bait. When the carriage passed its door, there was a sudden crash, one of the wheels had rolled off; the linchpin had given, and the occupants of the body were thrown violently forward and nearly dislodged from their seats. William and his companion immediately alighted and ascertained the cause of the accident. The driver pronounced it impossible to proceed, as an iron had been broken, which would require the interference of a smith to repair, and no forge or wheelwright was within some miles of where they were at present detained. The *sang-froid* of the stranger at this announcement, and the coolness with which he examined the broken axle, struck Cathcart as if the event was not unexpected by him; and he began to suspect he was now the dupe of some premeditated plot, or perhaps deeper scheme, to delay and defeat him. The unseasonable hour, in which no assistance could be called—the lonely situation where he was beset—the twofold odds against him—all rushed upon his mind; but though they awed it, braced it also; he suppressed his suspicions, and calmly addressed the party.

"It seems to me, that either through ignorance or design, a wrong course has been taken; this by-way certainly does not present the features of the great London road, it is too still and untrodden. What say you, Mr. Dixon (as this gentleman has favoured me with your name)—are you positive we are in the right track?"

"I will not swear we are, I never rode in this line before."

"Truth may come out by accident. Then where did you assume the part of postilion for my new acquaintance here, which fixed your name so indelibly on his memory? Oh, you need not trouble your invention for a lie, as I see you understand your employer's look to be cautious: but come, be stirring Dixon,

wake up the people of that house, and bring in the luggage; then push on, and find a workman to right the carriage:—and I think the sooner, sir, *we* part company the better, as you appear to have lost your desire to reach town so early as you lately asserted, on your self-introduction to me.”

“As you please, I am quite satisfied.”

The postilion cantered on with his horses, and Cathcart moved towards the house. It was a thatched, mean cottage, in slovenly and neglected order, below even the ordinary par of village inns. The broken panes of the ill-painted windows, and stove-in panels of the chalk-scored door, proved the riotous yet pauper habits of the characters by whom it was frequented.

“A dreary hostelry to take one’s ease in,” said Cathcart, as he applied for admission; “I hope we shall not be condemned to tarry long in this asylum.” The door was more speedily opened than he reckoned on from the hour, which he supposed would find the inmates asleep. The landlord himself, a bluff, bloated, muscular personage—more resembling a Smithfield “flesher” than a jolly Boniface—whose unchanged, disordered dress manifested that he must have reposed in his clothes if he *had* lain down to rest the preceding night—came forth and inquired the cause of this early call, and in what way he could meet their orders. The break-down was explained, and room was ordered for the reception of the luggage, which, with the assistance of the tapster, was carried into the house by Cathcart’s servant. William left his fellow-traveller superintending the removal of the “traps,” and entered the house to examine the accommodation. A large fire was blazing in the small parlour behind the bar, and the landlady and her *Maritornes*, who seemed to have remained in the same sleepless vigilance as “mine host,” were engaged in preparing coffee and other requisites for breakfast. The travellers were ushered into two small rooms that communicated with the parlour and each other (if they chose to sleep until their journey could be resumed): Cathcart, feeling fatigued, chose for himself the apartment nearest the sitting-room, and left for his companion the other, which was more remote and better furnished, and to reach which, it was necessary to pass through his own. He then walked out to acquaint his *élève* with this arrangement, and when in the hall was surprised to hear Julian barking angrily a continued challenge, and resisting the entreaties of the men to be pacified and silent. He hurried on, and saw his dog circling round and round the stranger’s trunk, scenting close to it, and keeping up a low growl of dissatisfaction. Cathcart stopped to view the result of the Montargis alarm and suspicion the animal discovered; the chest was moved nearer to the doorway, the dog still following it with the same hostile uneasiness; the bearer of

it looked to Cathcart to interfere, who smiled, and Julian was called in. The dog obeyed his voice, and drawing from the object, crouched at his master's feet, but instantly, on seeing them approach closer, bounded up and returned to the charge.

"It is very strange, sir," said Cathcart, "to observe the dislike my dog has taken to that chest, doubtless without foundation; however, I must use my interest with him to give a permit for its importation, or your Indian friend's valuables may be injured by heavy rain—I see the clouds are threatening—down Julian! to heel, sir!"

The entire party now re-entered the house, and the disputed trunk, like the Grecian horse, passed within the walls, and with the remaining baggage was lodged in Cathcart's room. A hasty repast was partaken of, and no sign of the postilion's return being yet exhibited, Cathcart, followed by Julian, withdrew to his room; his companion, who at breakfast had given his name as De Villars, remaining in earnest colloquy with the landlord.

Cathcart's first care was to examine the window-bars, and bolts of the door: they appeared strong and unwrenched, as he essayed and shut them. His own portmanteau and desk were arranged near the low sofa-bed fitted up for his repose, and the chest belonging to De Villars placed beside them. Julian cast his eye upon it on entering; but, as if recollecting his master's prohibition, repressed his dislike, and quietly kept close to him and observed his contemplated movements. Cathcart sat down upon the couch, and looked inquiringly round the room he found himself so unexpectedly lodged in. It was a mean, cold chamber, whose furniture corresponded with its white-washed walls and tiled floor; and he experienced but little inclination to lie down and sleep, through anxiety to proceed, and suspicion of the intentions of the inmates towards him.

Fatigue, however, and want of rest on the past night, were gradually overcoming his vigilance, and his head was drooping on the pillow, when Julian, who had been crouching near him, sprang up as he saw those signs of drowsiness, and grasping his cloak, shook it violently, as if endeavouring to recal him to self-possession. Cathcart's surprise returned; he was aware of the animal's sagacity, and determined to test it yet again, before he demanded an investigation of the mystery. "Julian certainly does not like that trunk; there may be more intended than meets the eye; however, I will net my betrayer in his own toils. Lie down, Julian, and go to sleep: you must not be turning fashionable and nervous like your master." He then affected to spread his cloak more carefully around him, and reclining at full length, to prepare for a long and settled slumber. The dog gave

an uneasy whine, repeated his attempt to disturb, and the moment Cathcart started to his feet, bounded on the trunk, and barked loud and angrily, as if he held an enemy at bay. "Julian's hints shall not be neglected; I must drive a javelin through this portentous disturber of our peace; its owner shall forthwith explain." And unlocking the door, he called to De Villars to enter, who somewhat disconcerted drew near—the landlord remaining behind, close enough to listen to the conversation.

"I have rather an extraordinary request to make, sir; but at the same time it is one to which I shall take no refusal; there is some charm in your trunk, which has inspired my dog with a strong aversion to its sight, and myself with a curiosity equally powerful to see the nature of its contents; I am sure that in return for my courtesy last night, you will have no objection to gratify this innocent inclination."

De Villars grew uneasy beneath Cathcart's stern and defying glance, which contradicted the sneering smoothness of his address.

"The trunk is not my own; and even if it were, I should be just as indisposed to bare my property to your, I may say, impertinent inquisitiveness."

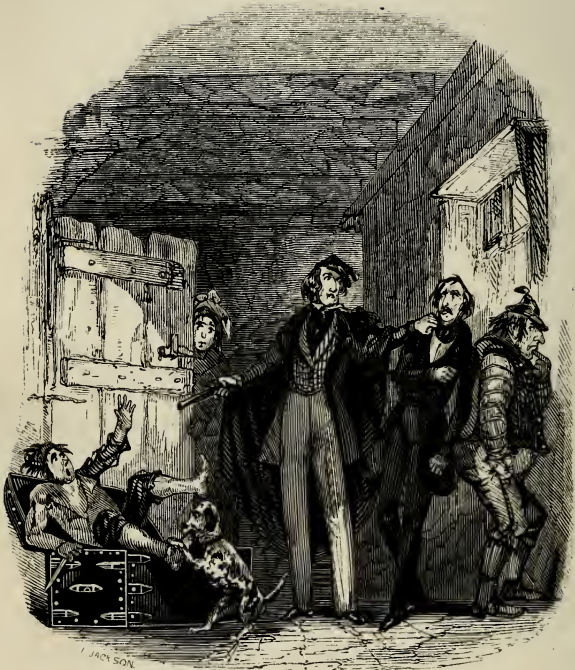
"Your answer is consonant with my expectations; but I shall speak plainly, sir, and no longer dissemble; I distrust you and your associates; I know that you have seduced me into a snare, and that the villain who drove me, and that other wretch who stands quailing behind you, have been hired and are leagued against me: but you have not prevailed—nor shall exculpate yourself, but by instantly opening that chest; else I shall arrest you where you stand. I am armed, and defy you. Open then, I say; I dare you to do so."

"Dare me to open it! You may fire into it, if you like."

"I take you at your word; *I will* fire into it." De Villars drew back, and his colour changed to a sepulchral paleness: he whispered something to the landlord, who answered in the same tone, "Let him try it, and waste his charge; 'tis ball-proof."

Cathcart now cocked his pistols and presented at the chest, and Julian, motionless, as if setting the first covey of the season, marked, in eager suspense, the result of the trial shot; while De Villars, steady as if waiting an antagonist's fire and ready to return it, confronted William, and smiled at the fears of the females of the establishment, who, deafened in anticipation by the coming report, were clinging round each other's necks in terror.

Cathcart suddenly lowered his weapon and appealed to De Villars;—"Innocence is always bold, but I have sometimes, too, seen guilt brasen. Now pause before I fire; for if blood be spilled, the crime be yours—you will not answer me?—Then bide the



event:—one—two—the last number was drowned in the pistol-shot—the lock was forced, the lid dashed open—and in the middle of the sulphurous smoke, Julian had leaped into the chest, and seized the pent-up and prisoned form of a man, who, armed with a dagger and provided with instruments to liberate himself from his ambush, was couching at the bottom. The apprehended assassin craved his life at Cathcart's hand, who had raised his pistol-handle to strike him down, but on reflection, permitted him to crawl slowly and unmolested from the apartment; but rushing on De Villars, he grasped him by the throat, and brought him fainting to his knee.—“Baffled murderer, I know you now! It is my cousin George Cathcart I have to thank for this night's entertainment: you are the ingenious manager of this our well-wrought melodrame. A new idea, certainly, to drive into my property in my own phaeton. I regret to have proved such a Marplot; and to compensate for your disappointment, I give you leave to complete the remainder of your journey alone and at *your own* expense;—you comprehend me. But as your India friend may suffer by the non-appearance of the trunk, I shall certainly convey it myself to town; and should she unfortunately have sailed, I shall retain it for ever as an ‘affectionate pledge’ and souvenir of my very kind relative Mr. George Cathcart. And now, ‘sweet Coz,’ adieu.”

William, leaving his servant in charge of the carriage, walked on to the next town, and procuring a fresh chaise, by untiring rapidity reached London in time to appear in court. His triumph and elation at his cousin's defeat, satisfied him too well to think of pressing a prosecution; and a few weeks after, a meeting in Battersea-fields (arising from a quarrel at roulette upon a disputed wager between single and double zero), blotted George Cathcart's name out of the page of existence, and freed his relative William from any suspicion of future attacks upon his life or rights—who never afterwards was known to offer any person, friend or stranger, a seat in his travelling-carriage.

THE GERMAN STUDENT.

CONRAD VON ALTENFELDT was the second son of a nobleman of high birth and connexions in the north of Germany, but of fortune small in proportion to the quarterings which blazoned his escutcheon, and to the liberal feelings and generous wishes of his proud but most benevolent heart. He was the father of three children—two sons and a daughter; and for these his divided possessions, at his death, made but slender provision; the elder son, in right of seniority, inheriting of course by far the larger share. Aware of this, the Baron Von Altenfeldt had decided on educating the younger, Conrad, for some profession which might enable him to procure an independence for himself, and thereby prevent his becoming a burden on his brother, when time should have bereft them of a father. In pursuance of this determination, at the usual age the promising and handsome boy was sent from the paternal roof, and entered as a student in the college of Heidelberg, there to commence a course of study which should ultimately open the way to learning, fortune, and honour, in whatever path his future inclinations might prompt him to follow.

Industrious, quick, and tractable, Conrad soon became a favourite with the professors of his college, whilst his gay and open manner, joined to much daring and courage when necessary, rendered him equally liked by his fellow-students. At the expiration of a couple of years, Conrad saw himself at the head of a class which was supposed to consist of those young men who held forth the best promise of future talent, and on whom the eyes of the whole university were fixed, as on men destined, when launched into the world, to play a high and distinguished part on its eventful stage. A third year glided peacefully on, and still Conrad pursued with ardour his routine of study, when accident made him acquainted with a young man who had entered the college but a few months, and in a very short space of time had established himself, in the opinion of all, as a person of most profligate and dissipated habits, but at the same time as being possessed of talents of no common order, and of manners fascinating in the extreme, from their light joyousness and seeming open generosity. Their rooms were contiguous—and soon Conrad Von Altenfeldt and Hans Stolberg were inseparable.

And now the exertions of the young student, in his laborious studies and efforts at distinction, began to relax; hours heretofore entirely devoted to reading and the duties of his college, were dedicated to dissipation, or lost in idle sports, harmless perhaps in themselves, but to be dreaded as leading the unthinking boy still further from those pursuits which had hitherto been his pride, and had bestowed so much happiness on those interested in his welfare. His tutor for a time beheld this defalcation in his favourite pupil with silent grief, only endeavouring to lure him back to wisdom by means so gentle, that the return might appear voluntary—but in vain;—hours of absence were soon lengthened into days—days became weeks—months—until the studio of Professor Von Blumenbach was altogether deserted.

Longer silence would have been criminal; therefore one morning—a morning following a night that had been passed in more than wonted revelry (for vice had been added to folly)—the Professor entered the bedchamber of the exhausted Conrad: unreservedly he spoke of the sorrow he experienced in witnessing an almost total blight of that harvest of talent the first years of Conrad's residence at Heidelberg had promised—adverted to his parents, and spoke of the bitterness of their disappointment; in short, drew so forcible and yet so true a picture of the fatal end Conrad was preparing for himself in thus wasting time, abilities, and wealth, that the penitent boy determined he would henceforth chase the companions of his idle hours, and endeavour again to draw around him those young men whom, by his late follies, he had almost entirely estranged.

First on his list of friends had formerly stood Louis Wallenstein, son of a much-esteemed companion in arms of Conrad's father, who was the proprietor of a large domain in the immediate neighbourhood of the town of Heidelberg. There had some of Conrad's happiest hours been passed; there in the society of the sisters of his friend;—they were young innocent girls, brought up in all the strict propriety of a German province, of sweet and simple manners, and possessing a great portion of personal beauty, particularly the eldest—at least so thought Conrad. Suzeline was about seventeen, tall and delicately formed, and gifted with that dazzling clearness of complexion and profusion of fair hair, which renders most of the German girls so peculiarly pretty.

The chosen friend of her brother, and his frequent guest at Wallenstein,—Suzeline could not long remain insensible to the evident love of Conrad. Their mutual affection was confessed, and with the consent of either family they were considered as betrothed.

So matters stood when Hans Stolberg became the corrupter of the hitherto virtuous Conrad. Few now became his visits at Wallenstein; and Suzeline, warned by her anxious brother of

the course Conrad was pursuing, received him, when he did seek her, with coldness, or with tears and reproaches but ill-brooked by the now intemperate youth, who, courted, flattered, and caressed by those who were leading him fast on to ruin, almost forgot in their society the love he owed his betrothed, or thought of it only as a clog and interruption to pleasures dazzling and intoxicating, but which concealed a path tending to the inevitable destruction of both body and soul.

As Blumenbach left his room, all this occurred to his mind with most painful accuracy, and he could not conceal from himself that he had wantonly forfeited the approbation of the worthy tutor, the friendship of Wallenstein, and the love of the gentle Suzeline.

The whole of that wretched day he tossed on his feverish pillow, with aching head and bursting heart; cursing his own folly and the vice of others, and firmly determining to lead a better course of life for the future.

Towards evening, the cool breeze and a rich setting sun tempted him from his chamber, and he went forth to walk; choosing the most unfrequented paths—fearful of encountering, in the more busy city, those young men, who would endeavour to enlist him in some plan of debauchery for the night. Lost in thought, and unmindful of his steps, he at length found himself, as twilight closed around him, in a retired part of those beautiful grounds which surround the stupendous ruins of the Castle of Heidelberg. Fatigued mentally and bodily, he threw himself on the cool refreshing turf; whilst the moon, now rising in an almost cloudless sky, streamed brightly on him through the archway which still stands to commemorate the ostentatious love of that monarch who once there “held sway.”

In the stillness of that beautiful evening he ruminated on the sage counsels of the good old Blumenbach, the repeated warnings of the friendly Wallenstein, and the gentle repinings of the lovely Suzeline. As these thoughts crossed his mind he wondered he could have allowed Hans Stolberg thus to engross him; yet owning that hours passed with that extraordinary man and his dissolute companions had not been deficient in delight. “How is it,” mentally asked the captious boy, “that almost all in this world we hail as pleasure, we are told is just what, as prudent youths, we ought most to shun?—Lovely woman, rich wine, fellowship with the gay and joyous—in short, all that excites and sets the mantling blood swelling through our veins, in that warm full tide which almost makes us forget our humanity, and gives an insight into joys old legends tell us were the privileges of the gods alone. How is it, that all this we are to forego—for what? To pore over musty books, or listen to the drone of some aged kill-joy; and, in our turn, to become as wise and

crabbed, and equally skilled in curbing and curtailing the pleasures of buoyant youth. By yon moon which now looks on me so mildly and modestly, I feel more than half inclined to throw off all restraint, drink my fill of pleasure, *and then*—ay, there it is—who can solve that?—*and then*—it is that thought which startles and restrains those not lost to all!—no—I feel I am not formed to be an entire villain; neither have I moral courage sufficient to keep me in the narrow path of virtue—but shall crawl through life a compound wise men will not trust, and one whom rogues will find a stumblingblock in their way. Still, I must now make a selection:—on the one hand fame, riches, and honour, with sweet Suzeline, await me; but to be earned with toil and self-denial:—whilst on the other, stand ready for my acceptance, intoxicating delights, hours free and uncontrolled—ecstatic joys, and Eleonora—the soul-entrancing Eleonora! Oh, that I possessed but the power of uniting these joys; by day, study, prudence, virtue, and Suzeline—by night, wine, gaiety, forgetfulness, and Eleonora! Oh, that I had the magic power of combining all this!”

“I will give you that power,” was whispered in silvery tones close to his ear.

“Who speaks?” asked the student, startled at thus hearing his very thoughts replied to, and looking hastily around him in expectation of seeing he knew not what.

“I spoke,” again sounded in his ear. “It is hopeless to expect to see me; but listen and profit. I know the subject of your inmost thoughts, and entirely sympathize with you as to the reasonableness of your complaint, which resolves itself simply into thus much—you would have the outward seeming of a most virtuous man, would rise to fame, wealth, and honour, and take a virtuous wife to your bosom—whilst, in fact, you are an unprincipled profligate, and would revel in every forbidden pleasure—ha-ha-ha! Nay, start not; you see I read your mind aright. Now, the means of being with impunity this consummate hypocrite I will empower you to obtain, under certain trifling conditions. Now fancy not that I am Lucifer himself, which your scared looks declare to be the case. I want not your soul, young man: only lend me your person, and I am content. No, I am not that exquisite Prince of Darkness; I am only a wandering spirit, unfortunately imbued with mortal passions without the power, as a mortal, of satisfying them. I began my fanciful existence in the half-crazed brain of a metaphysician, who put out all his capabilities towards producing, in this world of yours, the perfectibility of human nature; in furtherance of which, and as an example, I suppose, to his proselytes, he led a life that would have shocked an American savage; and at the height of one of the orgies celebrated by him and his neophytes, I sprang into

my mystery of being—invisible, incorporeal, but yet retaining so much of the spirit of my progenitor, that I burn to engage in mortal life. Now, boy, listen ; for this is the pact I would form with you. You lamented, but saw the incompatibility, of a life of what is called pleasure and a life of virtue. Now, I can, if so you will, enable you to quaff to the very bottom the intoxicating draught you thirst for ; I will fulfil your every wish from sunrise till sunset,—if, in return, you will allow my immaterial essence to inhabit the grosser materials which compose your body, consenting to lose all control over your actions though retaining perfect consciousness ; and then, young sir, from sunset until sunrise you shall taste delights your dull mind has never dreamed of, not even in the society of your brilliant fascinating Eleonora, or of that purer goddess of your love, sweet Suzeline.”

Conrad, with all the impetuosity of youth, was on the point of closing with this specious and wicked compact, when voices, calling on his name, sounded through the garden, and, in the next moment, a form rushed through the archway, and Conrad was locked in the embrace of his brother. Every thought and every feeling was now absorbed in pleasure at this most unexpected meeting ; and as the brothers, arm linked in arm, returned to the city, home and all its delights were vividly recalled to the recollection of the younger, by the affectionate conversation of the elder. Soon seated in Conrad's little study, their communications became still more unreserved, and Hubert adverted, though with feeling and delicacy, to the late falling off of Conrad from the paths of virtue and of duty.

“ If you could see the grief of our dear mother, Conrad, or know the mortification your conduct has occasioned our now aged father, I am convinced you would not, by your thoughtlessness and frivolity, oblige the friendly Blumenbach so often to complain. As your particular tutor, and your father's friend, the good old man had much pride in you ; and his anger at your present levity is great in proportion as this pride was gratified by your former diligence. Do, my brother, I entreat you, break through the delusions which inthral you ; delusions leading you from all that is just and honourable, to guilt and inevitable misery. Never let it be said an Altenfeldt could be a profligate—a gambler ! That I love you with an affection passing that of brothers in general, you know full well ; and you also know that were we deprived, this moment, of our excellent father, I would willingly share with you my last crust—but alas ! Conrad, I am not a free agent. In a few months my marriage with the Countess Annalie takes place, and whatever wealth may then, or hereafter, be mine, is but held in trust for those who may come after me. I speak thus because I know to what an extent

you have been imprudent. Oh! Conrad, were you but aware of the inconveniences you have occasioned our parents, aged as they are, and ill able to deprive themselves of habitual luxuries, I think you would pause before you squandered in a debauch, or staked at a gaming-table, a sum which, if lost, leaves you without other means of payment than the despoiling those whom both love and duty should teach you to succour. At dawn of day I must quit Heidelberg—I have come many miles out of my direct route to have this conversation with you; let it not, I beseech you, be that I have spoken in vain. Pause and reflect, ere too late, and be to us again that son, that brother, on whom we poured our love and blessings.”

Conrad remained silent, his face buried in his hands, which were placed on the table before which he sat; his countenance was consequently entirely concealed; but, by the convulsive heaving of his shoulders, and the quickly-drawn breath, Hubert concluded that his brother was deeply moved. He approached, and bending over him, whilst he removed from his burning forehead the clustering hair, said affectionately, “I perceive, Conrad, that you weep:—hide not those tears from me, my brother, for I regard them as the promise of a reformation which will bring happiness to us all; and believe me, I would rather witness those tears, and hear those deep-drawn sighs, than see you the merriest speaker, or loudest laughter, in one of those orgies which have, of late, so strangely fascinated you.”

Conrad took the hand of his brother and pressed it to his throbbing temples—to speak was impossible—tears choked his utterance—he arose from his chair, and falling on the neck of the pitying Hubert, there wept in bitter repentance. At length, after a severe struggle, he said, “Hubert, I trust you will find me worthy of this interest; for I will strive to be all that you could wish me: but I have a weak and wavering spirit, and can never hope to emulate your worth. Yet bear with me, I implore you, Hubert! cast me not off, and the knowledge of possessing your friendship—your esteem—may stimulate me to deserve it. Heaven bless you, my brother!”

In the morning they parted. Conrad, more calm than on the preceding evening, re-assured the anxious Hubert that his admonitions should not be unheeded. Taking his brother’s hand, he said, “Your nuptials are soon to be celebrated; I will be with you then, Hubert, and you shall find me indeed an altered man. Now, farewell! claim for me the blessing of my much loved parents, and think of me with kindness.”

Hubert returned with all a brother’s love the warm pressure of Conrad’s trembling hand—his heart was too full to allow of his speaking—they embraced in silence, and Hubert was soon far on his way to his paternal home, whilst Conrad returned to his

lonely study sad, and out of humour with himself, and with all around him. His life had latterly been one of much excitement: joyous in the extreme whilst *it* lasted, but ever, in the intervals of pleasure, visited by pain and remorse. Still it had been *excitement*, which is as absolutely necessary to a young and vigorous mind, as exercise is to the body. Happy that youth who, from choice or principle, lets nought constitute the exercise of his mind or feelings but what virtue may permit, or his conscience approve. Conrad now felt that days, nay weeks, and months, must be dragged through within the walls of that gloomy college; that he must devote himself to abstruse study, and to dry and uninteresting reading; that he must confine himself to the society of Blumenbach, avoiding all intercourse with that joy-inspiring band he once falsely called his friends—must withstand all their temptations, and, with courage, repel their lures. And Wallenstein and Suzeline? Ay, there was the oasis in this desert: he would devote himself to virtue for the sake of Suzeline.

For many months he persevered in the course of life his good sense had dictated to him to pursue. The mornings were dedicated to arduous study, the evenings to innocent recreation in the society of Suzeline and her virtuous family. The time too now approached for the marriage of his brother, and Conrad could look forward to a meeting with his relatives with unmixed pleasure. He had weaned himself, he thought, entirely from pursuits unworthy of his birth and talents, and was once more regarded by all, but his late libertine companions, as a young man of high worth and promise.

He had been deeply occupied the whole of one sultry morn in the month of August, in the translation of an abstruse and difficult Latin work. His whole mind had been employed in the task, and he was unmindful of all around him, until the intense warmth of his chamber recalled him from his abstraction. The burning evening sun streamed in at the unopened casement, and fell full on the desk of the now exhausted student. Every thing bespoke the languor attendant on the closing of a summer day: even the usually active spaniel, who was wont to play around him the moment her sagacity informed her he was unoccupied, now slumbered extended at his feet, lulled, it should seem, by the hum of numerous insects, who alone appeared busy in that oppressive atmosphere, and were droning their little songs in the broad sun-beam. Finding the closeness of his room unbearable, Conrad rose to open the window; the chapel bell struck the half-hour past six, and as he leaned forward to look into the court beneath, he saw several of the students issuing from the different portals, loitering in groups, arranging their plans for the evening.—“Ah!” he almost sighed, “there is young Richter

challenging Böhler and Hartz to join him in a sail up that lovely river, to visit, without doubt, the cottage of Jan Spiller. Well, I am no admirer of his gaudy laughter-loving daughters or of his sour wine; and yet when I think of that cool water, with its green and refreshing banks, I could almost be tempted to join their party—but they move on—they are gone—and without even a passing glance at my window: but who have we here? Alfred Müller, his brother, the Count Hiernstern, and linked on to a stranger, that very genius of mirth—Hans Stolberg. When did that dare-devil return to Heidelberg?—and see, they approach this way. Heavens! what a shout of laughter. But I must withdraw, for, if seen, Hans will not even let the strong lock of my chamber be a security against his intrusion.”—So saying, he left the window and threw himself pettishly into the chair he had just quitted. Soon his name, called in the joy-inspiring voice of Stolberg, impelled him almost involuntarily to the window,—but he did resist the call, and firmly remained in his place: again was he called, and challenged to come forth by that most musical voice. “Conrad, book-worm, runagate, answer man, or I will storm your citadel, and show no quarter. What! no answer? Then let us try what music can do;” and, in rich mellow tones, the party began a well-known bacchanalian chorus. Conrad listened, and his power of resistance wavered, but the last tones of their song now sounded faintly in distance, and his fortitude was spared further trial.

Long did he remain in sad rumination, gazing on the distant mountains: the setting sun now prepared to dip behind their summits, and the mysterious whisper in the garden of Heidelberg recurred to the memory of Conrad: that whisper so long forgotten, so unfortunately remembered.

“Could it have been fancy?—was I dreaming?—It proffered fairly, I must allow, be it what it might; and, when I look at these ponderous tomes, and know how much of their essence I must infuse into my already-tired brain, I could almost wish it were indeed reality, and that I had in truth a Spirit so accommodating at my call.”

“Command me,” sounded most musically in his ear. Conrad started—looked around his antique chamber, and, like a second Don Cleofas, almost expected to see the *diable* himself walk out of the ink-bottle. But no—all was still, and he was assured that he must be alone.

“This will never do!” he at length exclaimed. “I must banish these fancies, or I shall become as mystified as any German student past, present, or to come, who has lived on ghosts, witches, spirits, and hobgoblins. Come Latin, come Greek!—bring me to common sense and plain matter of fact. And here

is honest Frantz to dispel, by his presence, the mist of these illusions."

As he spoke, his servant entered, bringing a note which, by the superscription, he saw at a glance came from Stolberg. He laid it on his desk unopened, whilst a cold shudder ran through his frame. Again the voice sounded in his ear, tempting him to read. He broke the seal, and read as follows :

"Conrad, why have you forsaken us? Have wine, love, and beauty lost *all* charm for you? We are now at the paradise of Eleonora—come to us, and all will be forgotten.

"Yours,

"STOLBERG."

Under this was written in pencil, in a beautifully delicate character—"All will be *forgiven*—your Eleonora."

"Stolberg is at the house of Eleonora—*your* Eleonora," again whispered the spirit in his ear. "Will you not now make essay of my power?"

"I am thine, demon, or whatever thou art," answered the infatuated youth; and, rushing from the college, was soon in the splendid saloon of the beautiful but erring Eleonora.

When he entered, Stolberg was leaning over the couch on which she was seated, and he fancied he saw a glance of much meaning exchanged by them, as he approached; but Stolberg received him with an air so open and unembarrassed, and Eleonora so undisguisedly expressed her happiness at again seeing the long-estranged Conrad, that, seated by her side, all was soon forgotten, save the brilliant creature with whom he conversed. The night was spent in every species of refined dissipation. Eleonora avowed her esteem—her love—the gaming-table spread its lures—and wines, rich and exquisite, tempted the most fastidious to drink, even to excess.

Conrad remained unscathed. Many times that night was his purse emptied of its contents; yet, at a wish, behold! it was replenished. Goblet after goblet was drained, still Conrad retained his senses cool and unimpaired. Satiety was dispelled—fatigue unfelt:—his dissolute companions regarded him with wonder, and to himself he was incomprehensible. Morning, pure, calm morning, at length dawned; and, as Conrad entered his own quiet room, the superhuman excitement which had held him the whole of the night began to subside; the fresh breeze from the open casement blew on his flushed cheek: the sun too, he observed from the reflection on the opposite mountains, was rising. The power of the demon was for the time gone, and Conrad could reflect.

"Would that I could recal this dreadful night!" was his first thought.

“That is not possible,” sounded in his sickening ear. “But the sun is up—it is for you to command.”

Conrad, when he had changed his dress, and washed the wine-stains from his face, felt perfectly refreshed, and in every way competent to the morning duties. His head was more than commonly clear; and, in a metaphysical argument, he evinced so much perspicuity, that he was complimented by the professor of logic on his composition, both for the skill he had shown in conducting his argument, and for the elegance and purity of the style and language; and Professor Küper was not in the habit of making further comment than a cold approval. Conrad was astonished himself at the power of disputation he had shown, and at the ease with which he had accomplished a most difficult task, and that too within a few hours of quitting a scene of most unbridled debauchery. He returned from the schools to his study, animated by the praises that had been poured upon him.

“Have you further commands?” was demanded in that mystical silver tone.

“Commands, did you say, most delightful spirit?—Yes, a thousand,” exclaimed the excited student. “Only let me have such mornings and days of triumph as this has proved, and you may rule me ever, even for such nights of misrule as the last: for I see not but I am the better for it.”

“The *better* for it!” echoed the good genius of Conrad—that is to say, his conscience, as though in mockery repeating; and, for a moment, conscience did prevail—alas! but for a moment—for, with this demon at his call, every thing appeared in his power—fame, wealth, Suzeline, and Eleonora.

Brilliant and mysterious was now the existence of the student. Winning and deserving high academic honours, his rooms were crowded by day with men of science and learning—until the sun dipping behind the western mountains, the sway of his directing demon began, and then each succeeding hour was marked by revelry—mad, fiend-like revelry:—folly led to folly, and crime to crime, until the star of day compelled this “busy devil,” by his compact, again to servility. Oh, how hateful this bondage soon became to Conrad!—but he had thoughtlessly embarked in it, and was now become too deeply engaged not to be forced to abide the consequences, be they what they might.

Disturbances now grew frequent in the streets of Heidelberg; dreadful tales were told of the misconduct of the students; and, to the surprise of the professors of the college, the hero of every nocturnal riot was Conrad Von Altenfeldt. The young and beautiful wife of a respectable citizen was torn from her home: chance directed the distracted husband to the place of her concealment—a lone house, in the suburbs of the city, inhabited by

wretches whose profession was but too unequivocal. She was alone, it is true, when her husband entered the ruinous and squalid chamber; but she persisted in affirming that it was the young Count Altenfeldt who had lured her away—with what intent she shuddered but to think of.

The only son of the pastor of a neighbouring village, placed at the college in order to enable him to take up the profession of his aged father, whose infirmities were fast growing on him, had been enticed to the house of Eleonora de Wontner, and there, intoxicated by the blandishments of beauty, the power of wine, and every other fascination of this Circean abode, wrecked all that had hitherto made life happy! his self-esteem was lost, entirely lost, in one short night—and the tempter who had urged him on was Altenfeldt.

The lovely daughter of the college gardener had been seen, at midnight, rushing from the turret staircase which led to the apartments of Conrad, her dress in disorder, her hair dishevelled, and shrieking in a voice of agony, “Mercy, mercy! save me from Von Altenfeldt.” Ida was clasped to the bosom of her affrighted parent—but not in innocence.

The only son of a widow had been ruined at a gaming-table—ruined past hope. To live a beggar—and, above all, to see a sick and sorrow-worn mother pining in penury—was more than human courage could endure.—Wilhelm Dortmann was found a disfigured corpse in the cemetery of the college. A note, addressed to Conrad, was found on the table of the unhappy man; it contained few words; but when delivered to Conrad, at mid-day, those few words were as a dagger in his heart.

“You have destroyed the son—pity and protect the mother.—W. D.”

And did Altenfeldt bear this worse than slavery, without a struggle, to free himself from the sway of a master become too mighty for him?—No—often when day has dawned, and the bright and joyous sun has dispelled, with the darkness of night, the power of the fiend, the enormities committed in the form of Conrad, but by the agency of the demon who enthralled him, have staggered him with the weight and amount of the sins he felt he was thus so heedlessly incurring; and he has vowed to free himself from that power which was hurrying him to sure destruction both here and hereafter. But then the labyrinth of learning in which he had embarked, and the giddy height he had attained, solely by the spirit which ruled him, rose to his contemplation, and pride, that worldly despot, held him still enslaved to his destroyer.

And Suzeline?—was she entirely forgotten in this intoxicating alternation of the daily acquisition of fame and honour, and the nightly revel and debauch? No; not forgotten, but wilfully

shunned, as a being of too pure a mould to be contaminated by the presence of such a wretch as Conrad could not but feel he had become. Her birthday approached, and an affectionate billet from his betrothed prayed for his presence; to refuse was impossible, and yet the hour of meeting was fixed for that of *sunset*—for that hour, when, losing all control over himself, Conrad was doomed to be the passive agent of a demon. He determined to see her, to plead indisposition, and excuse himself from attending on the night of her fête. She received him with all the affection she felt, and, laughing at his plea, said, “You bookworm, it is the air of that gloomy college which has stolen the ruddy hue from your cheek. I will listen to no excuse; the fresh breeze of the river will refresh you, dear Conrad, and you shall guide my boat to the pavilion which my brother has raised for me on its bank, and which is to be our ball-room. To-morrow at sunset, I shall look for you.”

“At sunset, Suzeline?” half muttered the student. “Never—I would sooner tear this bursting heart from my tortured breast, than be with you after sunset.”

Tears rushed to the eyes of Suzeline, and, mournfully shaking her head, she said, “I fear it is too true, that I am but second in the heart of Conrad, a heart in which I would reign alone. Can you not spare me one short evening? Are hours passed away from her who, rumour has told me, has supplanted me in your affections, so irksome that not one can be endured from her side?—fie on it. I could have thought all were false in this world; father—brother—sister—friend—even my mother—all, save Conrad. Now is the hated truth forced on my conviction, and in to-morrow’s fête, desolate, wretched, and alone, I shall be pointed at by all as the forsaken one of Count Altenfeldt.”

“Suzeline,” gasped the agitated Conrad, “I am on the very brink of madness, and yet you urge me forward. I *will* be at your fête.”

“Conrad,” said Louis, who then joined them, “I think, by Jove, you are indeed mad!—what is all this? My sweet Suzeline looks heart-stricken, and you the counterpart of Faust, when in the clutches of the fell Mephistophiles.”

A loud unearthly laugh was the only reply of Conrad, who, turning to Suzeline, said, “At sunset expect me,” and left the castle.

That night was passed as many a preceding one had been. Eleonora was the Armida of the hour—all was bacchanalian riot and excess, and Stolberg the presiding god. Again morning dawned, and with the sun came remorse and shame to Conrad—the morning, too, of the fête of her whom, when he was not under the influence of the fiend, he loved so fondly, so purely. Again he decided not to join the evening festival; and as the time ap-

proached that was appointed for quitting the city, he hastened to the apartment of his friend, but there learnt that Louis had quitted Heidelberg some time, on a summons from his father.

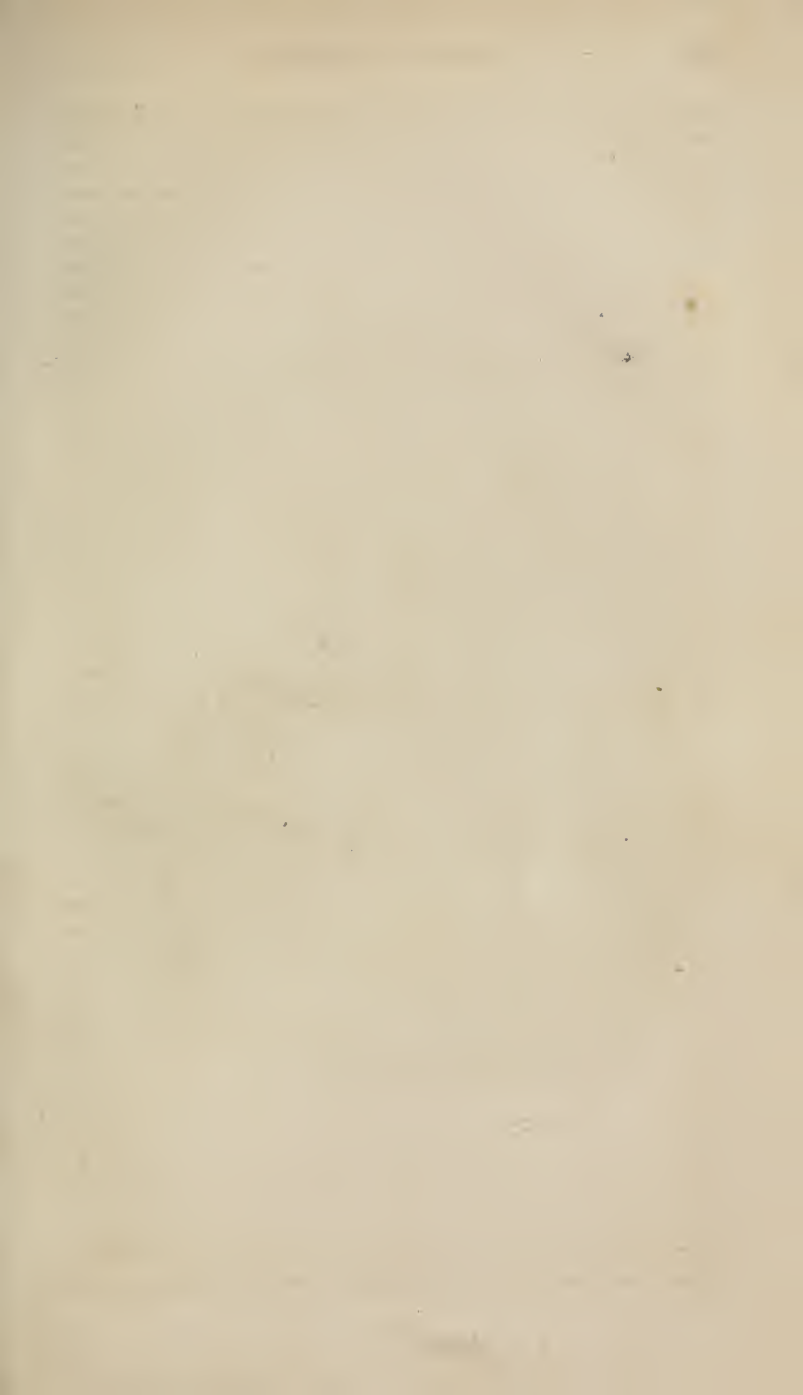
This absence was a sensible relief; and, immediately returning to his chamber, Conrad threw himself into a chair, fully determined nothing should induce him to quit it until the bright sun, which was now dipping behind the western hills, should return to the eastern hemisphere, bearing life and joy, and when the dominion of the demon would cease, who had given such direful proof of his power and evil propensities. Lost in thought, the student pondered on the means of ridding himself of a thrall which had become so intolerable, but in vain, all was hopeless.

The last golden ray faded from the so lately burnished sky, and slowly the young and silver moon assumed her modest reign; all was hushed in the now deserted courts of the college, and the soft evening air entering the opened casement, fanned gently with its freshness the fever-flushed cheek of Conrad. Presently his head drooped on his chest—he dozed; anon he roused himself, but an unusual heaviness overpowered him, and anon he slept—soundly slept, until suddenly awakened by the sound of gay music, and the blaze of numerous lights. Gazing around, he perceived that, in rich and gay attire, he was seated on a mossy couch by the side of Suzeline, in a pavilion which appeared a wilderness of flowers; gay dancers hovered round them, and Suzeline, bright in simple beauty, seemed the very soul of love.

Dazzled by the uncommon brilliancy of the scene, all appeared to the bewildered Conrad as enchantment, and he might have deemed the whole to be an illusive dream but for a fiendish laugh which rang in his ears, and a voice, not to be mistaken, which whispered, “Fool—idiot—did you think to rob me of to-night? a night, too, which gives to me the long coveted Suzeline!”

Altenfeldt started on his feet, and essayed to quit the scene of festivity, which now seemed to him a charnel-house filled with mouldering spectres—he would have said, “Fly Suzeline!” but his voice was lost in a murmuring sigh, and he felt but too truly that he might *wish* to avoid and avert the horrors about to be accomplished—but that to *act* was no longer in his power. Instead of warnings, he poured into the chaste ear of the yet innocent maiden vows of the most impassioned love; instead of leading Suzeline to the side and protection of her mother, she was in his arms, and they were lost in the mazes of the waltz; and, giddy with the intoxicating dance, soon forgot earth—heaven—all, save love.

Midnight sounded—the guests were departing, and Conrad and his Suzeline were sought for in the windings of the brilliantly illuminated walks that surrounded the pavilion—long and vain





was the search—vain the repeated name of Suzeline and of Altenfeldt—all was dismay and confusion. The wreath which had adorned the hair of the ill-fated girl was found faded and trampled on—the veil of silver gauze which had shaded her lovely figure, was discovered torn and soiled on the bank of the river, which slept in peace, save when, gently rippled by the light night-breeze, it danced in the glittering moonbeam—all unconscious that its now unruffled bosom had so lately proved the grave of betrayed and self-immolated innocence. Silence soon reigned in the late joyous scene—desolation seemed to make the spot her own from that terrific hour—and even now, as they pass that ruined bower, fearful mothers press close to their bosoms their trembling daughters and sigh for Suzeline of Wallenstein!

An hour after midnight, the Count Altenfeldt was seen striding through the streets of Heidelberg, with a flushed countenance and disordered dress. None dared to impede the rapidity of his progress, and, unstayed, he reached the house of Eleonora de Wortner. An immense crowd was tumultuously assembled round the gates, but all made way for the impetuous Conrad, though they muttered as he passed—“Ay, go and see what you have brought about. Jealousy and murder go hand in hand.” Still he strode on until he reached the saloon of Eleonora—that room, the scene of all his guilty pleasures. There, on a couch by which stood one solitary menial, was extended the lifeless form of the still beautiful Eleonora. The flowers which had ornamented her bosom, scarce faded, were clotted with the blood which flowed from a wound in her temple, in one single stream, finding its way down her marble neck, and staining in one or two places the white satin robe in which she was attired. Her features were composed, and, but for those crimson stains, it might have been thought she slept; so calm, so placid looked in death that guilty one. It was a soul-harrowing sight, even for the fiend-bound; and, turning from it with horror, he beheld, through the opposite door, Hans Stolberg stretched on a bed, insensible, if not dead. He was attended by a surgeon, who appeared to be dressing a wound. Conrad approached the bed, when Stolberg, in the extreme of agony, uttered a fearful groan, and, unclosing his glazed eyes, glared in horror on Altenfeldt.

After a dreadful pause, he uttered, in a voice barely articulate, “Ah, wretch! and are you come at last, to see and to enjoy your work? Who triumphs now, Altenfeldt or Stolberg? I have removed her from your intermeddling love, and would have lived to have sent you also to your reckoning, but for these officious fools,” and, as he spoke, he drove from him, with a sudden effort, the trembling and panic-struck surgeon; and,

springing from the bed, clutched Conrad by the throat, and would have strangled him in that superhuman grasp, had not the agonies of death at that instant seized him. His convulsive hands relaxed their hold, and the same moment saw him a corpse on the floor.

In the confusion which ensued, Conrad rushed from that fatal house, and, through unfrequented streets, reached the college. The gates were closed for the night, and he was turning from them, when he fancied he saw a figure in white move within the portal, and thought he heard a sob of distress. He approached, when again the fiendish laugh burst forth :

“ Woman, you escaped me once, but now you are mine, in spite of fate.”

It was the once honoured and adored wife of the worthy citizen—now an outcast, driven by a jealous, heart-broken husband, with blows and curses, from his door—an outcast, lone and unsheltered. Where she wandered that fatal night, none could tell; but, at daybreak, she was found in an obscure alley, dying, and in a state which baffles all description, and her last sigh was a curse on Altenfeldt. And Conrad?—The whole of that turbulent night he wandered through the city, joining in every scene of profligacy and riot he chanced to fall in with. At length morning dawned; a bright and heavenly sun arose, and the power of the now sated fiend over the unfortunate student was at an end,—and for ever!

For hours had Conrad been sought by the alarmed and faithful Frantz. The whole of Heidelberg was in an uproar, demanding justice, and vowing vengeance on the head of Altenfeldt. At length, at midday, he was discovered, a raving maniac, in the faded pavilion of poor Suzeline. No time was lost in conveying him to the house of his father. Broken in constitution, and a confirmed lunatic, Conrad roamed about the scenes of his youth, unconscious of all, yet incessantly heaping curses on the fiend, who, in the “ eternal now” of madness, he fancied still held sway over him.

Years rolled on: his afflicted parents slept in the tomb of their ancestors—the lovely infant of Hubert, the virtuous Hubert, and his estimable Annalie, had reached manhood—but still no change was perceptible in the afflicting malady of the now no longer youthful Conrad. Deep was the sorrow of his attached brother, and his ever-faithful Frantz; but, at length, it was announced by the medical attendant, that he thought reason was slowly but surely regaining her power over the mind of Altenfeldt; and, in the course of another year, he was pronounced as convalescent. Heaven in mercy had vouchsafed to withdraw its severe visitation. Recommended by his physician to travel, and to avoid all scenes fraught with saddening reminiscences,

which, as memory resumed its power, might endanger a return of his malady, Conrad again left his home, Germany, and all that was dear to him, and wandered, a second Cain, through the world, followed only by Frantz. Many were the climes he visited, but never again did he enter his native land!

ELLEN CORBET:

A TALE OF THE HEART.

ELLEN CORBET was the daughter of a fisherman, belonging to one of the little marine towns on the coast of Sussex. She was distinguished in early youth by a degree of simple gracefulness, rather uncommon among lasses of her rank in life, and which served to set off, in a very interesting manner, a countenance characterized more by delicacy and intellectual expression than what is generally understood by the term *beauty*. We will not stop to inquire whether the former quality is not in itself beauty of the highest grade, but proceed to state that Ellen, to a docile and capacious mind, added a facility of disposition which might have led persons apt in drawing deductions to prognosticate unfavourably as to her power in resisting temptation whenever it should occur.

Her parents, although moving in an humble sphere, were by no means penuriously circumstanced. They had wherewithal to live in decent competence—the fruits of many a year of hard labour, added to still-continued exertions on the part of Corbet himself. Ellen was their only child; and the old people took great pride in purchasing for her all the little gaieties their means could compass. Hence she was regarded, in no small degree, superior to the generality of the country maidens around her, who had neither natural aptitude, nor ambition, to step one pace forward from the *rank and file* in which nature had incorporated them.

She grew up thus in tranquillity and seclusion—gradually, like the rose, unfolding her charms—the various charms of innocence, loveliness, and good temper; until the son of a gentleman residing in the place returned from college. This youth and Ellen had been playmates, when children, at the common infantile school of the town; and Edward Leslie, on his return, failed not to recognise, with mingled surprise and admiration,

his little schoolfellow in the blooming, shapely, and retiring Ellen Corbet.

Ellen herself noticed not the young gentleman's return. His situation in life seemed so much above her own, that she was aware of no mental association which should lead her to remark the occurrence. Soon after, however, she perceived that, in her little occasional rambles, she was almost always followed by a genteel-looking youth—though at too great a distance for her clearly to distinguish his person; till one evening, instigated probably by that principle so commonly an inmate of female bosoms, she made a sharp turn, and walking briskly forward, soon came in contact—for it was he—with the handsome Edward Leslie.

Edward stopped, and gave the fair girl the salutation of the day—proceeding to remind her of their childish frolics, and to remark upon her altered and improved appearance. What else they chatted about, as they walked slowly toward her father's dwelling, we will not pretend to say—nor to account for that crimson tint which suddenly flushed over her face and neck at parting, whilst her eyes were bent upon the ground. Suffice it to say that, from this hour, Ellen's rambles were seldom solitary.

They who have ever been accustomed to live in a country town, know how much the population of such places is inclined to inquisitiveness and scandal. The Paul Pry principle is constantly in activity; and should food not be duly presented for the supply of this morbid appetite, the good folks set about concocting it for themselves. Thus, the eyes of all the inhabitants of ——— were turned upon the circumstance of Ellen's familiarity with the rich landowner's son, and many were the speculations hazarded both as to the origin and issue of this connexion.

And Ellen herself could not but see the impropriety of which she was thus guilty. But she loved; her young breast was touched with that sweet passion which never fails to ennoble its object, and she felt that to be joked with, and sneered at, on account of Edward Leslie, was preferable to being the open and acknowledged sweetheart of any other man.

The parents, on both sides, disapproved of the intimacy. Old Corbet, whose heart overflowed with tenderness and anxiety for his sweet daughter, cautioned and persuaded her to check the growing prepossession for an object placed beyond her honourable reach; while Mrs. Leslie remonstrated with Edward, in strong terms, against the sin of deceiving so fair and amiable a girl: and when he protested that nothing was further from his intention than to deceive her, launched forth with increased vehemency against so degrading a connexion. At length Ellen, distressed by the adverse circumstances surrounding their attach-

ment, and really believing that she had acted wrong in permitting its growth, summoned all the resolution she could muster—and, in spite of her lover's most earnest prayers and entreaties, firmly abstracted herself from his society.

Things were in this position when an incident occurred which served to throw over the whole affair a new character. Mr. Leslie, sen. had inherited, from his father, a good estate which he farmed himself. He had a large family, most of whom were settled in the world—when, rather late in life, a passion that had predominated somewhat in his youth, but slumbered during the intermediate period, again developed itself with twofold vehemence. It was the passion of gaming. Through its indulgence, Mr. Leslie had sustained repeated losses—yet were they insufficient to eradicate this vice, which, like the fabled basilisk, attracted him too strongly, and held him, as it were, spell-bound.

The instances are unfortunately numerous wherein this accursed propensity plunges its victim into the very profound of human misery. In the case we are recording, the family of Mr. Leslie, although aware of the existence of the evil to a limited degree, yet by no means guessed its full extent. It was therefore with equal surprise and consternation, they one morning received a letter from London (where Mr. Leslie spent a considerable portion of his time) couched in broken and scarcely coherent sentences—and intimating that he was a ruined man, and should be compelled to seek the shelter of another country.

This communication was shortly followed by the return of Mr. Leslie, who seemed somewhat more composed than when he had written. He stated, that he had revolved in his mind all the circumstances of their position, and that no resource appeared to him so eligible as that of *emigration*.

This was a sad blow to the pride and to the hopes of a family who had held up their heads among even the old gentry of the neighbourhood. It required no small fortitude to quit a spot endeared by numberless of the sweetest associations; a spot too on which nature appeared—*now* as if in mockery—to lavish all her charms. The snug yet substantial house, set, as it were, amidst embowering trees; the long close-shaven lawn which stretched away toward the entrance-gates, and was bordered on each side by the choicest of odorous and flowering plants;—the garden-terrace on the right, from whose gentle rise the magnificent ocean was seen, assuming from time to time all its variety of tints and moods;—the renouncing these, together with the friendship of the rich and goodwill of the poor surrounding them, might be likened to a task hard to learn—a cup bitter to empty.

“Ill news,” says the old adage, “travels apace;” and it is quite extraordinary how soon an event affecting *unfavourably* the for-

tunes of any of its inhabitants—more particularly those in a superior sphere—gets circulated in a country place. The change that awaited the Leslie family soon became town talk; and amongst others, the news found an unwelcome recipient in Ellen Corbet. The poor girl's thoughts recurred with double earnestness to her lover: latterly, she had suffered his image alone to be present to her imagination: that same evening, she felt in sweet though sad reality the pressure of his infolding arms.

And what led the fair girl now to seek that which she so long had shunned?—What, but triumphant love!—set free from restraint, by the consciousness that it would no longer be misconstrued. What, but the all-absorbing, all-purifying principle which drew the youthful Juliet to her balcony amidst the dews and shadows of night to meet the innocent enemy of her house—and caused the princely Imogen to select a nameless advocate in preference to all the nobles that thronged her father's court?—“We shall hear no more of Ellen Corbet's love for young Leslie,” muttered the goodnatured village gossips;—from the hour in which she learnt that fortune had abandoned his family, her fidelity to him was decided and irrevocable.

Preparations were now busily made for the removal of the Leslies to Upper Canada; and as Edward had no profession or immediate prospects in England, it was arranged that he should be a sharer in their new speculation. A grant of land, sufficient for both father and son, was obtained in the usual way, and steps taken to make over the property in England to Mr. Leslie's creditors.

Ellen's parents watched the course of these proceedings with satisfaction. “It will put an end to this harebrained attachment,” said old Corbet, “in the best way: by removing from my girl's eyes the object of her folly.” How greatly, therefore, were they thrown aback, when Ellen took occasion to declare her purpose of following her lover. Gently, but with a degree of quiet resolution hitherto undeveloped by her, did she express this determination, and her parents soon perceived that it would be vain to persevere in remonstrances against it.

It was arranged among the Leslies, that Edward should first go out and get things properly in train for the reception of his friends. He took with him several young men belonging to the neighbourhood and willing to seek a new field of action, to assist in clearing the ground, &c.: and having himself, when a lad, been a constant observer of agricultural labours, he was well qualified to superintend their exertions.

But he quitted not his native town ere he had obtained the plighted troth of Ellen, and her sacred promise to join him as soon as he should apprise her that he had a home wherein to

welcome and receive her. "Then," whispered he, "with what alacrity shall I fly to meet my bride—the dear one whose anticipated presence will sweeten all my labours and anxieties!"

He departed; and in due course of time came an intimation that his family might set forth on their voluntary exile. It might be reasonably imagined—for they well knew how matters stood between Edward and Ellen—that Mr. and Mrs. Leslie would descend from the high ground they had formerly taken, and display their sense of the damsel's disinterested affection by offering her their countenance and protection across the Atlantic. But, although kind and generous in some respects to persons below them, they had not sufficient magnanimity for this: and, probably, the very circumstance of their reduced condition tended in this particular to increase their hauteur. Be that as it may, they quitted England without making Ellen any communication; and our heroine, with beating heart yet unflinching resolution, awaited the despatch from Edward, which was to be the signal for her solitary voyage.

It came; and she, without hesitation, prepared to leave her home, her friends, her country, to seek a foreign land and a strange connexion: she a young and timid maiden, who, under any other circumstances, would have shrunk from journeying, unaccompanied, a dozen miles from her father's cottage. Oh, thou mysterious sentiment! thou electric spark, whose vibration causes the crooked to become straight, and the rough places plain, to what heroic achievements, to what abandonment of self, and scorn of danger, wilt thou not impel thy true votaries!

Edward had pointed out to her a certain vessel, commanded by a gentleman of whom he had obtained some knowledge, and whom he had led to expect so interesting a passenger. To this gentleman Ellen procured an application to be made, requesting to learn when and whence he started; and at the precise hour his answer specified, our true heroine stepped from a Thames wherry on board the bark which was to waft her to the half-savage land of Canada.

Meanwhile the young planter proceeded briskly in his several preparations. Enormous trees, whose tops seemed lost in the clouds, fell in great numbers beneath the axes of Edward's workmen, and yet abundance remained to surround and shelter the two commodious though simple habitations which rose amidst the solitude, and constituted the first innovation of the principle of comfort upon its rudeness and desolation. The tracts, thus cleared, were found to possess all those qualities desirable in the pursuits of agriculture, which were carried on without the attention being abstracted by any other points—for the profoundest silence reigned here, and was only interrupted, from time to

time, by the savage cries of the Indians, as they followed the chase; formidable enemies to the isolated colonist, but inspiring little dread in Robert, who had made up his mind to encounter danger as well as fatigue.

Twelve months had now elapsed since they had felled the first tree, and already did this new estate begin to assume the character of a regular farm. A space of several hundred acres was carefully planted, and a rich harvest of wheat and rye promised to crown the exertions of the indefatigable young man, whose activity must be estimated with a regard to the prospect of independence in which he had been brought up. His own little mansion, constructed of trunks of trees, carefully hewn and prepared for the purpose, was placed upon a gentle slope, towards the entrance of the entire plantation; and that intended for his parents was of somewhat larger dimensions, with a little attempt at architectural display, and situated more towards the centre of the enclosure. A few clumps of trees had been tastefully left standing immediately around these houses; whilst wild roses and other flowering shrubs added to the ornamental part of the retired dwellings. Dense masses of wood bounded the horizon in every direction. One solitary opening in the woods displayed a view of Lake Erie, whose pure waters reflected the rays of the sun, and gave repose to the eye, wearied by dwelling on the sombre tints of the forest.

To those accustomed to live in a thickly-peopled country, where all the conveniences and luxuries of civilization are continually at command, this habitation could scarce appear other than a dismal prison; yet Edward, although he had been bred up in affluence, and in England, when he looked on the result of his labours, felt a glow of satisfaction and delight—for they *were* the result of his labours. He might be almost termed the creator of all those marks of advancing civilization spread around him; and, as he gazed on the pretty though homely dwellings above mentioned, and the numerous cots of his workmen peeping here and there from many a little sheltered nook, his heart swelled with exultation as he thought, "I can at any rate welcome my Ellen here, and she shall be future lady of the manor over a new and a faithful tenantry."

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie had arrived some time, and begun to feel a little settled in their transatlantic abode—although their habits, confirmed by years, did not yield to new circumstances so flexibly as Edward's—when Ellen set foot once more on *terra firma*, after a passage which had tried her firmness in more ways than one. As soon as the excitement of starting had left her mind, there came over it a sense of strangeness and solitude—added to which, a vague presentiment of some evil at hand—an emotion for which she could not account—troubled her inmost spirit:

it was therefore with no small pleasure she disembarked, on reaching the end of her voyage, and found her betrothed in readiness to receive her.

Edward, according to previous arrangement, conveyed the blushing girl to the house of a gentleman, a brother planter, whose residence was within a couple of leagues from his own. Here Ellen was to abide until the second day after her arrival, upon which the marriage ceremony was fixed to take place, the daughter of her kind host officiating as bridemaids, and a reverend gentleman from Quebec performing the holy rite.

And the long-wished-for day dawned at length upon the faithful pair. Edward had prevailed on his parents to assist at and to bless his nuptials; and reduced a little in feeling and expectations, they at last made a virtue of necessity. Most of the surrounding planters of respectability, who dwell within a reasonable distance, were bidden to the festivity; and the wedding-feast, if not so choice and elegant as might be enjoyed in England, displayed an abundance of excellent and substantial fare, which was succeeded by the production of a variety of both foreign and home-made wines—the whole served with zeal and precision that amply compensated for the absence of powdered menials and a French cook.

The good liquor went round, and the joke was sported with almost primeval simplicity and heartiness, when the approaching dusk reminded Edward and his party that it was time to journey toward home.

The greater part of the company expressed their intention to escort the young couple to their dwelling; and, the horses being saddled, they set forth, Edward leading Ellen's steed—not from apprehension, for she was a good horsewoman, but from the impulse of affection. They followed first a regular highway, then struck into a path, leading through the forest; when Edward, better mounted than the rest, and impatient to reach home, advanced before his companions, and soon insensibly left between them, and himself and bride, a considerable space.

The lovers rode gaily and speedily forward—until, on turning a sharp angle, formed by the forest path, they were alarmed by hearing a wild and sudden shout. Ellen's steed was startled and sprang forward, and Edward was in the act of dashing on to seize its reins, when a blow from behind struck him from his horse: he lay upon the ground stunned. He soon, however, recovered perception, but it was to find himself alone. Both horses, even, had disappeared. He scrambled up; he gazed around; he shouted the name of his beloved;—in vain! Madened by the violence of his anguish, he awaited not the coming up of the bridal party, but followed a track pointed out to him by broken branches and marks of horses' hoofs. For several

miles did the bereaved man pursue his venturesome and painful way—until, just as the declining sun was gilding the extreme verge of the horizon, he saw the trees open before him, and expand gradually into the clearing that marked an Indian encampment.

Edward was aware that it was now necessary to be extremely cautious. He had traced the footmarks to this point, and felt instinctively sure that hither his bride had been conveyed. He continued to move stealthily among the trees that surrounded the clearing, and soon saw that which convinced him his surmises were correct. The spot he had reached was of a peculiar kind, and under happier circumstances would have drawn forth his admiration! It was a kind of oasis in the wilderness. A bubbling rill descended from an abrupt and jagged eminence that rose on one hand, forming itself into a little lake at the foot—on whose dancing waters the moon (which had now risen) cast a silver lustre. A few rude shreds were scattered about the fountain, and stretched on the grass lay the dusky figures of three Indians.

Our hero paused, in doubt what further course he should pursue. He did not see the person of his Ellen, but doubted not she was within one of the temporary huts. He listened to the conversation of the Indians, the earnestness of which was favourable to his ambush. They were warmly disputing; and, as he at length made out, their dispute related to the possession of some prize. After a while, two of these men started to their feet, and commenced a desperate conflict, the third appearing to act as umpire. Edward trembled from the excess of his excitement. Should one of these combatants fall, or should they, by a still more fortunate chance, disable each other, the odds would be turned greatly in his favour. This result soon partially occurred. One of the natives succeeded in wounding and disarming his opponent; and in the next moment, the third party led forth, from an adjacent shed, the prize—Edward's beloved and half unconscious wife!

The indignant young man could withhold no longer. With one bound he sprang upon the scene of action, made towards the Indians, and seized the weapon of the prostrate combatant, while Ellen, on recognising him, shrieked with mingled apprehension and delight. But alas! weak and exhausted as Leslie had become, he was speedily overpowered by his antagonists, who had been aided likewise by the defeated party. They were about, in fact, to follow up their advantage by the sacrifice of the European, when a new actor appeared upon the scene. This was a young man whose accoutrements and deportment proclaimed him to be an Indian chief. His presence arrested the purpose of the victors. He instantly demanded the circum-

stances of the affray ; and, on learning them, to the utter surprise of Edward, pronounced the following decision :

“ Children of the Forest, your leader feels shame for you ! The Europeans who encroach upon our boundaries, should be taught to respect, not to despise us. Your conduct but tends meanly to prove their boasted superiority. Strangers, you are free : depart in peace ;—and if, as it should seem, ye are affianced, remember in after life, and transmit to your posterity, the truth that an Indian can act justly.”

Thus saying, he retired, and drew after him, his abashed followers ; while Leslie supported his now reviving bride from the spot. By dint of great exertion, they had advanced a considerable way in the direction of home, when they were met by several of their friends, who were scouring the country in search of them, and hailed their return with enthusiasm.

And Edward and Ellen *did* remember the friendly interposition of the Indian chief ;—and took closer to their hearts that charitable and ennobling maxim, that all tribes of the great family of man are inherently equal in the eyes of the Supreme Originator, and that the voice of an exalted nation may find a vent even from the bosom of a reputed savage.

SABINE HALL ;

OR, RECOLLECTIONS OF YOUTH.

I IMBIBED oxygen for the first time under circumstances somewhat more favourable than nine-tenths of mankind usually do, inasmuch as I was born, not with a silver spoon in my mouth, nor possessed of two thousand acres of fruitful land, but with half only of those useful appendages, being a twin. I and my brother had no sooner become terrestrial beings, than my father (as antiquated a mortal as ever had sons, and better versed in the Roman history than the sacred), determined on naming us after those two famous heroes and demi-gods, to whom tradition ascribes the foundation of that wonderful empire which subjected to its dominion the nations of the earth, both civilized and barbarous, and instructed man in all the arts and sciences for upwards of a thousand years. Accordingly, on the first dawn of our existence, the curate (*pedagogus parochialis*) of my father's parish was summoned to the family mansion (lest dame Nature should play any freaks with her new-born creatures), to confer on us the patronymics of Romulus and Remus.

The good man, whose predilections of course were for *Christian*-names, betrayed in his countenance a misapprehension of my father's instructions. No doubt it occurred to him, that our mother had never taken the vestal vow—that our father was as unlike Mars, as she was Venus—that we had never floated on the Tiber in a basket, nor been rescued from its torrent by a civilized wolf; and that it was more probable we should build a dog-kennel on one of our patrimonial acres in Shropshire, than found a second Rome. Be this as it may, the worthy pastor did as he was bidden, and proceeded to commit what he deemed an offence against the scriptural nomenclature; the baptismal office or rite was performed, and his clerical scruples overcome with libations of my father's best port, plentifully quaffed, from votive cups, to the rising fame of the new-made Christians—certainly a wiser course than to have his name inscribed in his patron's black book, for nonconformity to his wishes. Thus classically named, classically did we shoot up through our infancy and boyhood. Like our ancient prototypes, we seemed to betray, or rather indicate, a precocity both of animal and mental endowment—on contemplating which, our parent appeared to acquire an additional altitude to his figure (already measuring nearly seven feet, and as slender and erect as a Norway pine), and his mind was strongly impressed with visions of the glorious destiny awaiting his offspring. Poor man! while dreaming perpetually on the past yet splendid era of Roman glory, or on the golden future his sons were to attain, the present quite escaped his calculations; our Herculean energies and propensities never entered his pericranium, although scarcely a day passed in which, either an arrow discharged from a crossbow, a stone hurled from a sling, or a misdirected shot from a fowling-piece, did not kill a splendid peacock or pheasant, lame one of his favourite spaniels, nay, sometimes a liveried biped, or demolish a light or two of the green-house, stored with exotics; nor were these feats regarded as indications of future celebrity or prowess. So long as the storied panes, with their delineations of ancestral honours, escaped destruction, or the rusty rolls of papyrus were not converted into paper kites, the Castalian waters of my father's life flowed smoothly on; and it was not until he had discovered an antique bust of Julius Cæsar (the great gem of his collection) tattooed in the most ingenious and grotesque manner imaginable with a penknife and Japan blacking, that he was aroused from his slumbers to avenge the insult offered the mighty Cæsar, and to suffer his parental affection to be superseded by that for the antique.

Of my mother I have as yet said nothing. All, indeed, that need be said relating to her, is *short*, and not sentimental. For-

unately for the equilibrium of the universe, Nature or some other power has instituted a law, that extremes should every now and then meet. This common and necessary provision imposed on all mankind, our parents most willingly complied with (as is before indicated); and, let me add, but for the bustling, dusting, and modernizing spirit which pervaded the maternal side of Sabine Hall, the paternal, with its Roman lord, its tattooed Cæsar, noseless Pliny, papyrian rolls, illuminated missals, and all its "fragmenta vetusta," would have resolved or returned into its primeval chaos, quite as awful and unanalyzable as that which the Roman poet, Virgil, has so well succeeded in depicting.

Sacred and secluded as was my father's studio, and which (except by stealth) the heavy foot of man never disturbed, the lighter foot of woman very often did; not in search of classic lore, but of dust; for my mother (when her gaunt lord's absence permitted it) wended her way to the sacred apartment, and there, armed neither with gauntlet nor falchion but with leathern gloves and feather brush, fiercely encountered Sallust, Livy, Cicero, Pliny, and the whole host of the learned and antiquarian world, classical, historical, and dubious; and, if the dust she "kicked up" (*vulgo dicens*) did not equal that in the plains of Marathon on a celebrated occasion, it was equally annoying to those within its atmospheric circumference. In truth, with such Amazonian spirit did she bestir herself on these sacrilegious visits that the field of her exertions presented a sad spectacle of her destructive fury, in fragments of tessellated pavements, antique marbles, dislocated and mutilated bronzes, rusty weapons, and all those precious articles designated by the word, *virtù*. So zealous and active were her unhallowed detergent attentions, that she really and literally deserved to have inscribed on her family escutcheon, the motto of the hero of antiquity—"Veni, vidi, vici."

Another word or two on my mother's domestic, maternal, and social qualifications. We have already seen that order and cleanliness were leading features in the domestic arrangements at Sabine Hall; to which may be added, all that is comprised in the words comfort and respectability, that is to say—within doors, all that hospitality can bestow, and without, all that respectability can command; her own example furnished to the menials or dependents at the Hall, a pattern of industry, frugality and cleanliness, in which all the branches of domestic and rural economy were fully developed, and which produced, as a natural result, order, peace, and quiet, with their usual concomitant plenty,—the overflowings or superabundance of which was liberally distributed in unostentatious charity amongst the neighbouring poor. Of her mental acquirements, I can say less:

suffice it, that her education had been conducted in the best school of the county, with a special regard to the distinction between the useful and ornamental—since it partook largely of the former. The embellishments, as they are termed, of the sex were not known in the establishment; whilst usefulness, industry, good manners, and morality, combined with the duties of religion, formed, at that time of day, the basis of female education. What are now considered female accomplishments, were then totally unknown. These exotics, like many of the floral world, may please the eye or gratify the senses, yet it is more than doubtful if we can correctly judge, from observation, whether the present system has not the same relative analogy to the past, that dross has to the pure ore in the metallic world.

Out of doors, the good lady's visits were usually confined to her poor and sick neighbours; she not only distributed food and wine to such as required them, but now and then pecuniary relief under the advice of her almoner, the vicar—and often supplanted the village apothecary in his function, by administering with her own hand a draught, pill, bolus, or strengthening cordial prepared from the dicta of the famed Culpeper, or from the recipes carefully preserved in "my grandmother's book of family nostrums," which said family nostrums were always to be found on the same shelf, and in juxtaposition, with the "book of family prayers;" so that whether it happened that the body or mind of the patient was diseased; a medicine for either was at hand. It need scarcely be observed, that she was most punctual in her attendance at the house of God, always preferring to walk thither, and shrewdly observing, there was no humility in going to church in a coach, and that if the great expected their neighbours to be good, they must themselves set the example; in addition, quoting and fortifying her observation with some axiom of Roger Ascham, the schoolmaster, to his royal pupil (afterwards Queen Elizabeth), to that effect. On a very wet day, a dispensation usually passed under the family seal at Sabine Hall, enabling the good lady to go in her carriage, to be shriven, rather than omit her sabbatical duty—on all which occasions the villagers exhibited the most visible concern for her health, which they felt convinced must be more than equivocal by the appearance of the carriage—indeed the good lady herself looked almost ashamed of being seen in such a situation.

The two coal-black stall-fed coach horses (like his Majesty's Hanoverian state stud), occasionally appeared in their best housings and trappings, drawing what was then called a *coach* but now a *carriage*, of ample dimensions, well stuffed, wadded, and bolstered, with all other sorts of conveniences for the easy transportation of some half-dozen of his Majesty's liege subjects, from one domain to another. In it sat my august father, going either

to the neighbouring town, to the election of knights for the shire, or to meet his Majesty's justices of assize, or perhaps to a county meeting. As to the county race ball, my mother, having no daughters to introduce, nor any desire to come in contact with the modern *accomplishments* there exhibited, always declined these meetings; and though assailed with incessant and unwearyed requests to accompany her lord in his quaternal visitations to the great metropolis, (having no very strong presentiment of its courtesies, accommodations, or advantages, nor any wish to amalgamate her "household stuff," economical habits and notions, with modern improvements,) she was satisfied to remain on the safe side of the Rubicon.

My father generally returned pretty early from his daily ride on the Campus Martius, as he was pleased to term a verdant plot of about fifty acres adjoining the mansion, when he proceeded to his *sanctum*, where his antiquarian and classical companions had, in a great measure, recovered their "status quo ante bellum" (without making any discovery of the sad havoc which had occurred in his temporary absence) to feast himself as usual, on the contemplation of his favourite study—the manners, customs, and habits of the ancient Romans—in the consideration of which, their taste for delicate viands and choice wines not unfrequently, and very seriously, occupied his attention till dinner time; he wishing to assimilate his farinaceous, carnivorous, and vinous propensities to the various aliments by which the aforementioned ancient personages sustained their corpuses in health and strength, whereby they were no doubt better enabled to maintain the superiority over their Scythian, Numidian, and Gothic compeers in the annals of fame. My father's wines were the true Falernian, his fish (the produce of the circumambient stream surrounding the demesne) were lampreys at least (*Anglice* eels); and for the solid aliments of beef and mutton, as they were not to be found in the bill of fare of Roman luxuries, he ventured to consider them of higher origin, perhaps antediluvian or a masonic diet, on which kings Solomon and Hiram fed in secret, when contriving that stupendous erection, that wonder of the world, the temple of Jerusalem; whilst the hare, partridge, pheasant, venison, and other game, were acceptable only to his palate, and furnished his table, under their ancient cognomina of *lepus*, *perdrix*, &c.

Thus fed with antiquarian food, both mental and corporeal, my father, with his associates, ranked high in the scale of antiquarian lore; it being an inferential if not logical conclusion, that, if the pugnacious spirit of the game-cock be the effect of appropriate feeding and training, that spirit of research for which the antiquarian has credit with the world, must be equally an effect of similar co-operating causes. Dubbed a member of the

far-famed Antiquarian Society, and also of the no less famed Beef-steak Club, whose sittings were held in the metropolis, it became both my father's duty and inclination to make quaternal visits thereto, where he laid in fresh stores of intellectual provender, in the shape of black-letter volumes, illegible MSS., and all those varieties of the rare and unique displayed by dealers in curiosities and articles of *virtù*, to tempt the inquisitive country gentleman in his devious course about town; for devious it must have been when I acquaint you that neither the localities of the "Porridge Island" nor the insalubrious declivities of "Saffron Hill," the pestilential vapours of "the Borough Clink," nor the purlieus and nuisances of the "ancient city of Westminster," escaped the persevering diligence and all-searching eye of this omnivorous antiquary.

To illustrate, by way of anecdote, the pretensions of my father to be ranked amongst the members of that innocuous and amusing, if not *learned society*, the following may be mentioned. It happened that this sage of antiquity had dropped in to dine with the Beef-steak Club, where having partaken somewhat freely of the Tuscan, and received divers quizzing encomiums or compliments on his prevailing taste, it occurred to another member that it might be as well to tempt his learned brother to a free discussion "on the origin of the said club." Since the Calf's-head Club and the Hell-fire Club, *cum multis aliis*, had been honoured with a publication of their annals, why was not the Beef-steak Club also to be signalized? Now my father (though by no means a pugnacious) was certainly an excitable animal, and only required *quantum suff.* of the Falernian, or Tuscan, to rouse a certain disease lurking in his veins, called the *cacoethes loquendi*, in contradistinction to the *cacoethes scribendi*, though both often arising from the same above-mentioned exhilarating cause. This friend, at the same time, rubbed him down with a due portion of the unction of flattery, by assuring him that it was a debt of honour due from him to the club; superadding also that his name would be enrolled in their annals and handed down to posterity *in secula seculorum*.

An appeal like this was not to be withstood; my father's tide was at the flood; and to use his own expression, he felt, at that moment, eloquent even to the finger-ends, as he set forth in pompous and classic terms the glories of a club which, in the annals of English epicurism, as far exceeds all others in celebrity as it does in substance and savour, and to which is strictly applicable the axiom "de gustibus non est disputandum;" since princes, nobles, ecclesiastics, nay all ranks and grades of society, have been anxious to enrol themselves as members thereof.

And now came the tug of war:—its origin. The mem-

bers sat in silent wonder. All was hushed: there was not a single murmur, to disturb the stream of the speaker's eloquence, as he arrived at the last link of the mighty and learned chain. The memorable and honourable club of which he then spoke had doubtless originated with the *Romans* and their Emperor Maximin, who seldom passed a day without consuming the extraordinary quantity of thirty pounds of solid meat; and that this meat was beef, he, my father had had the inexpressible satisfaction of ascertaining from an old manuscript of that emperor's reign, which he had been fortunate enough to meet with only that very morning.

Having decided this weighty point, my sire, it might have been expected, would have sat down satisfied with his triumph: but no; he had still another important fact to state, which was neither more nor less than that, from the present Beef-steak Club originated the corps of his Majesty's "*Beef-eaters!*" Now, alas! like others of his fraternity, my father was not infallible in antiquarian lore; for "*The Buffetiers*" had their origin and office from being the persons employed to serve or place the dainties about to be masticated by his Majesty's royal progenitors in the buffets or closets within the royal apartments. It seems, however, there was so much mystification in this attempt to give an account of the club and its offspring ("*the Beef-eaters*"), that, after receiving the thanks of the assembled members for his luminous disquisition, the whole ended in a proposition on my father's part to submit his reading and research on those subjects to the next meeting of the Antiquarian Society. This appeared to give general satisfaction, and the club resumed its libations *con amore*.

My brother Remus and I had now arrived at an age at which most young men of family make choice of what is termed a profession; and as birthright with us had no precedence, owing to the remarkable negligence of my mother's female accoucheur in omitting to distinguish which of the twain first appeared in this terrestrial hemisphere (which is generally done by affixing some ornamental filament or bandage round the arm of the first born), nor had the event been determined by the same augury which decided that of our namesakes—viz., a flight of birds; the heirs and successors to my father's estates had been duly and justly provided for by his will: we were made joint inheritors and proprietors of Sabine Hall. Untimely fate, however, shortly set aside this paternal arrangement by the death of my brother Remus, which he met with whilst hunting. His horse, the best, the Phlegethon of my father's stud, refused a leap—when my brother, forgetting the "*O! puer, parce stimulos,*" rushed upon his end through not attending to the instinctive remonstrance or admonition of the sagacious animal which he bestrode.

The loss of poor Remus was, of course, much lamented by the Nimrods of the day; and Sabine Hall thus became the house of mourning, in which I truly sympathized. A determination however, that my father had come to, upon the demise of my brother, added to my sorrow and produced much embarrassment. It was, to send me off to a public school to be *educated*, for although a tutor, a Cambridge scholar, and distinguished as a wrangler had long been an inmate of Sabine Hall, my wits had not been much sharpened by his instruction, and, in fact, Priscian's head was but too often broken. The classics were not my favourite study; nor did they occupy a moment's serious consideration; whilst the making of nets, to take both fish and game—catching flies for the trout-stream—breaking in setters, pointers and spaniels—added to the manly sports or exercises of cricket, quoiting (the ancient discus), wrestling, and fencing, had irresistible charms for me. If I ever had recourse to study, the lucubrations of honest “Isaac Walton,” the “Country Gentleman's Companion, or Complete Manual for Sportsmen,” and the “Cornish Wrestler or In-play,” were the objects of it; and these were, at times, laid aside or exchanged for the more animating and interesting recreations of bear-baiting, bull-fighting, hunting the otter, badger, and martin-cat, and the general destruction of all the animal and reptile creation passing under the name of vermine; nay, even the very fowls of the air—the crane, vulture, hawk, heron, and every species of the feathered tribe that dared to feed on things below—became respectively the objects of my unceasing persecution.

Sir Gilbert ———, a *soi-disant* member of the Beef Steak Club, a landed proprietor, magistrate, and one of the quorum in the county of Salop, a neighbour also of my father's, had three sons then educating at Harrow; and, upon his recommendation, I was sent to that far-famed seat of education. The sudden change from home and freedom to the confinement and drudgery of a school, at first ill accorded either with my habits, my feelings, or that haughty air which I already (presuming on my Roman name and ancient family descent) had assumed. Here, however, Greek met Greek; I soon found that the heir of Sabine Hall must succumb to the usages of Harrow; and that he who acted the petty tyrant at home must become a slave to the tyrants of a public school: the word discipline had not hitherto been in the vocabulary of Romulus, but the master at Harrow soon convinced me it would shortly be found there; indeed, before I had been one week within the walls of this modern Rome, it was discovered that I must do as the Romans do; the haughty untamed spirit of my boyhood soon subsided into a silent acquiescence with the customary abuses of that first-rate classical establishment, and my cha-

acter resembled more the modern Greek than the ancient Roman. In this, however, I was not singular; for let me ask, what youth ever entered the precincts of a public school who did not undergo a total revolution of habits and sentiment—and though veering about for a period, did not ultimately settle into the counterpart of some school contemporary, and form his opinions and future course through life on the models there presented? The connexions and associations taking root at our public schools too often bias and influence the destiny of a youth in future life. His habits and mode of thinking generally take their shape and tincture from objects then and there viewed through a false or imperfect medium; and experience proves that little else is acquired at celebrated schools but aristocratic and domineering feelings. The distinctions of nobility, or the accidental advantages of wealth, are greater objects of consideration than the more solid ones of personal merit and mental acquirement.

There was a youth at Harrow (my contemporary), whose spirit and genius partook of the ancient Roman and Greek characters combined; they were imbued with the haughty military feeling of the former and the poetic lustre of the latter; and which to admire most, his noble bearing and resistance to oppression in all its Protean forms, or his verse with its bewitching imagery and nervous expression, the world has yet to decide. A former age boasted of its Admirable Crichton, we of our no less admirable Byron; the germs of whose lofty mind were sown at Harrow to be developed in the blood-stained, yet classic fields of the ancient Achaia. When we contemplate the associations we feel in reading the immortal lines of the Iliad and Odyssey, how singular a coincidence is it that the best of our modern poets should not only have poured out his song, but his life's blood, in defence of that soil and cause for which so many Grecian heroes and poets of antiquity had done the same.

The late Lord Erskine used to remark that original impressions were not only the strongest but generally the most correct; Lord Byron presented, however, a flat contradiction to this apophthegm. His air, at first, was haughty, his manners repulsive; but when even schoolboy oppression was the cause—at all hazard, the oppressed was sure of a defender in his lordship, whose courage, ever at hand, generally ensured a victory. Whether in harmless sport or bloody fight, Byron was a decided partisan; and in whatever cause he enlisted—to use an English phrase, “he was game to the back-bone.” It has been alleged that his lordship's feelings were any thing but kindly. That his heart was warmed by the best sensibilities of human nature, I can, however, attest in the following trifling incident. Some half-dozen of us were bandying our hockey-ball and sticks,

when I accidentally received an agonizing blow on my shin-bone (perhaps the most sensitive part of the human frame), of which to this day the scar remains indelibly. Never did the soldier of Agincourt, on the anniversary of St. Crispin, or the British warrior on that of Waterloo, feel prouder than do I, in contemplating this scar, bringing with it, as such contemplation does, the recollection of his lordship's kindness. Felled to the ground from the violence of the blow, my senses were for a time suspended, and when consciousness returned, Lord Byron was found at my side, bandaging the limb (the bandage his own neck-handkerchief), and accompanying his action with the warmest expressions of regret at my accident. I need scarcely add that this trifling occurrence has endeared his memory to my heart as much as his matchless verse has to my mind—than which, that of Shakspeare, Milton, Dryden, nay even of old Homer himself, in all their majesty, is not more precious.

His lordship was, by the way, no doubt uncourteously disposed towards his relative, the late Earl of Carlisle; for whenever that nobleman made his customary visit at Harrow, Byron always became fidgety, and would rush into any game or sport then going on, obviously to avoid an interview with the noble visiter.

Although my friend Dr. Joseph ——— was, as all the world admits, one of the first classical scholars of the age (for not a pupil escaped his inquiring and anxious eye) his care was thrown away on me. My best and almost only friend at Harrow was Henry Meadows (now consigned to a watery grave); and many were the hours we have trifled away in plotting treason against the state. Much as our illustrious schoolfellow disliked the classics (we have his own word for it),

“ I abhorred
Too much to conquer, for the poet's sake,
The drilled dull lesson forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth :”

I and my friend hated them much more; and at the time we did so, were doubtless both ignorant of the great authority we had in support of our aversion.—Milton, as I have since found, grieved bitterly over the time wasted in teaching the dead languages.—Addison considered it an egregious error, that boys, whether they had genius or not, should be compelled to read the poetry of the ancients; and Cowley, I think, came nearer the truth than either of them, by affirming, that the classics taught words only and not things. And who can subvert these opinions, founded and supported as they are by such high authorities? Whether Henry Meadows and I did, at length, manage the clas-

sics either to our own or the doctor's satisfaction, must remain questionable; suffice it, we left Harrow simultaneously, and laden, I should say, exactly with the same quantity of verbose learning. It was kind, perhaps politic, on the part of the doctor (I mean no reflection) to make the best of the matter to my Homer-struck parent. For him to have discovered that not a single spark of the Homeric fire could be elicited from, nor a particle of classic taste be instilled into, his son's whole composition, would have been more than his philosophy could endure; the conviction would have buried him deeper than ever in the misty caverns of his antediluvian brain. I, however, returned to Sabine Hall, graced in his opinion (though not in my own) with a classical exterior, and an address which he termed senatorial. Were I to touch on the state of my acquirements (of which, by-the-by, I certainly was the best judge) I might be said to have performed a periphrasis of the learned globe without visiting it more closely. At the two physical poles I had certainly touched; but then, of the people and their language I knew no more than did my sire of the Belles Lettres—of the balls at Almack's—or of the Parliamentary Debates. Concerning the latter, indeed, my father, like many other wise men, was of opinion, that the less he troubled himself about them the more he consulted his own interests: consequently he nourished opinions far from flattering to the then existing senate-house, and seldom did he launch out in true Ciceronian style, except when, like the bristly badger, he was drawn unwillingly from his burrow.

The only person who could, in true style, effect this, was Sir Gilbert ——. Whenever my father returned from town, his ready friend was generally summoned to dine at Sabine Hall, to discuss the merits and pretensions of the new members of the Beef-steak Club, and in fact to settle to joint satisfaction every point connected with this sarcophagous assembly; unfortunately, however, for my sire, this furnished not the only topic of conversation. Sir Gilbert ———, knowing every body worth knowing, and, from a speech he had once made, being also known to every body worthy of his acquaintance, it became necessary to discuss, in addition, all topics connected with the *other* assemblies;—and by the time the second bottle (not of Falernian, for Sir Gilbert drank nothing but Burgundy) was empty, opinions had been broached, first respecting the lower, then the upper house, until the debate would at length grow warm, and my father's nose get redder and redder, a sure sign that both Tribunes and Decemviri were fast leaving my father's brains for their original habitation (the capitol), and which circumstance my penetrating mother hailed as presenting a favourable opportunity for her retiring once more to the studio, where there was every probability of her being able to carry on her sweeping sacrileges

unobserved and undisturbed. But I, meanwhile, remained rivetted to my chair by a display of oratory which I then thought could never be equalled. Here sat Sir Gilbert, with his little eyes twinkling like morning stars, and his rubicund face on the broad grin—revelling in the victory which his sophistry, added to a correct knowledge of the politics of the day (obtained from his newspaper), readily and generally gave him over his excited and at the same time bigoted opponent.

But if Sir Gilbert could thus enjoy his triumph in the dining-room of Sabine Hall, what must have been his transport when it was attested by hundreds of voices applauding his overwhelming sentences; whilst the opposition benches yielded in silence to the torrent of his eloquence, like reeds beneath a whirlwind. But the grand climax of the prandial discussion (for which, by-the-by, Sir Gilbert always prepared himself by sundry deep libations of his favourite Burgundy), consisted in my father's rising from his chair, and striking the table (bright with the polish of an hundred years), at the same time that he addressed his torturer nearly in such words as follow:

“ Sir Gilbert, I beg, Sir, this matter may rest here. I cannot suffer myself to get so warm (my father's face, at this time, seemed to have robbed the heavy moreen curtains of all their red), upon such a trifling subject—such useless nonsense. I tell you, Sir Gilbert, that such are my opinions; and I shall never change them, either to oblige you, Sir Gilbert, or any body else.”

Now the explanation of all the above is, that my father, if any politician at all, was, as might be expected, a stanch supporter of all the admirable institutions and constitutions which time has fathered upon us, whether legitimate or illegitimate. To displace a stone of these fabrics was, in his opinion, to endanger the whole. For instance, he considered Cromwell as one of the greatest scoundrels that ever lived;—that Charles the First was a pious martyr;—that James the Second, as a Roman Catholic, deserved his fate, being an enemy to the Protestant faith;—that William and Mary were the pious restorers of the union of church and state;—that Queen Anne, George the First, Second, and Third, were all great and glorious supporters of that system; but that the latter more especially was a most exemplary, religious, patriotic, paternal, and peace-making monarch. Moreover, he affirmed that the national debt was a great debt, justly incurred for the benefit of all classes; but that, if it were a curse, Bonaparte and the French were the cause of it, and not most certainly the Houses of Lords and Commons. In fine, my father's opinion was simply this,—that whatever is, is best; and this he believed as fully as the clergymen of the Established Church are sworn to believe in the

Thirty-nine Articles. But diametrically opposed to him was Sir Gilbert. His father, it is true, had been a rigid constitutionalist, and his loyalty had secured him, not only a baronetcy, but something wherewith to support it (a court appointment), the spoils of which had descended to his only son, the present Sir Gilbert.

But he, like a great many other sons, although he had stepped into his father's shoes as to the title and estates, did not choose to wear his political armour; on the contrary, he empaled the ancestral escutcheon with the cross-bars of political illegitimacy or heresy. B—— Hall, with its magnificent estate, and a seat in parliament, had, in fact, descended to him, without the trouble even of thinking about the one, or paying a few thousands for the other; and, under such circumstances, it was not very unreasonable to expect he should adhere to the principles of the former Sir Gilbert:—he did, however, no such thing;—and no sooner had he been returned for C——, (a mere appendant to his estate), than the Whig administration came into office.

Already had Sir Gilbert's maiden speech been hurled at the leaders of this party, and to no less than six tedious debates had he listened, when, his logical and metaphysical powers being any thing but contemptible, he at last arrived at the conclusion (which more than half the world had reached before him), that there was as much reason on one side as on the other, and that there could be no great harm done by his remaining, for that session, neutral—or as he facetiously termed himself, a political mermaid. But this politic decision (which, if it retarded not, most certainly did not advance the interests of his constituents) was not finally made, until Sir Gilbert had discovered the advantage which another club possessed over his own, not only in being much nearer his town residence in St. James's Square, but in a different way far more seductive. The point of all others on which Sir Gilbert piqued himself was political economy or wholesale finance, which the young Sir Gilbert, my schoolfellow, and to whom I am indebted for this brief sketch of the father, informed me, consisted, in his opinion, in discharging a number of needy, though efficient clerks, upon retiring pensions of 100*l.* a-year, in order to supply their places with the same number of the sons of influential men, and of course not needy persons, upon salaries of 200*l.* Economy, Sir Gilbert's strong point in the Commons, was not his weak one elsewhere, for he thought it madness to pay three shillings for a dinner at his present quarters, when at the new club he could be equally well accommodated for about half that sum—consequently, on this principle, he at once enrolled his name amongst the Whigs; and from the line of argument he pursued over my

father's Burgundy, on subsequent occasions, there is no reason to suppose that he rejoined his former allies, the Tories.

I was now in my twentieth year—and still I remained under my father's surveillance. With the world, beyond the walls of Harrow, I had hitherto held no communion, and it was difficult to say, when and in what character I was to make my debut. This serious question, however, having been at length placed in my own hands for decision, I was not long in forming one. Let fortune sport as she liked with that mysterious thing, my existence, I knew that sooner or later I must come into the possession of Sabine Hall, besides funded property to the amount of many thousands; nevertheless, I determined not to remain an idler, but to become an active if not a useful member of the community; to live as an intellectual rather than a mere sensual being; and neither to waste my fortune nor destroy my health in the too common pursuits, or rather dissipations, of a country gentleman,—namely, the sports of the turf or vinous debauches at the table. The course I pursued, however, is foreign to these Recollections. My career has been a varied one, and some other day I may take up my pen to portray it; meanwhile, I here bid farewell to the reader and to *Sabine Hall*.

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