

TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD."

A READING PARTY IN THE LONG VACATION.

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CHAPTER I.

EVERY one who knows Oxford, and a good many besides, must have heard of certain periodical migrations of the younger members of that learned university into distant and retired parts of her Majesty's dominions, which (on the "*lucus a non lucendo*" principle) are called and known by the name of Reading Parties. Some half-dozen undergraduates, in peril of the coming examination, form themselves into a joint-stock cramming company; take £30 or £40 shares in a private tutor; pitch their camp in some Dan or Beersheba which has a reputation for dulness; and, like other joint-stock companies, humbug the public, and sometimes themselves, into the belief that they are "doing business." For these classical bubbles, the long vacation is the usual season, and Wales one of the

favourite localities; and certainly, putting "Reading" out of the question, three fine summer months might be worse spent, than in climbing the mountains, and whipping the trout-streams, of that romantic land. Many a quiet sea-side town, or picturesque fishing-village, might be mentioned, which owes no little of its summer gaiety, and perhaps something of its prosperity, to the annual visit of "the Oxonians:" many a fair girl has been indebted for the most piquant flirtation of the season to the "gens togata," who were reading at the little watering-place to which fate and papa had carried her for the race-week or the hunt-ball: and whatever the effect of these voluntary rustications upon the class lists in Oxford, they certainly have procured for the parties occasionally a very high "provincial celebrity." I know that when we beat our retreat from summer quarters at Glyndewi in —, the sighs of our late partners were positively heart-rending, and the blank faces of the deserted billiard-marker and solitary livery-stable groom haunt me to this day.

I had been endeavouring, by hard reading for the last three months, to work up the arrears of three years of college idleness, when my evil genius himself, in the likeness of George Gordon of Trinity, persuaded me to put the finishing-touch to my education, by joining a party who were going down to Glyndewi, in —shire, "really to read." In an

unguarded moment I consented ; packed up books enough to last me for five years, reading at the rate of twenty-four hours per day, wrote to the governor announcing my virtuous intention, and was formally introduced to the Rev. Mr Hanmer, Gordon's tutor, as one of his "cubs" for the long vacation.

Six of us there were to be ; a very mixed party, and not well mixed—a social chaos. We had an exquisite from St Mary Hall, a pea-coated Brazen-nose boatman, a philosophical water-drinker and union-debater from Baliol, and a two-bottle man from Christ Church. When we first met, it was like oil and water ; it seemed as if we might be churned together for a century, and never coalesce : but in time, like punch-making, it turned out that the very heterogeneousness of the ingredients was the zest of the compound.

I had never heard of such a place as Glyndewi, nor had I an idea how to get there. Gordon and Hanmer were gone already ; so I packed myself on the top of the Shrewsbury mail, as the direct communication between Oxford and North Wales, and there became acquainted with No. 2 of my fellows in transportation (for, except Gordon and myself, we were all utter strangers to each other). "I say, Hawkins, let's feel those ribbons a bit, will you?" quoth the occupant of the box-seat to our respectable Jehu. "Can't indeed, sir, with these hosses : it's as much as ever I can do to hold this

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here near leader." This was satisfactory. Risking one's neck in a tandem was all very well—a part of the regular course of an Oxford education; but amateur drivers of stage coaches I had always a prejudice against: let gentlemen keep their own four-in-hands, and upset themselves and families, as they have an undeniable right to do—but not the public. I looked at the first speaker; at his pea-jacket, that is, which was all I could see of him: Oxford decidedly. His cigar was Oxford too, by the villanous smell of it. He took the coachman's implied distrust of his professional experience good-humouredly enough, proffered him his cigar-case, and entered into a discussion on the near leader's moral and physical qualities. "I'll trouble you for a light, if you please," said I. He turned round, we stuck the ends of our cigars together, and puffed into each other's faces for about a minute (my cigars were dampish), as grave as North American Indians. "Thank you," said I, as the interesting ceremony was concluded, and our acquaintance begun. We got into conversation, when it appeared that he too was bound for the undiscovered shores of Glyndewi, and that we were therefore likely to be companions for the next three months. He was an off-hand, good-humoured fellow; drank brandy-and-water, treated the coachman, and professed an acquaintance with bar-maids in general, and pretty ones in particular, on our line of road. He was

going up for a class, he supposed, he said; the governor had taken a "second below the line" himself, and insisted upon his emulating the paternal distinction; d——d nonsense, he said, in his opinion: except that the governor had a couple of harriers with Greek names, he did not see that his classics were of any use to him; and no doubt but that Hylax and Phryne would run just as well if they had been called Stormer and Merry Lass. However, he must rub up all his old Eton books this "long," and get old Hanmer to lay it on thick. Such was Mr Branling of Brazen-nose.

At Shrewsbury, we were saluted with the intelligence, "Coach dines here, gentlemen." We found a couple of fowls that the coach might probably have dined upon, and digested with other articles—in the hind boot; to human stomachs they seemed impracticable. We employed the allotted ten minutes upon a leg of mutton, and ascended again to our stations on the roof; and here was an addition to our party. Externally, it consisted of a mackintosh and a fur cap: in the very short interval between the turned-down flap of the one and the turned-up collar of the other, were a pair of grey glass spectacles, and part of a nose. So far we had no very sufficient premises from which to draw conclusions, whether or not he were "one of us." But there were internal evidences; an odour of Bouquet de Roi, or some such villanous compound,

nearly overpowering the fragrance of some genuine weed which I had supplied my pea-coated friend with in the place of his Oxford. "Havannahs;" a short cough occasionally, as though the smoke of the said weed were not altogether "the perfume of the lips he loved;" and a resolute taciturnity. What was he? It is a lamentable fact, that an Oxford undergraduate does not invariably look the gentleman. He vibrates between the fashionable assurance of a London swindler and the modest diffidence of an overgrown schoolboy. There is usually a degree of unfinishedness about him. He seems to be assuming a character: unlike the glorious Burschenschaft of Germany, he has no character of his own. However, for want of more profitable occupation, we set to work in earnest to discover who our fellow-traveller really was; and by a series of somewhat American conversational inquiries, we at last fished out that he was going into ——shire, like ourselves —nay, in answer to a direct question on the subject, that he hoped to meet Hanmer of Trinity at Glyn-dewi. But no further information could we get: our new friend was reserved. Mr Branling and I had commenced intimacy already. "My name is Branling of Brazen-nose;" "and mine Hawthorne of ——;" was our concise introduction. But our companion was the pink of Oxford correctness on this point. He thanked the porter for putting his luggage up; called me "Sir," till he found I

was an Oxford man; and had we travelled for a month together, would rather have requested the coachman to introduce us, than be guilty of any such barbarism as to introduce himself. So by degrees our intimacy, instead of warming, waxed cold. As night drew on, and the fire of cigars from Brangling, self, and coachman became more deadly, the fur cap was drawn still closer over the ears, the mackintosh crept up higher, and we lost sight of all but the outline of the spectacles.

The abominable twitter of the sparrows in the hedgerows gave notice of the break of day—to travellers the most dismal of all hours, in my opinion—when I awoke from the comfortable nap into which I had fallen since the last change of horses. For some time we alternately dozed, tumbled against each other, begged pardon, and awoke; till at last the sun broke out gloriously as we drove into the cheerful little town of B——.

A good breakfast set us all to rights, and made even our friend in the mackintosh talkative. He came out most in the character of tea-maker (an office, by the way, which he filled to the general satisfaction of his constituents during our stay in North Wales). We found out that he was a St Mary Hall man, with a duplicate name: Mr Sydney Dawson, as the cards on his multifarious luggage set forth: that he was an aspirant for “anything he could get” in the way of honours (humble aspi-

ration as it seemed, it was not destined to be gratified, for he got nothing). He thought he might find some shooting and fishing in Wales, so had brought with him a gun-case and a setter; though his pretensions to sportsmanship proved to be rather of the cockney order. For three months he was the happily unconscious butt of our party, and yet never but once was his good-humour seriously interrupted.

From B—— to Glyndewi we had been told we must make our way as we could: and a council of war, which included boots and the waiter, ended in the arrival of the owner of one of the herring-boats, of which there were several under "the terrace." "Was you wish to go to Glyndewi, gentlemen? I shall take you so quick as any way; she is capital wind, and you shall have fine sail." A man who could speak such undeniable English was in himself a treasure; for an ineffectual attempt at a bargain for some lobsters (even with a "Welsh interpreter" in our hands) had warned us that there were in this Christian country unknown tongues which would have puzzled even the Rev. Edward Irving. So the bargain was struck: in half an hour ourselves and traps were alongside the boat: and after waiting ten minutes for the embarkation of Mr Sydney Dawson and his dog Sholto, who seemed to have an abhorrence of sea-voyages, Branling at last hauled in the latter in the last

agonies or strangulation, and his master having tumbled in over him, to the detriment of a pair of clean whites and a cerulean waistcoat, we—*i. e.* the rest of us—set sail for Glyndewi in high spirits.

Our boatmen were intelligent fellows, and very anxious to display their little stock of English. They knew Mr Hammer well, they said—he had been at Glyndewi the summer before; he was “nice free gentleman;” and they guessed immediately the object of our pilgrimage: Glyndewi was “very much for learning;” did not gentlemen from Oxford College, and gentlemen from Cambridge College, all come there? We warned him not on any account to couple us in his mind with “Cambridge gentlemen:” we were quite a distinct species, we assured him. (They had beaten us that year in the eight-oar match on the Thames.) But there seemed no sufficient reason for disabusing their minds of the notion that this influx of students was owing to something classical in the air of Glyndewi; indeed, supposing this theory to be wrong, it was no easy matter to substitute a sounder one. In what did the superiority of Mrs Jenkins’s smoky parlour at Glyndewi consist, for the purposes of reading for a degree, compared with my pleasant rooms looking into — gardens at Oxford, or the governor’s snug library at home? It is an abstruse question. Parents and guardians, indeed, whose part upon the stage of life, as upon

the theatrical stage, consists principally in submitting to be more or less humbugged, attribute surprising effects to a fancied absence of all amusements, with a mill-horse round of Greek, Latin, and logic, early rising, and walks in the country with a pocket Horace. From my own experience of reading parties, I should select as their peculiar characteristics a tendency to hats and caps of such remarkable shapes as, if once sported in the college quadrangle, would be the subject of a common-room *instanter*; and, among some individuals (whom we may call the peripatetic philosophers of the party) a predilection for seedy shooting-coats and short pipes, with which they perambulate the neighbourhood to the marvel of the aboriginal inhabitants; while those whom we may class with the stoics, display a preference for dressing-gowns and meerschaums, and confine themselves principally to the door-ways and open windows of their respective lodgings. How far these "helps to knowledge"—for which Oxford certainly does not afford equal facilities—conduce to the required first or second class, is a question I do not feel competent to decide; but *if* reading-parties *do* succeed, the secret of their success may at least as probably lie in these hitherto unregarded phenomena.

Five hours of a fair wind brought us to Glyndewi. Here we found Hammer and Gordon, who had taken a house for the party, and seemed already domesti-

cated. I cannot say that we were royally lodged : the rooms were low, and the terms high ; but as no one thought of taking lodgings at Glyndewi in the winter, and the rats consequently lived in them rent-free for six months, it was but fair somebody should pay : and we did. "Attendance" we had into the bargain. Now, attendance at a lodging-house has been defined to be, the privilege of ringing your bell as often as you please, provided you do not expect any one to answer it. But the bell-ropes in Mrs Jenkins's parlours being only ornamental appendages, our privilege was confined to calling upon the landing-place for a red-headed female, who, when she did come, which was seldom, was terrible to look upon, and could only be conversed with by pantomime.

To do Mrs Jenkins and "Gweny" justice, they were scrupulously clean in everything but their own persons, which, the latter's especially, seemed to have monopolised the dirt of the whole establishment. College bedrooms are not luxurious affairs, so we were not inclined to be captious on that head ; and we slept soundly, and awoke with a determination to make our first voyage of discovery in a charitable spirit.

The result of our morning's stroll was the unanimous conclusion that Glyndewi was a rising place. It did not seem inclined to rise all at once though ; but in patches here and there, with a quarter of a

mile or so between, like what we read of the great sea-serpent. (I fear this individual is no more; this matter-of-fact age has been the death of him.) There were two long streets—one parallel to the quay (or, as the more refined call it, "the terrace"), and the other at right angles to it. The first was Herring Street—the second Goose Street. At least such were the ancient names, which I give for the benefit of antiquarian readers. Since the then Princess Victoria visited B——, the loyalty of the Glyndewi people had changed "Herring" into "Victoria;" and her royal consort has since had the equivocal compliment paid him of transmuting "Goose Street" into "Albert Buildings." I trust it will not be considered disloyal to say, that the original sponsors—the geese and the herrings—seem to me to have been somewhat hardly used; having done more for their namesakes than, as far as I can learn, their royal successors even promised.

Glyndewi was rising, however, in more respects than in the matter of taste in nomenclature. Tall houses, all front and windows, were stuck up here and there; sometimes with a low fisherman's cottage between them, whose sinking roof and bulging walls looked as if, like the frog in the fable, it had burst in the vain attempt to rival its majestic neighbour. At one end stood a large hotel with a small business, and an empty billiard-room; at the

Other, a wall six inches high marked the spot where subscription-rooms were to be built for the accommodation of visitors and the public generally, as set forth in the prospectus, as soon as the visitors and the public chose to find the money. Nearly the whole of the village was the property of a gentleman who had built the hotel and billiard-room, and run up a few lodging-houses on a speculation, which seemed at best a doubtful one, of making it in time a fashionable watering-place.

Glyndewi had been recommended to us as a quiet place. It was quiet—horribly quiet. Not the quiet of green fields and deep woods, the charm of country life; but the quiet of a tectotal supper-party, or a college in vacation. “Just the place for reading: no gaiety—no temptations.” So I had written to tell the governor, in the ardour of my setting forth as one of a “reading-party:” alas! it was a fatal mistake. Had it been an ordinarily cheerful place, I think one or two of us could and would have read there; as it was, our whole wits were set to work to enliven its dullness. It took us as long to invent an amusement, as would have sufficed elsewhere for getting tired of half-a-dozen different dissipations. The very reason which made us fix upon it as a place to read in, proved in our case the source of unmitigated idleness. “No temptations,” indeed! there were no temptations—the only temptation I felt there was to hang or

drown myself, and there was not a tree six feet high within as many miles, and the Dewi was a river "darkly, deeply, beautifully"—muddy; it would have been smothering rather. We should not have staid to the end of the first month, had it not been for very shame; but to run away from a reading-party would have been a joke against us for ever. So from the time we got up in the morning, until we climbed Mrs Jenkins's domestic treadmill again at night, the one question was, what should we do with ourselves? Walk? there were the A—— and B—— roads—three miles of sand and dust either way. Before us was the bay—behind the ——shire mountains, up which one might walk some sixteen miles (in the month of July), and get the same view from each successive point you reached: viz., a hill before you, which you thought must be the top at last, and Glyndewi—of which we knew the number of houses, and the number of windows in each—behind. Ride then?—the two hacks kept by mine host of the Mynysnewydd Arms deserve a history to themselves. Rosinante would have been ashamed to be seen grazing in the same field with such caricatures of his race. There was a board upon a house a few doors off, announcing that "pleasure and other boats" were to be let on hire. All the boats that we were acquainted with must have been the "other" ones—for they smelled of herrings, sailed at about the

pace of a couple of freshmen in a "two-oar," and gave very pretty exercise—to those who were fond of it—in baling. As for reading, we were like the performers at a travelling theatre—always "going to begin."

Branling, indeed, did once shut himself up in his bedroom, as we afterwards ascertained, with a box of cigars and a black and tan terrier, and read for three weeks on end in the peculiar atmosphere thus created. Willingham of Christ Church, and myself, had what was called the dining-room in common, and proceeded so far on the third day after our arrival, as to lay out a very imposing spread of books upon all the tables; and there it remained in evidence of our good intentions, until the first time we were called upon to do the honours of an extempore luncheon. Unfortunately, from the very first, Willingham and myself were set down by Hammer as the idle men of the party; this sort of prophetic discrimination, which tutors at Oxford are very much in the habit of priding themselves upon, tends, like other prophecies, to work its own fulfilment. Did a civil Welshman favour us with a call? "Show him in to Mr Hawthorne and Mr Willingham; I dare say they are not very busy"—quoth our *Jupiter tonans* from on high in the dining-room, where he held his court; and accordingly in he came. We had Stilton and bottled porter in charge for these occasions from

the common stock; but the honours of all these visits were exclusively our own, as far as house-room went. In dropped the rest of the party, one by one. Hammer himself pitched the Ethics into a corner to make room, as he said, for substantials, the froth of bottled Guinness damped the eloquence of Cicero, and Branling having twisted up my analysis of the last-read chapter into a light for his cigar, there was an end of our morning's work. How could we read? That was what we always said, and there was some truth in it.

Mr Branling's reading fit was soon over too; and having cursed the natives for barbarians, because there was not a pack of harriers within ten miles, which confirmed him in the opinion he had always expressed of their utter want of civilisation (for; as he justly remarked, not one in a dozen could even speak decent English), he waited impatiently for September, when he had got leave from some Mr Williams or Jones—I never remembered which—to shoot over a considerable range about Glyndewi.

But with the 20th of August a change came o'er the spirit of our dream. Hitherto we had seen little of any of the neighbouring families, excepting that of a Captain George Phillips, who, living only three miles off, on the bank of the river, and having three sons and two daughters, and keeping a pretty yacht, had given us a dinner-party or two,

and a pleasant day's sail. Capital fellows were the young Phillipses : Nature's gentlemen ; unsophisticated, hearty Welshmen ; lads from sixteen to twenty. Down they used to come in a most dangerous little craft of their own, which went by the name of the "Coroner's Inquest," to smoke cigars, (against which the Captain had published an interdict at home), and question us about Oxford larks, and tell us in return stories of wild-fowl shooting, otter-hunting, and salmon-fishing, in all which they were proficient.

Our establishment was not an imposing one, but of them we made no strangers. Once they came, I remember, self-invited to dinner, in a most unfortunate state of our larder. The weekly half sheep had not arrived from B— ; to get anything in Glyndewi, beyond the native luxuries of bacon and herrings, was hopeless ; and our dinner happened to be a leash of fowls, of which we had just purchased a live supply. Mrs Glasse would have been in despair ; we took it coolly ; to the three boiled fowls at top, we added three roast ditto at bottom, and by unanimous consent of both guests and entertainers, a more excellent dinner was never put on table.

But the 20th of August ! the day of the Glyndewi regatta !—*that* must have a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN a dull place like Glyndewi does undertake to be gay, it seldom does things by halves. Ordinary doses of excitement fail to meet the urgency of the case. It was the fashion, it appeared, for all the country families of any pretensions to *ton*, and not a few of the idlers from the neighbouring watering-places, to be at Glyndewi for the race-week. And as far as the programme of amusements went, certainly the committee (consisting of the resident surgeon, the non-resident proprietor of the "hotel," &c., and a retired major in the H.E.I.C.'s service, called by his familiars by the endearing name of "Tiger Jones") had made a spirited attempt to meet the demand. A public breakfast, and a regatta, and a ball—a "Full Dress and Fancy Ball," the advertisement said, on the 20th; a Horse-Race and an Ordinary on the 21st; a Cricket Match, if possible, and any extra fun which the Visitors' own genius might strike out on the following days.

The little bay of Glyndewi was not a bad place for a boat-race on a small scale. The "terrace" commanded the whole of it; there were plenty of herring-boats, about equally matched in sailing deficiencies, ready and willing to "run"—*i. e.* creep—for the prizes; and an honourable member of the

Yacht Club, who for some years past, for reasons which it was said his creditors could explain, had found it more convenient to keep his season at B—— than at Cowes, always paid the stewards the compliment of carrying off the “Ladies’ Challenge Cup.”

The two or three years’ experience which the Glyndewi people had lately gained of the nature and habits of “the Oxonians,” made them an article in great demand on these occasions. Mammās and daughters agreed in looking upon us as undeniable partners in the ball-room, while the sporting men booked us as safe for getting up a creditable four-oar, with a strong probability of finding a light-weight willing to risk his neck and reputation at a hurdle-race. Certain it is, that from the time the races began to be seriously talked about, we began to feel ourselves invested with additional importance. “Tiger Jones” (who occupied a snug little box about a mile out of Glyndewi, where he lived upon cheroots and brandy-and-water) called, was exceedingly polite, apologised for not inviting us to dinner—a thing he declared impossible in his quarters—hoped we would call some day and take a lunch with him, spoke with rapture of the capital crew which “the gentlemen who were studying here last summer” had made up, and which ran away from all competitors, and expressed a fervent hope that we should do likewise.

The sporting surgeon (of course he had called upon us long ago) redoubled his attentions, begged that if any of us were cricketers we would endeavour to aid him in getting up a "Glyndewi eleven" against the "Strangers," and fixed himself upon me as an invaluable acquisition, when he found I had actually once played in a match against Marylebone. (I did not tell him that the total score of my innings was "one.") Would I, then, at once take the drilling of as many recruits as he could get together? And would Mr Willingham and Mr Gordon, who "used to play at school," get up their practice again? (It wanted about a fortnight to the races.) The result of this, and sundry other interviews, was, that Branling at length found a vent for the *vis inertiae* in putting us all, with the exception of Mr Sydney Dawson, whom he declared to be so stiff in the back that he had no hope of him, into training for a four-oar; and the surgeon and myself set off in his gig for B——, to purchase materials for cricket.

It is true that our respected tutor did look more than usually grave, and shook his head with a meaning almost as voluminous as Lord Burleigh's, when informed of our new line of study. Rowing he declared to be a most absurd expenditure of time and strength; he never could see the fun of men breaking blood-vessels, and getting plucked for their degree, for the honour of "the Trinity

Boat." But the cricket touched him on the raw. He was an old Etonian, and had in his time been a good player; and was now as active as any stout gentleman of seven-and-thirty, who had been twelve years a steady admirer of bursary dinners and common-room port. So, after some decent scruples on his part, and some well-timed compliments touching his physical abilities on ours (he was much vainer of the muscle of his arm than of his high reputation as a scholar), we succeeded in drawing from him a sort of promise, that if we were so foolish as to get up a match, he would try whether he had forgot all about bowling.

For the next fortnight, therefore, we had occupation enough cut out for us. Branling was unmerciful in his practice on the river; and considering that two of us had never pulled an oar but in the slowest of "Torpids," we improved surprisingly under his tuition. The cricket, too, was quite a new era in our existence. Dawson (we told him that the "Sydney" must be kept for Sundays) was a perfect fund of amusement in his zealous practice. He knew as much about the matter as a cow might, and was rather less active. But if perseverance could have made a cricketer, he would have turned out a first-rate one. Not content with two or three hours of it every fine evening, when we all sallied down to the marsh, followed by every idler in Glyndewi, he used to disappear occasionally in

the mornings, and for some days puzzled us as to where and how he disposed of himself. We had engaged, in our corporate capacity, the services of a most original retainer, who cleaned boots, fetched *the beer, eat the cold mutton, and made himself otherwise useful when required.* He was amphibious in his habits, having been a herring-fisher the best part of his life; but being a martyr to the rheumatism, which occasionally screwed him up into indescribable forms, had betaken himself to earning a precarious subsistence as he could on shore. It was not often that we required his services between breakfast and luncheon, but one morning, after having despatched Gwenny in all directions to hunt for Bill Thomas in vain, we at last elicited from her that "may-be she was gone with Mr Dawson." Then it came out, to our infinite amusement, that Dawson was in the habit, occasionally, of impressing our factotum Bill to carry bat, stumps, and ball down to the marsh, and there commencing private practice on his own account.

Mr Sydney Dawson and Bill Thomas—the sublime and the ridiculous—amalgamating at cricket, was far too good a joke to lose; so we got Hanmer to cut his lecture short, and come down with us to the scene of action. From the cover of a sand-bank, we had a view of all that was going on in the plain below. There was our friend at the wicket,

with his coat off, and the grey spectacles on, in an attitude which it must have taken him some study to accomplish, and Bill, with the ball in his hand, vociferating "Plaiy." A ragged urchin behind the wicket, attempting to bag the balls as Dawson missed them in what had once been a hat, and Sholto looking on with an air of mystification, completed the picture.

"That's too slow," said Sydney, as Bill, after some awful contortions, at length delivered himself of what he called a cast. "*Diawl!*" said Bill, *sotto voce*, as he again got possession of the ball. "That's too high," was the complaint, as, with an extraordinary kind of jerk, it flew some yards over the batsman's head, and took what remained of the crown out of the little lazzaroni's hat behind. "*Diawl!*" quoth Bill again, apologetically, "She got too much way on her that time." Bill was generally pretty wide of his mark, and great appeared to be the satisfaction of all parties when Dawson contrived to make a hit, and Sholto and the boy set off after the ball, while the striker leaned with elegant *nonchalance* upon his bat, and Bill mopped his face, and gave vent to a complimentary variety of "*Diawl.*" It was really a pity to interrupt the performance; but we did at last. Bill looked rather ashamed of his share in the business when he saw "*Mishtar,*" as he called Hanmer; but Dawson's self-complacency and good-humour

carried him through everything. "By Jove," said Willingham to him, "no wonder you improve in your style of play; Bill has no bad notion of bowling, has he?" "Why, no; he does very well for practice; and he is to have half-a-crown if he gets me out." "Bowl at his legs, Bill," said Willingham aside, "he's out, you know, if you hit them." "Nay," said Bill, with a desponding shake of the head, "She squat'n hard on the knee now just, and made'n proper savage, but I wasn't get nothing for that."

Positively we did more in the way of reading after the boating and the cricket began, than while we continued in a state of vagrant idleness, without a fixed amusement of any kind. In the first place, it was necessary to conciliate Hanmer by some show of industry in the morning, in order to keep him in good humour for the cricket in the evening; for he was decidedly the main hope of our having anything like a decent eleven. Secondly, the Phillipses took to dining early at home, and coming to practice with us in the evening, instead of dropping down the river every breezy morning, and either idling in our rooms, or beguiling us out mackerel-fishing or flapper-shooting in their boat. And thirdly, it became absolutely necessary that we should do something, if class lists and examiners had any real existence, and were not mere bugbears invented by "alma mater" to instil

a wholesome terror into her unruly progeny. Really, when one compared our actual progress with the Augean labour which was to be gone through, it required a large amount of faith to believe that we were all "going up for honours in October."

We spent a very pleasant morning at Llyn-ciros, the den of "Tiger Jones." He obtained this somewhat appalling sobriquet from a habit of spinning yarns, more marvellous than his unwarlike neighbours were accustomed to, of the dangers encountered in his Indian sports; and one in particular, of an extraordinary combat between his "chokedar" and a tiger—whether the gist of the story lay in the tiger's eating the chokedar, or the chokedar eating the tiger, I am not sure—I rather think the latter. However, in Wales one is always glad to have some distinguishing appellation to prefix to the name of Jones. If a man's godfathers and godmothers have the forethought to christen him "Mountstewart Jones," or "Fitzhardinge Jones" (I knew such instances of cognominal anticlimax), then it was all very well—no mistake about the individuality of such fortunate people. But "Tom Joneses" and "Bob Joneses" were no individuals at all. They were classes, and large classes; and had to be again distinguished into "Little Bob Joneses" and "Long Bob Joneses." Or if there happened to be nothing sufficiently characteristic in the personal appearance of the rival Joneses,

then was ne fortunate who had no less complimentary additions to his style and title than what might be derived from the name of his location, or the nature of his engagements. These honours were often hereditary—nay, sometimes descended in the female line. We hear occasionally, in England, of "Mrs Doctor Smith," and "Mrs Major Brown;" and absurd as it is, one does comprehend by intuition that it was the gentleman and not the lady who was the ten-year man at Cambridge, or the commandant of the Boggleton yeomanry; but few besides a Welshman would have learned, without a smile, that "Mrs Jones the officer" was the relict of the late tide-waiter at Glyndewi, or that the quiet, modest little daughter of the town-clerk of B—— was known to her intimates as "Miss Jones the lawyer." Luckily our friend the Tiger was a bachelor; it would have been alarming to a nervous stranger at the Glyndewi ball, upon inquiring the name of the young lady with red hair and cat's eyes, to have been introduced incontinently to "Miss Jones the tiger."

The Tiger himself was a well-disposed animal; somewhat given to solitary prowling, like his namesakes in a state of nature, but of most untigerlike and facetious humour. He generally marched into Glyndewi after an early breakfast, and from that time until he returned to his "mutton" at five, might be seen majestically stalking up and down

the extreme edge of the terrace, looking at the fishing-boats, and shaking—*not* his tail, for, as all stout gentlemen seemed to think it their duty to do by the sea-side, he wore a round jacket. From the time that we began our new pursuits, he took to us amazingly—called us his “dear lads”—offered bets to any amount that we should beat the B—Cutter Club, and protested that he never saw finer bowling at Lord’s than Hanner’s.

Branling was in delight. He had found a man who would smoke with him all day (report said, indeed, that the Tiger regularly went to sleep with a cheroot in his mouth), and he had the superintending of “the boat,” which was his thought from morning to night. A light gig, that had once belonged to the custom-house, was polished and painted under his special directions (often did we sigh for one of King’s worst “fours!”) and the fishermen marvelled at such precocious nautical talent.

None of these, however—great events as they were in our hitherto monotonous sojourn—were the “crowning mercy” of the Glyndewi regatta. Hitherto the sunshine of bright eyes, and the breath of balmy lips, had been almost as much unknown to us as if we had been still within the monastic walls of Oxford. We had dined in a body at our friend the surgeon’s: he was a bachelor. We had been invited by twos and threes at a

time to a Welsh squire's in the neighbourhood, who had two maiden sisters, and a fat, good-humoured wife. Captain Phillips had given us a spread more than once at Craig-y-gerron, and, of course, some of us (*I was not so fortunate*) had handed in the Misses Phillips to dinner; but the greater part of the time from six till eleven (at which hour Hammer always ordered out our "*tray*") was too pleasantly occupied in discussing the captain's port and claret, and laughing at his jokes, to induce us to give much time or attention to the ladies in the drawing-room. If some of my fair readers exclaim against this stoic (or rather epicurean) indifference, it may gratify their injured vanity to know, that in the sequel some of us paid for it.

The Phillipses came down in full force the day before the regatta; they were engaged to lunch with us, and, as it was the first time that the ladies of the party had honoured us with a visit, we spared no pains to make our entertainment somewhat more *recherché* than was our wont. It was then that I first discovered that Clara Phillips was beautiful. I am not going to describe her now; I never could have described her. All I knew, and all I remember, was, that for a long time afterwards I formed my standard of what a woman ought to be, by unconscious comparison with what she was. What colour her eyes were, was a question among us at the time. Willingham swore they were grey;

Dawson insisted that they were hazel ; Branling, to whom they referred the point, was inclined to think there was " something green " in them. But that they were eyes of no common expression, all of us were agreed. I think at least half the party were more than half in love with her when that race-week was over. In one sense it was not her fault if we were ; for a girl more thoroughly free from every species of coquetry, and with less of that pitiful ambition of making conquests, which is the curse of half the sex, it was impossible to meet with. But she was to blame for it too, in another way ; for to know her, and not love her, would have been a reproach to any man. Lively and good-humoured, with an unaffected buoyancy of spirits, interesting herself in all that passed around her, and unconscious of the interest she herself excited, no wonder that she seemed to us like an angel sent to cheer us in our house of bondage. Of her own family she was deservedly the darling ; even Dick Phillips, whom three successive tutors had given up in despair, became the most docile of pupils under his sister Clara. Accustomed early to join her brothers in all out-door sports, she was an excellent horsewoman, a fearless sailor, and an untiring explorer of mountains and waterfalls, without losing her naturally feminine character, or becoming in any degree a hoiden or a romp. She sang the sweet national airs of Wales with a voice whose

richness of tone was only second to its power of expression. She did everything with the air of one who, while delighting others, is conscious only of delighting herself; and never seeking admiration, received it as gracefully as it was ungrudgingly bestowed.

If there is one form of taking exercise which I really hate, it is what people call dancing. I am passionately fond of music; but why people should conceive it necessary to shuffle about in all varieties of awkwardness, in order to enjoy it to their satisfaction, has been, is, and probably will ever be, beyond my comprehension. It is all very well for young ladies on the look-out for husbands to affect a fondness for dancing: in the first place, some women dance gracefully, and even elegantly, and show themselves off undoubtedly to advantage (if any exhibition on a woman's part be an advantage); then it gives an excuse for whispering, and squeezing of hands, and stealing flowers, and a thousand nameless skirmishings preparatory to what they are endeavouring to bring about—an engagement; but for a man to be fond of shuffling and twirling himself out of the dignity of step which nature gave him—picking his way through a quadrille, like a goose upon hot bricks, or gyrating like a bad teetotum in what English fashionables are pleased to term a "valse," I never see a man thus occupied, without a fervent desire to kick him. "What a

Goth!" I hear a fair reader of eighteen, prettily ejaculate—"thank Heaven, that all men have not such barbarous ideas! Why, I would go fifty miles to a good ball!" Be not alarmed, my dear young lady; give me but a moment to thank Providence, in my turn, that you are neither my sister nor my daughter, and I will promise you that you shall never be my wife.

On the Saturday night, then, I made Gordon and Willingham both very cross, and caught Sydney Dawson's eye looking over his spectacles with supreme contempt, when I declared my decided intention of staying at home the night of the ball. Even the Reverend Robert Hanmer, who was going himself, was annoyed when Gordon told him of what he called my wilfulness, having a notion that it was decidedly disrespectful in any of us, either to go when he did *not*, or to decline going when he *did*.

On the Tuesday morning, I sent to B—— for white kids. Gordon looked astonished, Hanmer was glad that I had "taken his advice," and Willingham laughed outright; he had overheard Clara Phillips ask me to dance with her. Men *are* like green gooseberries—very green ones; women *do* make fools of them, and a comparatively small proportion of sugar, in the shape of flattery, is sufficient.

Two days before the regatta, there marched into Mrs Jenkins's open doorway, a bewildered-looking

gentleman, shaking off the dust from his feet in testimony of having had a long walk, and inquiring for Hanmer. Gwenny, with her natural grace, trotted upstairs before him, put her head in at the "drawing-room" door (she seemed always conscious that the less one saw of her person the better), and having announced briefly, but emphatically, "a gentlemans," retreated. Hanmer had puzzled himself and me by an attempt to explain a passage which Aristotle, of course, would have put in plainer language if he had known what he meant himself—but modern philosophers are kind enough to help him out occasionally—when the entrance of the gentleman in dust cut the Gordian knot, and saved the Stagyrite from the disgrace of having a pretty bit of esoteric abstruseness translated into common sense.

(What a blessing would it be for Dr —, and Professor —, if they might be allowed to mystify their readers in Greek! though, to do them justice, they have turned the Queen's English to good account for that purpose, and have produced passages which first-class men, at an Athenian university, might possibly construe, but which the whole board of sophists might be defied to explain.)

The *deus ex machinâ*—the gentleman on, or rather off the tramp—who arrived thus opportunely, was no less a person than the Reverend George Plympton, Fellow of Oriel, &c. &c. &c. He was an intimate friend of our worthy tutor's; if the friendship

between Oxford dons can be called intimacy. They compared the merits of their respective college cooks three or four times a term, and contended for the superior vintage of the common-room port. They played whist together ; walked arm-in-arm round Christ Church meadow ; and knew the names of all the old incumbents in each other's college-list, and the value of the respective livings. Mr Plympton and a friend had been making a walking tour of North Wales ; that is, they walked about five miles, stared at a mountain, or a fall, or an old castle, as per guide-book, and then coached it to the next point, when the said book set down that "the Black Dog was an excellent inn," or that "travellers would find every accommodation at Mrs Price's of the Wynnstay Arms." Knowing that Hammer was to be found at Glyndewi, Mr Plympton left his friend at B——, where the salmon was unexceptionable, and had completed the most arduous day's walk in his journal, nearly thirteen miles, in a state of dust and heat far from agreeable to a stoutish gentleman of forty, who usually looked as spruce as if he came out of a band-box. Hammer and he seemed really glad to see each other. On those "oxless" shores, where, as Byron says, "beef was rare," though

"Goat's flesh there was, no doubt, and kid, and mutton,"

the tender reminiscences of far-off Gaude days and

Bursary dinners, that must have arisen in the hearts of each, were enough to make their meeting almost an affecting one. Hammer must have blushed, I think, though far from his wont, when he asked Mr Plympton if he could feed with us at four upon—*hashed mutton!* (*We consumed nearly a sheep per week, and exhausted our stock of culinary ideas, as well as our landlady's patience, in trying to vary the forms in which it was to appear; not having taken the precaution, as some Cambridge men did at B—— one vacation, to bespeak a French cook at a rather higher salary than the mathematical tutor's.*)* Probably, however, Mr Plympton's unusual walk made him more anxious about the quantity than the quality of his diet, for he not only attacked the mutton like an Etonian, but announced his intention of staying with us over the ball, if a bed was to be had, and sending to B—— for his decorations. He was introduced in due form to the Phillipses the next day, and in the number and elegance of his bows, almost eclipsed Mr Sydney Dawson, whom Clara never ceased to recommend to her brothers as an example of politeness.

Bright dawned the morning of the 20th of August, the first of the "three glorious days" of Glyndewi. As people came to these races really for amusement, the breakfast was fixed for the very unfashionable hour of ten, in order not to interfere with the

* Fact.

main business of the day—the regatta. Before half-past, the tables at the Mynysnewydd Arms were filled with what the —*shire Herald* termed “a galaxy of beauty and fashion.” But every one seemed well aware that there were far more substantial attractions present, meant to fill not the tables only, but the guests. The breakfast was by no means a matter of form. People had evidently come with more serious intentions than merely to display new bonnets, and trifle with grapes and peaches. Sea-air gives a whet to even a lady’s appetite, and if the performances that morning were any criterion of the effects of that of Glyndewi, the new Poor Law Commissioners, in forming their scale of allowances, must really have reported it a “special case.” The fair Cambrians, in short, played very respectable knives and forks—made no bones—or rather nothing but bones—of the chickens, and ate kippered salmon like Catholics. You caught a bright eye gazing in your direction with evident interest—“Would you have the kindness to cut that pasty before you for a lady?” You almost overheard a tender whisper from the gentleman opposite to the pretty girl beside him. She blushes and gently remonstrates. Again his lip almost touches her cheek in earnest persuasion—yes! she is consenting—to another *little* slice of ham! As for the jolly Welsh squires themselves, and their strapping heirs-apparent (you remember that six-foot-four

man surely, number six of the Jesus boat)—now that the ladies have really done, and the waiters have brought in the relays of brandered chickens and fresh-caught salmon, which mine host, who has had some experience of his customers, has most liberally provided—they set to work in earnest. They have been only politely trifling hitherto with the wing of a fowl or so, to keep the ladies company. But now, as old Captain Phillips, at the head of the table, cuts a slice and a joke alternately, and the Tiger at the bottom begins to let out his carnivorous propensities, one gets to have an idea what breakfast means. "Let me advise you, my dear Mr Dawson—as a friend—you'll excuse an old stager—if you have no particular wish to starve yourself—you've had nothing yet but two cups of tea—to help yourself, and let your neighbours do the same. You may keep on cutting Vauxhall shavings for those three young Lloyds till Michaelmas; pass the ham down to them, and hand me those devilled kidneys."

"Tea? no; thank you; I took a cup yesterday, and haven't been myself since. Waiter! don't you see this tankard's empty?"

"Consume you, Dick Phillips! I left two birds in that pie five minutes back, and you've cleared it out!"

"Diawl, John Jones, I was a fool to look into a tankard after you!"

Everything has an end, and so the breakfast had at last ; and we followed the ladies to the terrace to watch the sailing for the ladies' challenge cup. By the help of a glass we could see three yachts, with about half a mile between each, endeavouring to get round a small boat with a man and a flag in it, which, as the wind was about the worst they could have had for the purpose, seemed no easy matter. There was no great interest in straining one's eyes after them, so I found out the Phillipses, and having told Dawson, who was escorting Clara, that Hanmer was looking for him to make out the list of "the eleven," I was very sorry indeed when the sound of a gun announced that the Hon. H. Chouser's Firefly had won the cup, and that the other two yachts might be expected in the course of half an hour. Nobody waited for them, of course. The herring-boats, after a considerable deal of what I concluded from the emphasis to be swearing in Welch, in which, however, Captain Phillips, who was umpire, seemed to have decidedly the advantage in variety of terms and power of voice, were pronounced "ready," and started by gun-fire accordingly. A rare start they made of it. The great ambition of every man among them seemed to be to prevent the boats next in the line from starting at all. It was a general fouling-match, and the jabbering was terrific. At last, the two outside boats, having the advantage of a clear berth

on one side, got away, and made a pretty race of it, followed by such of the rest as could by degrees extricate themselves from the mêlée.

But now was to come our turn. Laden with all manner of good wishes, we hoisted a bit of dark-blue silk for the honour of Oxford, and spurted under the terrace to our starting-place. The only boat entered against us was the Dolphin, containing three stout gentlemen and a thin one, members of the B—— Cutter Club, who evidently looked upon pulling as no joke. Branling gave us a steady stroke, and Cotton of Baliol steered us admirably; the rest did as well as they could. The old boys had a very pretty boat—ours was a tub—but we beat them. They gave us a stern-chase for the first hundred yards, for I cut a crab at starting; but we had plenty of pluck, and came in winners by a length. Of course we were the favourites—the “Dolphins” were all but one married—and hearty were the congratulations with which we were greeted on landing. Clara Phillips’ eyes had a most dangerous light in them, as she shook hands with our noble captain, who was in a terrible hurry, however, to get away, and hunting everywhere for “that d——d Dawson,” who had promised to have Bill Thomas in readiness with “the lush.” So I was compelled to stay with her and give an account of the race, which she perfectly understood, and be soundly scolded by the prettiest lips in the world

for my awkwardness, which she declared she never could have forgiven if it had lost the race.

“You will come to the ball, then, Mr Hawthorne?”

“Am I not to dance with you?”

“Yes, if you behave well, and don’t tease Mr Sydney Dawson: he is a great favourite of mine, and took great care of me this morning at breakfast.”

“Well, then, for your sake, Miss Phillips, I will be particularly civil to him; but I assure you, Dawson is like the fox that took a pride in being hunted; he considers our persecution of him as the strongest evidence of his own superiority; and if you seriously undertake to patronise him, he will become positively unbearable.”

The regatta over, we retired to make a hurried dinner, and to dress for the ball. This, with some of our party, was a serious business. Willingham and Dawson were going in fancy dresses. The former was an admirable personification of Dick Turpin, standing upwards of six feet, and broadly built; and becoming his picturesque costume as if it were his everyday suit, he strutted before Mrs Jenkins’s best glass, which Hanmer charitably gave up for his accommodation, with a pardonable vanity. Dawson had got a lancer’s uniform from his London tailor; but how to get into it was a puzzle; it was delightful to see his attempts to unravel the gorgeous mysteries which were occupying every available spot in his dingy bedroom. The shako was

the main stumbling-block. Being unfortunately rather small, it was no easy matter to keep it on his head at all; and how to dispose of the cap-lines was beyond our united wisdom. "Go without it, man," said Branling: "people don't want hats in a ball-room. You can never dance with that thing on your head."

"Oh, but the head-dress is always worn at a fancy-ball, you know, and I can take it off if I like to dance."

At last the idea struck us of employing the five or six yards of gold cord that had so puzzled us, in securing shako and plume in a perpendicular position. This at length accomplished, by dint of keeping himself scrupulously upright, Mr Sydney Dawson majestically walked down stairs.

CHAPTER III.

Now, there happened to be at that time residing in Glyndewi an old lady, "of the name and cousin-ago" of Phillips, who, though an old maid, was one of those unhappily rare individuals who do not think it necessary to rail against those amusements which they are no longer in a situation to enjoy. She was neither as young, nor as rich, nor as light-hearted, as she had been; but it was difficult to imagine that she could ever have been more truly cheer-

ful and happy than she seemed now. So, instead of cutting short every sally of youthful spirits, and every dream of youthful happiness, by sagacious hints of cares and troubles to come, she rather lent her aid to further every innocent enjoyment among her younger friends ; feeling, as she said, that the only *pity was that young hearts grew old so soon*. The consequence was, that, instead of exacting a forced deference from her many nephews and nieces (so are first cousins' children called in Wales), she was really loved and esteemed by them all ; and while she never wished to deprive them of an hour's enjoyment, they would willingly give up a pleasant party at any time to spend an evening with the old lady, and enliven her solitude with the sounds she best loved—the music of youthful voices.

All among her acquaintance, therefore, who were going to the ball in fancy costume, had promised to call upon her, whether in or out of their way, to “show themselves,” willing to make her a partaker, as far as they could, of the amusement of the evening. Captain Phillips had asked us if we would oblige him, and gratify a kind old woman, by allowing him to introduce us in our fancy dresses. I had none, and therefore did not form part of the exhibition ; but Dick Turpin and the cornet of lancers, with Branling in a full hunting-costume (which always formed part of his travelling baggage), walked some fifty yards to the old lady's

lodgings. Mr Plympton, always polite, accepted Captain Phillips's invitation to be introduced at the same time. Now Mr Plympton, as was before recorded, was a remarkably dapper personage; wore hair-powder, a formidably tall and stiff white "choker," and upon all occasions of ceremony, black shorts and silks, with gold buckles. Remarkably upright and somewhat pompous in his gait, and abominating the free-and-easy manners of the modern school, his bow would have graced the court of Versailles, and his step was a subdued minuet. Equipped with somewhat more than his wonted care, the rev. junior bursar of Oriël was introduced into Mrs Phillips's little drawing-room, accompanying, and strongly contrasting with, three gentlemen in scarlet and gold. Hurriedly did the good old lady seize her spectacles, and rising to receive her guests with a delighted curtsy, scan curiously for a few moments Turpin's athletic proportions, and the fox-hunter's close-fitting leathers and tops. As for Dawson, he stood like the clear-complexioned and magnificently-whiskered officer, who silently invites the stranger to enter the doors of Madame Tussaud's wax exhibition; not daring to bow for fear of losing his beloved shako, but turning his head from side to side as slowly, and far less naturally, than the waxen gentleman aforementioned. All, in their several ways, were worthy of admiration, and all did she seem to admire; but it was when her eye rested

at last on the less showy, but equally characteristic figure in black, who stood bowing his acknowledgments of the honour of the interview, with an *empressement* which fully made up for Dawson's forced *hauteur*—that her whole countenance glistened with intense appreciation of the joke, and the very spectacles danced with glee. Again did she make the stranger her most gracious curtsy; again did Mr Plympton, as strongly as a bow could do it, declare how entirely he was at her service: he essayed to speak, but before a word escaped his lips, the old lady fairly burst out into a hearty laugh, clapped her hands, and shouted to his astonished ears, "Capital, capital! do it again! oh, do it again!" For a moment the consternation depicted upon Mr Plympton's countenance at this remarkable reception, extended to the whole of his companions; but the extraordinary sounds which proceeded from Captain Phillips, in the vain attempt to stifle the laugh that was nearly choking him, were too much for the gravity of even the polite Mr Dawson; and it was amidst the violent application of pocket-handkerchiefs in all possible ways, that the captain stepped forward with the somewhat tardy announcement; "My dear aunt, allow me to present the Rev. Mr Plympton, Fellow and Tutor of Oriel College." This was accompanied by a wink and an attempt at a frown, intended to convey the strongest reprobation of the old lady's proceedings; but which, upon

the features of the good captain, whose risible muscles were still rebellious, had anything but a serious effect. "Indeed!" said she, curtsying yet more profoundly in return for another bow. "How do you do, sir? Oh, he is beautiful, isn't he?" half-aside to *Willingham*, who was swallowing as much as he could of the butt of his whip. Poor Mr Plympton looked aghast at the compliment. *Branling* fairly turned his back, and burst from the room, nearly upsetting *Hanmer* and myself; who, having waited below some time for our party to join us, had made our way up-stairs to ascertain the cause of the unusual noises which reached us from the open door of the drawing-room. *Dawson* was shaking with reckless disregard of the safety of his headdress, and the captain in an agony between his natural relish for a joke and his real good-breeding. "Aunt Martha, this is a clergyman, a friend of Mr *Hanmer's*, who is on a visit here, and whom I introduce to you, because I know you will like him." Mr Plympton commenced a fresh series of bows, in which there was, perhaps, less gallantry and more dignity than usual, looking all the time as comfortable as a gentleman might do who was debating with himself whether the probabilities, as regarded the old lady's next movements, lay on the side of kissing or scratching. Mrs Martha Phillips herself commenced an incoherent apology about "expecting to see four young gentlemen in fancy dresses;" and

Hanmer and the captain tried all they could to laugh off a *contretemps*, which to explain was impossible. What the old lady took Mr Plympton for, and what Mr Plympton thought of her, were questions which, so far as I know, no one ventured to ask. He left Glyndewi the next morning; but the joke, after furnishing us with a never-failing fund of ludicrous reminiscence for the rest of our stay, followed him to the Oriel common-room, and was an cra in the dulness of that respectable symposium.

Dancing had begun in good earnest when we arrived at the ball-room. There was the usual motley assemblage of costumes of all nations under the sun, and some which the sun, when he put down the impudence of the wax-lights upon his return the next morning, must have marvelled to behold. Childish as it may be called, a fancy-ball is certainly, for the first half-hour at all events, an amusing scene. Willingham and myself stood a little inside the doorway for some moments, he enjoying the admiring glances which his fine figure and picturesque costume were well calculated to call forth, and I vainly endeavouring to make out Clara's figure amidst the gay dresses and well-grown proportions of the pretty Cambrians who flitted past. Sounds of expostulation and entreaty, mingled with a laugh which we knew to be Branling's, in the passage outside, disturbed both our meditations, and at last induced me to turn my eyes unwillingly to the

open door. Branling was leaning against it in a fit of uncontrollable mirth, and beckoned us earnestly to join him. Outside stood Dawson, stamping with vexation, and endeavouring to undo the complex machinery which had hitherto secured his shako in an erect position. He was in the unfortunate predicament of Dr S——'s candelabrum, which, presented to him as a testimony of respect from his grateful pupils, was found by many feet too large to be introduced into any room in the Dr's comparatively humble habitation, and stood for some time in the manufacturer's show-room in testimony of the fact, that public acknowledgments of merit are *sometimes* made on too large a scale. Architects who give measurements for ordinary doorways, do not contemplate such emergencies as testimonial candelabrams or irremovable caps and plumes; and the door of the Glyndewi ball-room had no notion of accommodating a lancer in full dress, who could not even be civil enough to take off his hat. So there stood our friend, impatient to display his uniform, and unwilling to lessen the effect of his first appearance by doffing so important a part of his costume: to get through the door, in the rigid inflexibility of head and neck which he had hitherto maintained, was a manifest impossibility. Branling had suggested his staying outside, and he would undertake to bring people to look at him; but Dawson, for some unaccountable reason, was usually

suspicious of advice from that quarter; so he "stooped to conquer," and lost all. The shako tumbled from its precarious perch, and hung ignobly suspended by the cap-lines. A lancer with a pair of grey spectacles, and a shako hanging round his neck, would have been a very fancy dress indeed: so he was endeavouring, at the risk of choking himself, to disentangle, by main force, the complication of knots which we had woven with some dim hope of the result. In vain did we exhort him to take it patiently, and remind him how preposterous it was to expect, that what had taken our united ingenuity half an hour to arrange "to please him," could be undone in a minute. "Cut the cursed things, can't you?" implored he. No one had a knife. "I do believe, Branling, you are tying that knot tighter: I had much rather not have your assistance." Branling protested his innocence. At last we did release him, and he entered the room with a look most appropriately crest-fallen, shako in hand, solacing himself by displaying its glories as well as could be effected by judicious changes of its position.

I soon found Clara, looking more radiantly beautiful than ever I had seen her, in a sweet dress of Stuart tartan. I had to make my apologies, which were most sincerely penitent ones, for not being in time to claim my privilege of dancing the first quadrille with her. She smiled at my evident earnestness, and good-humouredly added, that the next would

be a much more pleasant dance, as the room was now beginning to fill. It was a pleasant dance, as she said; and the waltz that followed still more delightful; and then Clara, with a blush and a laugh, declined my pressing entreaties until after supper at all events. I refused her good-natured offer of an introduction to "that pretty girl in blue," or any other among the stars of the night; and sat down, or leant against the wall, almost unconsciously watching her light step, and sternly resisting all attempts on the part of my acquaintances to persuade me to dance again. Of course, all the dancing characters among our party were Clara's partners in succession; and both Gordon and Dawson, who came to ask what had put me into the sulks, were loud in their encomiums on her beauty and fascination; even Branling, no very devoted admirer of the sex (he saw too much of them, he said, having four presentable sisters), allowed that she was "the right sort of girl;" but it was not until I saw her stand up with Willingham, and marked his evident admiration of her, and heard the remarks freely made around me, that they were the handsomest couple in the room, that I felt a twinge of what I would hardly allow to myself was jealousy: when, however, after the dance, they passed me in laughing conversation, evidently in high good-humour with each other, and too much occupied to notice any one else, I began to wonder

I had never before found out what a conceited puppy Willingham was, and set down poor Clara as an arrant flirt. But I was in a variable mood, it seemed, and a feather—or, what some may say is even lighter, a woman's word—was enough to turn me. So when I found myself, by some irresistible attraction, drawn next to her again at supper, and heard her sweet voice, and saw what I interpreted into a smile of welcome, as she made room for me beside her, I forgave her all past offences, and was perfectly happy for the next hour; nay, even condescended to challenge Willingham to a glass of *soi-disant* champagne. The Tiger, who was, according to annual custom, displaying the tarnished uniform of the 3d Madras N.I., and illustrating his tremendous stories of the siege of Overabad, or some such place, by attacks on all the edibles in his neighbourhood, gave me a look of intelligence as he requested I would “do him the honour,” and shook his whiskers with some meaning which I did not think it necessary to inquire into. What was it to him if I chose to confine my attentions to my undoubtedly pretty neighbour? No one could dispute my taste, at all events; for Clara Phillips was a universal favourite, though I had remarked that none of the numerous “eligible young men” in the room appeared about her in the character of a dangler. She was engaged to Willingham for the waltz next after supper, and I felt

queerish again, till she willingly agreed to dance the next set with me, on condition that I would oblige her so far as to ask a friend of hers to be my partner in the mean time. "She is a very nice girl, Mr Hawthorne, though, perhaps, not one of the *belles* of the room, and has danced but twice this evening, and it will be so kind in you to ask her—only don't do it upon my introduction, but let Major Jones introduce you as if at your own request." Let no one say that vanity, jealousy, and all those petty arts by which woman wrongs her better nature, are the rank growth necessarily engendered by the vitiated air of a ball-room; rooted on the same soil, warmed by the same sunshine, fed by the same shower, one plant shall bear the antidote and one the poison: one kind and gentle nature shall find exercise for all its sweetest qualities in those very scenes which, in another, shall foster nothing but heartless coquetry or unfeminine display. Never did Clara seem so lovely in mind and person as when she drew upon her own attractions to give pleasure to her less gifted friend; and, I suppose, I must have thrown into the tone of my reply something of what I felt; for she blushed, uttered a hasty "I thank you," and told Willingham it was time to take their places. I sought and obtained the introduction, and endeavoured, for Clara's sake, to be an agreeable partner to the quiet little girl beside me. One subject of conversation,

at all events, we hit upon, where we seemed both at home ; and if I felt some hesitation in saying all I thought of Clara, my companion had none, but told me how much everybody loved her, and how much she deserved to be loved. It was really so much easier to draw my fair partner out on this point than any other, that I excused myself for being so eager a listener ; and, when we parted, to show my gratitude in what I conceived the most agreeable way, I begged permission to introduce Mr Sydney Dawson, and thus provided her with what, I dare say, she considered a most enviable partner. I had told Dawson she was a very clever girl (he was fond of what he called "talented women," and had a delusive notion that he was himself a genius) : he had the impertinence to tell me afterwards he found her rather stupid ; I ought, perhaps, to have given him the key-note. During the dance which followed, I remember I was silent and *distract* ; and when it was over, and Clara told me she was positively engaged for more sets than she should dance again, I left the ball-room, and wandered feverishly along the quay to our lodgings. I remember persuading myself, by a syllogistic process, that I was not in love, and dreaming that I was anxiously reading the class-list, in which it seemed unaccountable that my name should be omitted, till I discovered, on a second perusal, that just about the centre of the first class, where "Hawthorne, Fran-

ciscus, e. Coll——" ought to have come in, stood in large type the name of "CLARA PHILLIPS."

The races, which occupied the morning of the next day, were as stupid as country races usually are, except that the Welshmen had rather more noise about it. The guttural shouts and yells from the throats of tenants and other dependants, as the "mishtur's" horse won or lost, and the extraordinary terms in which they endeavoured to encourage the riders, were amusing even to a stranger, though one lost the point of the various sallies which kept the course in one continued roar. As to the running, everybody—that is, all the sporting world—knew perfectly well, long before the horses started, which was to win; that appearing to be the result of some private arrangement between the parties interested, while the "racing" was for the benefit of the strangers and the ladies. Those of the latter who had fathers, or brothers, or, above all, lovers, among the knowing ones, won divers pairs of gloves on the occasion, while those who were not so fortunate, lost them.

I fancied that Clara was not in her usual spirits on the race-course, and she pleaded a headache as an excuse to her sister for ordering the carriage to drive home long before the "sport" was over. If I had thought the said sport stupid before, it did not improve in attraction after her departure; and, when the jumping in sacks, and climbing up poles,

and other calisthenic exercises began, feeling a growing disgust for "things in general," I resisted the invitation of a mamma and three daughters, to join themselves and Mr Dawson in masticating some sandwiches which looked very much like "relics of joy" from last night's supper, and sauntered home, and sat an hour over a cigar and a chapter of ethics. As the clock struck five, remembering that the Ordinary hour was six, I called at the Phillips' lodgings to inquire for Clara. She was out walking with her sister; so I returned to dress in a placid frame of mind, confident that I should meet her at dinner.

For it was an Ordinary for ladies as well as gentlemen. A jovial Welsh baronet sat at the head of the table, with the two ladies of highest "consideration"—the county member's wife and the would-have-been member's daughter—on his right and left; nobody thought of politics at the Glyndewi regatta. Clara was there; but she was escorted into the room by some odious man, who, in virtue of having been made high-sheriff by mistake, sat next Miss Anti-reform on the chairman's left. The natives were civil enough to marshal us pretty high up by right of strangership, but still I was barely near enough to drink wine with her.

If a man wants a good dinner, a hearty laugh, an opportunity of singing songs and speech-making, and can put up with indifferent wine, let him go to

the race Ordinary at Glyndewi next year, if it still be among the things which time has spared. There was nothing like stiffness or formality : people came there for amusement, and they knew that the only way to get it was to make it for themselves. There seemed to be fun enough for half-a-dozen of the common run of such dinners, even while the ladies remained. It was, as Hanmer called it, an *extraordinary*. But it was when the ladies had retired, and Hanmer and a few of the "steady ones" had followed them, and those who remained closed up around the chairman, and cigars and genuine whisky began to supersede the questionable port and sherry, and the "Vice" requested permission to call on a gentleman for a song, that we began to fancy ourselves within the walls of some hitherto unknown college, where the "levelling system" had mixed up fellows and undergraduates in one common supper-party, and the portly principal himself rejoiced in the office of "*arbiter bibendi*." Shall I confess it? I forgot even Clara in the uproarious mirth that followed. Two of the young Phillipses were admirable singers, and drew forth the hearty applause of the whole company. We got Dawson to make a speech, in which he waxed poetical touching the "flowers of Cambria," and drew down thunders of applause by a Latin quotation, which every one took that means of showing that they understood. I obtained almost unconsciously an

immortal reputation by a species of flattery to which the Welsh are most open. I had learnt, after no little application, a Welsh toast—a happy specimen of the language; it was but three words, but they were truly cabalistic. No sooner had I, after a “neat and appropriate” preface, uttered my triple Shibboleth (it ended in *rag*, and signified “Wales, Welshmen, and Welshwomen”), than the whole party rose, and cheered at me till I felt positively modest. My pronunciation, I believe, was perfect, (a woman’s lips and an angel’s voice had taught it to me): and it was indeed the Open Sesame to their hearts and feelings. I became at once the intimate friend of all who could get near enough to offer me their houses, their horses, their dogs—I have no doubt, had I given a hint at the moment, I might have had any one of their daughters. “Would I come and pay a visit at Abergwrnant before I left the neighbourhood? Only twenty-five miles, and a coach from B——!” “Would I, before the shooting began, come to Craig-y-bwldrwn, and stay over the first fortnight in September?” I could have quartered myself, and two or three friends, in a dozen places for a month at a time. And, let me do justice to the warm hospitality of North Wales—these invitations were renewed in the morning: and were I ever to visit those shores again, I should have no fear of their having been yet forgotten.

Captain Phillips had told us that, when we left the table, "the girls" would have some coffee for us, if not too late; and Willingham and myself, having taken a turn or two in the moonlight to get rid of the excitement of the evening, bent our steps in that direction. There were about as many persons assembled as the little drawing-room would hold, and Clara, having forgotten her headache, and looking as lovely as ever, was seated at a wretched piano, endeavouring to accompany herself in her favourite songs. Willingham and myself stood by, and our repeated requests for some of those melodies which, unknown to us before, we had learnt from her singing to admire beyond all the fashionable trash of the day, were gratified with untiring good-nature. Somehow I thought that she avoided my eye, and answered my remarks with less than her usual archness and vivacity. I could bear it on this evening less than ever; a hair will turn the scale; and I had just been, half ludicrously, half seriously, affected by Welsh nationality. One cannot help warming towards a community which are so warm-hearted among themselves. Visions of I know not what—love and a living, Clara and a cottage—were floating dreamlike before my eyes; and I felt as if borne along by a current whose direction might be dangerous, but which it was misery to resist. Willingham had turned away a minute to hunt for some missing book, which con-

tained one of his favourites; and, leaning over her with my finger pointing to the words which she had just been singing, I said something about there being always a fear in happiness such as I had lately been enjoying, lest it might not last. For a moment she met my earnest look, and coloured violently; and then fixing her eyes on the music before her, she said quickly, "Mr Hawthorne, I thought you had a higher opinion of me than to make me pretty speeches; I have a great dislike to them." I began to protest warmly against any intention of mere compliment, when the return of Willingham with his song prevented any renewal of the subject. I was annoyed and silent, and detected a tremor in her voice while she sang the words, and saw her cheek paler than usual. The instant the song was over, she complained with a smile of being tired, and, without a look at either of us, joined a party who were noisily recounting the events of the race-course. Nor could I again that evening obtain a moment's conversation with her. She spoke to me, indeed, and very kindly; but once only did I catch her eye, when I was speaking to some one else—the glance was rapidly withdrawn, but it seemed rather sorrowful than cold.

I was busy with Hanmer the next morning before breakfast, when Dick Phillips made his appearance and informed us that the "strangers" had made up an eleven for the cricket match, and that we were

to play at ten. He was a sort of live circular, despatched to get all parties in readiness.

"Oh! I have something for you from Clara," said he to me, as he was leaving; "the words of a song she promised you, I believe."

I opened the sealed envelope, saw that it was *not* a song, and left Hanmer somewhat abruptly. When I was alone, I read the following:—

"DEAR MR HAWTHORNE,—Possibly you may have been told that I have, before now, done things which people call strange—that is, contrary to some arbitrary notions which are to supersede our natural sense of right and wrong. But never, until now, did I follow the dictates of my own feelings in opposition to conventional rules, with the painful uncertainty as to the propriety of such a course, which I now feel. And if I had less confidence than I have in your honour and your kindness, or less esteem for your character, or less anxiety for your happiness, I would not write to you now. But I feel that, if you are what I wish to believe you, it is right that you should be at once undeceived as to my position. Others should have done it, perhaps—it would have spared me much. Whether your attentions to me are in sport or earnest, they must cease. I have no right to listen to such words as yours last-night—my heart and hand are engaged to one who deserves better from me than the levity which alone

could have placed me in the position from which I thus painfully extricate myself. For any fault on my part, I thus make bitter atonement. I wish you health and happiness, and now let this save us both from further misunderstanding. "C."

Again and again did I read these words. Not one woman in a hundred would have ventured on such a step. And for what? to save me from the mortification of a rejection? It could be nothing else. How easy for a man of heartless gallantry to have written a cool note in reply, disclaiming "any aspiration after the honour implied," and placing the warm-hearted writer in the predicament of having declined attentions never meant to be serious! But I felt how kindly, how gently, I had been treated—the worst of it was, I loved her better than ever. I wrote some incoherent words in reply, sufficiently expressive of my bitter disappointment, and my admiration of her conduct; and then I felt "that my occupation was gone." She whom I had so loved to look upon, I trembled now to see. I had no mind to break my heart; but I felt that time and change were necessary to prevent it. Above all, Glyndewi was no place for me to forget *her* in.

In the midst of my painful reflections on all the happy hours of the past week, Gordon and Willingham broke in upon me with high matter for consul-

tation relative to the match. In vain did I plead sudden illness, and inability to play : they declared it would knock the whole thing on the head, for Hanmer would be sure to turn sulky, and there was an end of the eleven; and they looked so really chagrined at my continued refusals, that at length I conquered my selfishness (I had had a lesson in that), and, though really feeling indisposed for any exertion, went down with them to the ground. I was in momentary dread of seeing Clara arrive (for all the world was to be there), and felt nervous and low-spirited. The strangers' eleven was a better one than we expected, and they put our men out pretty fast. Hanmer got most unfortunately run out after a splendid hit, and begged me to go in and "do something." I took my place mechanically, and lost my wicket to the first ball. We made a wretched score, and the strangers went in exultingly. In spite of Hanmer's steady bowling, they got runs pretty fast; and an easy catch came into my hands just as Clara appeared on the ground, and I lost all consciousness of what I was about. Again the same opportunity offered, and again my eyes were wandering among the tents. Hanmer got annoyed, and said something not over civil: I was vexed myself that my carelessness should be the cause of disappointment twice, and yet more than half-inclined to quarrel with Branling, whom I overheard muttering about my "cursed awkward-

ness." We were left in a fearful minority at the close of the first innings, when we retired to dinner. The Glyndewi party and their friends were evidently disappointed. I tried to avoid Clara; but could not keep far from her. At last she came up with one of her brothers, spoke and shook hands with me, said that her brother had told her I was not well, and that she feared I ought not to have played at all. "I wish you could have beat them, Mr Hawthorne—I had bet that you would; perhaps you will feel better after dinner; those kind of headaches soon wear off," she added with a smile and a kind look, which I understood as she meant it. I walked into the tent where we were to dine: I sat next a little man on the opposite side, an Englishman, one of their best players, as active as a monkey, who had caught out three of our men in succession. He talked big about his play, criticised Willingham's batting, which was really pretty, and ended by discussing Clara Phillips, who was, he said, "a demned fine girl, but too much of her." I disliked his flippancy before, but now my disgust to him was supreme. I asked the odds against us, and took them freely. There was champagne before me, and I drank it in tumblers. I did what even in my undergraduate days was rarely my habit—I drank till I was considerably excited. Hanmer saw it, and got the match resumed at once to save me, as he afterwards said, "from making a fool of

myself." I insisted, in spite of his advice, "to cool myself," upon going in first. My flippant acquaintance of the dinner-table stood *point*, and I knew, if I could but see the ball, and not see more than one, that I could occasionally "hit square" to some purpose. I had the luck to catch the first ball just on the rise, and it cut my friend *point* off his legs as if he had been shot. He limped off the ground, and we were troubled with him no more. I hit as I never did before, or shall again. At first I played wild; but as I got cool, and my sight became steady, I felt quite at home. The bowlers got tired, and Dick Phillips, who had no science, but the strength of a unicorn, was in with me half-an-hour, slashing in all directions. In short, the tide turned, and the match ended in our favour.

I was quite sober, and free from all excitement, when I joined Clara, for the last time, after the game was over. "I am so glad you played so well," said she; "if you are but as successful at Oxford as you have been at the boat-race and the cricket, you will have no reason to be disappointed: your career here has been one course of victory." "Not altogether, Miss Phillips: the prize I shall leave behind me when I quit Glyndewi to-morrow, is worth more than all that I can gain." "Mr Hawthorne," said she kindly, "one victory is in your own power, and you will soon gain it, and be happy—the victory over yourself."

I made some excuse to Hanmer about letters from home, to account for my sudden departure. How the party got on after I left them, and what was the final result of our "reading," is no part of my tale; but I fear the reader will search the class-lists of 18— in vain for the names of Mr Hanmer's pupils.

FATHER TOM AND THE POPE;

OR, A NIGHT AT THE VATICAN.

As related by Mr Michael Heffernan, Master of the National School at Tallymactaggart, in the County of Leitrim, to a friend, during his official visit to Dublin, for the purpose of studying Political Economy, in the Spring of 1838.

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CHAPTER I.

HOW FATHER TOM WENT TO TAKE POT-LUCK AT THE VATICAN.

WHEN his Riv'rence was in Room, ov coorse the Pope axed him to take pot look wid him. More be token, it was on a Friday; but, for all that, there was plenty of mate; for the Pope gev himself an absolution from the fast on account ov the great company that was in it—at laste so I'm tould. Howandiver, there's no fast on the dhrink, anyhow—glory be to God!—and so, as they wor sitting, afther dinner, taking their sup together, says the Pope, says he, "Thomaus"—for the Pope,

you know, spakes that away, all as one as one ov uz—"Thomaus *a lanna*," says he, "I'm tould you welt them English heretics out ov the face."

"You may say that," says his Riv'rence to him again. "Be my sowl," says he, "if I put your Holiness undher the table, you won't be the first Pope I floored."

Well, his Holiness laughed like to split; for, you know, Pope was the great Prodesan that Father Tom put down upon Purgathory; and ov coorse they knewn all the ins and outs of the conthravarsy at Room. "Faix, Thomaus," says he, smiling across the table at him mighty agreeable—"it's no ie what they tell me, that yourself is the pleasant man over the ddrop ov good liquor."

"Would you like to thry?" says his Riv'rence.

"Sure, and amn't I thrying all I can?" says the Pope. "Sorra betther bottle ov wine's betuxt this and Salamancha, nor's there fornenst you on the table; it's raal Lachrymalchrysal, every spudh ov it."

"It's mortal could," says Father Tom.

"Well, man alive," says the Pope, "sure and here's the best ov good claret in the cut decanther."

"Not maning to make little ov the claret, your Holiness," says his Riv'rence, "I would prefir some hot wather and sugar, wid a glass ov spirits through t, if convanient."

"Hand me over the bottle of brandy," says the

Pope to his head butler, "and fetch up the materi'ls," says he.

"Ah, then, your Holiness," says his Riv'rence, mighty eager, "maybe you'd have a dhrop ov the native in your cellar? Sure it's all one throuble," says he, "and, troth, I dunna how it is, but brandy always plays the puck wid my intrails."

"'Pon my conscience, then," says the Pope, "it's very sorry I am, Misther Maguire," says he, "that it isn't in my power to plase you; for I'm sure and certaint that there's not as much whisky in Room this blessed minit as 'ud blind the eye ov a midge."

"Well, in troth, your Holiness," says Father Tom, "I knewn there was no use in axing; only," says he, "I didn't know how elso to exqueeze the liberty I tuck," says he, "of bringing a small taste," says he, "of the real stuff," says he, hauling out an imper'l quart bottle out ov his coat-pocket; "that never seen the face of a gauger," says he, setting it down on the table fornenst the Pope: "and if you'll jist thry the full ov a thimble ov it, and it doesn't rise the cockles of your Holiness's heart, why then, my name," says he, "isn't Tom Maguire!" and wid that he outs wid the cork.

Well, the Pope at first was going to get vexed at Father Tom for fetching dhrink thataway in his pocket, as if there wasn't lashins in the house: so says he, "Misther Maguire," says he, "I'd have you to comprehend the differ betuxt an invitation

to dinner from the successor of Saint Pether, and from a common nagur ov a Prodesan squireen that maybe hasn't liquor enough in his cupboard to wet more nor his own heretical whistle. That may be the way wid them that you wisit in Leithrim," says he, "and in Roscommon; and I'd let you know the differ in the prisint case," says he, "only that you're a champion ov the Church and entitled to laniency. So," says he, "as the liquor's come, let it stay. And in throth I'm curis myself," says he, getting mighty soft when he found the delightful smell ov the *putteen*, "in inwistigating the composition ov distilled liquors; "it's a branch ov natural philosophy," says he, taking up the bottle and putting it to his blessed nose. Ah! my dear, the very first snuff he got ov it, he cried out, the dear man, "Blessed Vargin, but it has the divine smell!" and crossed himself and the bottle half-a-dozen times running.

"Well, sure enough, it's the blessed liquor now," says his Riv'rence, "and so there can be no harm any way in mixing a dandy of punch; and," says he, stirring up the materi'ls wid his goolden muddler—for everything at the Pope's table, to the very shcrew for drawing the corks, was ov vergin goold—"if I might make bould," says he, "to spake on so deep a subjie afore your Holiness, I think it 'ud considherably whacilitate the inwestigating ov its chemisthry and phyarmaceutics, if

you'd jist thry the laste sup in life ov it in wardly."

"Well, then, suppose I do make the same experiment," says the Pope, in a much more condescending way nor you'd have expected—and wid that he mixes himself a real stiff facer.

"Now, your Holiness," says Father Tom, "this bein' the first time you ever dispensed them chymicals," says he, "I'll just make bould to lay down one rule ov orthography," says he, "for conwhounding them, *secundum mortem*."

"What's that?" says the Pope.

"Put in the sperits first," says his Riv'rence; "and then put in the sugar; and remember, every dhrop ov wather you put in after that spoils the punch."

"Glory be to God!" says the Pope, not minding a word Father Tom was saying. "Glory be to God!" says he, smacking his lips. "I never knewn what dhrink was afore," says he. "It bates the Lachrymalchrystal out ov the face!" says he—"it's Nectar itself, it is, so it is!" says he, wiping his epistolical mouth wid the cuff ov his coat.

"'Pon my secret honour," says his Riv'rence, "I'm raally glad to see your Holiness set so much to your satiswhaction; especially," says he, "as, for fear ov accidents, I tuck the liberty of fetching the fellow ov that small vesshel," says he, "in my other coat-pocket. So devil a fear ov our running

dhry till the but-end of the evening, anyhow," says he.

" Dhraw your stool in to the fire, Misther Maguire," says the Pope, "for faix," says he, "I'm bent on analizing the metaphwysics ov this phinomenon. Come, man alive, clear off," says he, "you're not dhrinking at all."

"Is it dhrink?" says his Riv'rence; "by Gorra, your Holiness," says he, "I'd dhrink wid you till the cows 'ud be couing home in the morning."

So wid that they tackled to, to the second fugee a-piece, and fell into larned discourse. But it's time for me now to be off to the lecthir at the Boord. Oh my sorra light upon you, Docther Whateley, wid your pilitical eonomy and your hydherastatics! What the *dioul* use has a poor hedge-master like me wid sich deep larning as is only fit for the likes ov them two that I left over their second tumbler? Howandiver, wishing I was like them, in regard ov the sup ov dhrink, anyhow, I must brake off my narration for the prisint; but when I see you again, I'll tell you how Father Tom made a hare ov the Pope that evening, both in theology and the cube root.

CHAPTER II.

HOW FATHER TOM SACKED HIS HOLINESS IN THEOLOGY
AND LOGIC.

WELL, the lecthir's over, and I'm kilt out and out. My bitther curse upon the man that invinted the same Boord! I thought ons't I'd fadomed the say ov throuble; and that was when I got through fractions at ould Mat Kavanagh's school, in Firdramore—God be good to poor Mat's sowl, though he did deny the cause the day he suffered! but it's fluxions itself we're set to bottom now, sink or shwim! May I never die if my head isn't as throughother as anything wid their ordinals and cardinals—and, begob, it's all nothing to the ecinimy lecthir that I have to go to at two o'clock. Howandiver, I mustn't forget that we left his Riv'rence and his Holiness sitting fornenst one another in the parlor ov the Vatican, jist afther mixing their second tumbler.

When they had got well down into the same, they fell, as I was telling you, into larned discourse. For, you see, the Pope was curious to find out whether Father Tom was the great theologian all out that people said; and says he, "Mister Maguire," says he, "What answer do you make to the heretics when they quote them passidges agin thransubstantiation out ov the Fathers?" says he.

"Why," says his Riv'rence, "as there should be no sich passidges I make myself mighty aisy about

them ; but if you want to know how I dispose ov them," says he, "just repate one ov them, and I'll show you how to catapomphericate it in two shakes."

"Why, then," says the Pope, "myself disremimbers the particlar passidges they alledge out ov them ould felleys," says he, "though sure enough they're more numerous nor edifying—so we'll jist suppose that a heretic was to find sich a saying as this in Austin, 'Every sensible man knows that thransubstantiation is a lie,'—or this out of Tertulian or Plutarch, 'the bishop ov Room is a common imposther,'—now tell me, could you answer him?"

"As easy as kiss," says his Riv'rence. "In the first, we're to understand that the exprission, 'Every sinsible man,' signifies simply, 'Every man that judges by his nath'ral sineses;' and we all know that nobody folleying them seven deludhers could ever find out the mysthery that's in it, if somebody didn't come in to his assistance wid an eighth sinse, which is the only sinse to be depended on, being the sinse ov the Church. So that, regarding the first quotation which your Holiness has supposed, it makes clane for us, and tee-totally agin the heretics."

"That's the explanation sure enough," says his Holiness ; "and now what div you say to my being a common imposther?"

"Faix, I think," says his Riv'rence, "wid all submission to the betther judgment ov the learned

father that your Holiness has quoted, he'd have been a thrife nearer the thruth, if he had said that the bishop ov Room is the grand imposther and top-sawyer in that line over us all."

"What do you mane?" says the Pope, getting quite red in the face.

"What would I mane," says his Riv'rence, as composed as a docther ov physic, "but that your Holiness is at the head ov ~~an~~ them—troth I had a'most forgot I wasn't a bishop myself," says he (the deludher was going to say, as the head of all *uz*)—"that has the gift ov laying on hands. For sure," says he, "imposther and *imposithir* is all one, so you're only to undherstand *manuum*, and the job is done. Awouich!" says he, "if any heretic 'ud go for to cast up sich a passidge as that agin me, I'd soon give him a lesson in the p'lite art ov cutting a stick to welt his own back wid."

"'Pon my apostolical word," says the Pope, "you've cleared up them two pints in a most satisfwhacthery manner."

"You see," says his Riv'rence—by this time they wor mixing their third tumbler—"the writings ov them Fathers is to be thrated wid great veneration; and it 'ud be the height ov presumption in any one to sit down to interpret them wid-out providing himself wid a genteel assortment ov the best figures ov rhetoric, sich as mettonymy, hyperbol, cattychraysis, prolipsis, mettylipsis, su-

perbaton, pollysyndreton, hustheronprotheron, prosodypeia and the like, in ordher that he may never be at a loss for shuitable sintiments when he comes to their high-flown passidges. For unless we thrate them Fathers liberally to a handsome allowance ov thropes and figures, they'd set up heresy at ons't, so they would."

"It's throe for you," says the Pope; "the figures ov spache is the pillars ov the Church."

"Bedad," says his Riv'rence, "I dunna what we'd do widout them at all."

"Which one do you prefir?" says the Pope; "that is," says he, "which figure of spache do you find most usefulest when you're hard set?"

"Metaphour's very good," says his Riv'rence, "and so's mettonymy—and I've known prosodypeia stand to me at a pinch mighty well—but for a constancy, superbaton's the figure for my money. Devil be in me," says he, "but I'd prove black white as fast as a horse 'ud throt wid only a good stock ov superbaton."

"Faix," says the Pope, wid a sly look, "you'd need to have it backed, I judge, wid a small taste of assurance."

"Well now, jist for that word," says his Riv'rence, "I'll prove it widout aither one or other. Black," says he, "is one thing and white is another thing. You don't conthravene that? But every thing is aither one thing or another thing; I defy

the apostle Paul to get over that dilemma. Well! If any thing be one thing, well and good; but if it be another thing, then it's plain it isn't both things, and so can't be two things—nobody can deny that. But what can't be two things must be one thing,—*Ergo*, whether it's one thing or another thing it's all one. But black is one thing and white is another thing,—*Ergo*, black and white is all one. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*"

"Stop a bit," says the Pope, "I can't althegither give in to your second minor—no—your second major," says he, and he stopped. "Faix, then," says he, getting confused, "I don't rightly remember where it was exactly that I thought I seen the flaw in your premises. Howsomdiver," says he, "I don't deny that it's a good conclusion, and one that 'ud be ov materi'l service to the Church if it was dlrawn wid a little more distinctiveness."

"I'll make it as plain as the nose on your Holiness's face, by superbaton," says his Riv'rence. "My adversary says, black is not another colour, that is, white? Now that's jist a parallel passidge wid the one out ov Tartullian that me and Hayes smashed the heretics on in Clarendon Sthreet, 'This is my body—that is, the figure ov my body.' That's a superbaton, and we showed that it oughtn't to be read that way at all, but this way, 'This figure of my body is my body.' Jist so wid my adversary's proposition, it musn't be understood the way it

reads, by no manner of manes; but it's to be taken this way,—'Black—that is, white, is not another colour,'—green, if you like, or orange, by dad, for anything I care, for my case is proved. 'Black,' that is, 'white,' lave out the 'that,' by sinnalapyhy, and you have the orthodox conclusion, 'Black is white,' or by convarson, 'White is black.' "

"It's as clear as mud," says the Pope.

"Begad," says his Riv'rence, "I'm in great humour for disputin' to-night. I wisht your Holiness was a heretic jist for two minutes," says he, "till you'd see the flaking I'd give you!"

"Well then, for the fun o' the thing, suppose me my namesake, if you like," says the Pope, laughing, "though, by Jayminy," says he, "he's not one that I take much pride out ov."

"Very good—devil a betther joke ever I had," says his Riv'rence. "Come, then, Misther Pope," says he, "hould up that purty face ov yours, and answer me this question. Which 'ud be the biggest lie, if I said I seen a turkey-cock lying on the broad ov his back, and picking the stars out ov the sky, or if I was to say that I seen a gandher in the same intherestin' posture, raycreating himself wid similar astronomical experiments? Answer me that, you ould swaddler?" says he.

"How durst you call me a swaddler, sir?" says the Pope, forgetting, the dear man, the part that he was acting.

"Don't think for to bully me!" says his Riv'rence, "I always daar to spake the truth, and it's well known that you're nothing but a swaddling ould sinner ov a saint," says he, never letting on to persave that his Holiness had forgot what they were agreed on.

"By all that's good," says the Pope, "I often hard ov the imperance ov you Irish afore," says he, "but I never expected to be called a saint in my own house either by Irishman or Hottentot. I'll till you what, Misther Maguire," says he, "if you can't keep a civil tongue in your head, you had betther be walking off wid yourself; for I beg lave to give you to undherstand, that it won't be for the good ov your health if you call me by sich an out-probrious epithet again," says he.

"Oh, indeed! then things is come to a purty pass," says his Riv'rence (the dear funny soul that he ever was!) "when the likes of you compares one of the Maguires ov Tempo wid a wild Ingive! Why, man alive, the Maguires was kings ov Fermanagh three thousand years afore your grandfather, that was the first ov your breed that ever wore shoes and stockings" (I'm bound to say, in justice to the poor Prodesan, that this was all spoken by his Riv'rence by way of a figure ov spache), "was sint his Majesty's arrand to cultivate the friendship of Prince Lee Boo in Botteney Bay! Oh Bryan dear," says he, letting on to cry, "if you

were alive to hear a *boddagh Sassenagh* like this casting up his counthry to one ov the name ov Maguire !”

“ In the name ov God,” says the Pope, very solemniously, “ what is the maning ov all this at all at all ? ” says he.

“ Sure,” says his Riv’rence, whispering to him across the table, “ sure you know we’re acting a conthrawarsy, and you tuck the part ov the Prodesan champion. You wouldn’t be angry wid me, I’m sure, for sarving out the heretic to the best ov my ability.”

“ Oh begad, I had forgot,” says the Pope, the good-natured ould crethur ; “ sure enough you were only taking your part, as a good Milesian Catholic ought, agin the heretic Sassenagh. Well,” says he, “ fire away now, and I’ll put up wid as many conthroversial compliments as you plase to pay me.”

“ Well, then, answer me my-question, you santi-monious ould dandy,” says his Riv’rence.

“ In troth, then,” says the Pope, “ I dunna which ’ud be the biggest lie : to my mind,” says he, “ the one appears to be about as big a bounce as the other.”

“ Why, then, you poor simpleton,” says his Riv’rence, “ don’t you persave that, forbye the advantage the gandher ’ud have in the length ov his neck, it ’ud be next to onpossible for the turkey-

cock lying thataway to see what he was about, by rason ov his djollars and other accouthrements hanging back over his eyes? The one about as big a bounce as the other! Oh, you misfortunate crethur! if you had ever larned your A B C in theology, you'd have known that there's a differ betuxt them two lies so great, that, begad, I wouldn't wondher if it 'ud make a balance ov five years in purgathory to the sowl that 'ud be in it. Ay, and if it wasn't that the Church is too liberal entirely, so she is, it 'ud cost his heirs and succissors betther nor ten pounds to have him out as soon as the other. Get along, man, and take half-a-year at dogmatical theology: go and read your Dens, you poor dunce, you!"

"Raaly," says the Pope, "you're making the heretic's shoes too hot to hould me. I wondher how the Prodesans can stand afore you at all."

"Don't think to delude me," says his Riv'rence, "don't think to back out ov your challenge now," says he, "but come to the scratch like a man, if you are a man, and answer me my question. What's the rason, now, that Julius Cæsar and the Vargin Mary was born upon the one day?—answer me that, if you wouldn't be hissed off the platform?"

Well, my dear, the Pope couldn't answer it, and he had to acknowledge himself sacked. Then he axed his Riv'rence to tell him the rason himself; and Father Tom communicated it to him in Latin.

But as that is a very deep question, I never hard what the answer was, except that I'm tould it was so mysterious, it made the Pope's hair stand on end.

But there's two o'clock, and I'll be late for the lecthir.

CHAPTER III.

HOW FATHER TOM MADE A HARE OF HIS HOLINESS IN LATIN.

OII, Docther Whateley, Docther Whateley, I'm sure I'll never die another death if I don't die aither of consumption or production! I ever and always thought that asthronomy was the hardest science that was till now—and it's no lie I'm telling you, the same asthronomy is a tough enough morsel to brake a man's fast upon—and geolidgy is middling and hard too—and hydherastatics is no joke; but ov all the books of science that ever was opened and shut, that book upon Pilitical Econimy lifts the pins! Well, well, if they wait till they persuade me that taking a man's rints out ov the counthry, and spinding them in forrain parts isn't doing us out ov the same, they'll wait a long time in troth. But you're waiting, I see, to hear how his Riv'rence and his Holiness got on after finishing the disputation I was telling you of. Well, you see, my dear, when the Pope found he couldn't hold a candle to Father Tom in theology and logic, he thought he'd

take the shine out ov him in Latin anyhow, so says he, "Misther Maguire," says he, "I quite agree wid you that it's not lucky for us to be spaking on them deep subjects in sich languidges as the evil spirits is acquainted wid; and," says he, "I think it 'ud be no harm for us to spake from this out in Latin," says he, "for fraid the devil 'ud undherstand what we are saying."

"Not a hair I care," says Father Tom, "whether he undherstands what we're saying or not, as long as we keep off that last pint we wor discussing, and one or two others. Listners never heard good ov themselves," says he; "and if Belzhebub takes anything amiss that aither you or me says in regard ov himself or his faction, let him stand forrid like a man, and, never fear, I'll give him his answer. Howandiver, if it's for a taste ov classic conversation you are, just to put us in mind ov ould Cordarius," says he, "here's at you;" and wid that he lets fly at his Holiness wid his health in Latin.

"Vesthræ Sanctitatis salutem volo!" says he.

"Vesthræ Revirintæ salubritati bibo!" says the Pope to him again (haith, it's no joke, I tell you, to remimber sich a power ov larning). "Here's to you wid the same," says the Pope, in the raal Ciceronian. "Nunc poculum alterhum imple," says he.

"Cum omni jucunditate in vita," says his Riv'-

rence. "Cum summâ concupiscintiâ et animositate," says he; as much as to say, "Wid all the veins ov my heart, I'll do that same;" and so wid that, they mixed their fourth gun a-piece.

"Aqua vitæ vesthra sane est liquor admirabilis," says the Pope.

"Verum est pro te,—it's thruc for you," says his Riv'rence, forgetting the idyim ov the Latin phwra-seology, in a manner.

"Prava est tua Latinitas, domine," says the Pope, finding fault like wid his etymology.

"Parva culpa mihi," "small blame to me, that is," says his Riv'rence; "nam multum laboro in partibus interioribus," says he—the dear man! that never was at a loss for an excuse!

"Quid tibi incommodi?" says the Pope, axing him what ailed him.

"Habesne id quod Anglicè vocamus, a looking-glass," says his Riv'rence.

"Immo, habeo speculum splendidissimum subther operculum pyxidis hujus starnutatoriæ," says the Pope, pulling out a beautiful goold snuff-box, wid a looking-glass in under the lid; "Subther operculum pyxidis hujus starnutatorii—no—starnutatoriæ—quam dono accepi ab Archi-duce Austhriaco siptuagisima prætheritâ," says he; as much as to say that he got the box in a prisint from the Queen ov Spain last Lint, if I rightly remimber.

Well, Father Tom laughed like to burst. At

last, says he, "Pather Sancte," says he, "sub errore jaces. 'Looking-glass' apud nos habet significationem quamdam peculiarem ex tempore diei dependentem"—there was a sthring ov accusatives for yez!—"nam mane speculum sonat," says he, "post prandium vero mat—mat—mat"—sorra bo in me but I disremimber the classic appellivation ov the same article. Howandiver, his Riv'rence went on explaining himself in such a way as no scholar could mistake. "Vesica mea," says he, "ab illo ultimo eversore distenditur, donec similis est rumpere. Verbis apertis," says he, "Vesthræ Sanctitatis præsentia salvata, aquam facere valde desidhero."

"Ho, ho, ho!" says the Pope, grabbing up his box; "si inquinavisses meam pyxidem, excimnicari debuisses. Hillo, Anthony," says he to his head butler, "fetch Misther Maguire a——"

"You spoke first!" says his Riv'rence, jumping off his sate: "You spoke first in the vernacular. I take Misther Anthony to witness," says he.

"What else would you have me to do?" says the Pope, quite dogged like to see himself bate thataway at his own waypons. "Sure," says he, "Anthony wouldn't undherstand a B from a bull's foot, if I spoke to him any other way."

"Well, then," says his Riv'rence, in considheration ov the needcessity," says he, "I'll let you off for this time; but mind, now, afther I say *præstho*,

the first of us that spakes a word of English is the hare—*præstho* ' "

Neither ov them spoke for near a minit, considhering wid themselves how they wor to begin sich a great thrial ov shkill. At last, says the Pope—the blessed man! only think how 'cute it was ov him!—"Domine Maguire," says he, "valde desidhero, certiozem fieri de significatione istius verbi *eversor* quo jam jam usus es"—(well, surely I *am* the boy for the Latin!)

"*Eversor*, id est cyathus," says his Riv'rence, "nam apud nos *tumbleri*, seu *eversores*, dicti sunt ab evertendo ceremoniam inter amicos; non, ut Temperantiæ Societatis frigidis fautoribus placet, ab evertendis ipsis potatoribus." (It's not every masher undher the Board, I tell you, could carry such a carload ov the dead langidges.) "In agro vero Louthiano et Midensi," says he, "nomine gaudent quodam secundum linguam Anglicanam significante bombardam seu tormentum; quia ex eis tanquam ex telis jaculatoriis liquorem faucibus immittere solent. Etiam inter hæreticos illos melanostomos" (that was a touch of Greek). "Presbyterianos Septentrionales, qui sunt terribiles potatores, Cyathi dicti sunt *faceres*, et dimidium Cyathi *hæf-a-glessus*. Dimidium Cyathi verò apud Metropolitanos Hibernicos dicitur *dandy*."—

"En verbum Anglicanum!" says the Pope, clapping his hands,—"leporem te fecisti;" as

much as to say that he had made a hare ov himself.

"*Dandæus, dandæus, verbum erat,*" says his Riv'rence—oh, the dear man, but it's himself that was handy ever and always at getting out ov a hobble—"*dandæus verbum erat,*" says he, "*quod dicturus eram, cum me intherpillavisti.*"

"*Ast ego dico,*" says the Pope, very sharp, "*quod verbum erat dandy.*"

"*Per tibicinem qui coram Mose modulatus est,*" says his Riv'rence, "*id flagellat mundum! Dandæus dixi, et tu dicis dandy; ergo tu es lepus, non ego—Ah, ha! Saccavi vesthram Sanctitatem!*"

"*Mendacium est!*" says the Pope, quite forgetting himself, he was so mad at being sacked before the sarvints.

Well, if it hadn't been that his Holiness was in it, Father Tom 'ud have given him the contints of his tumbler betext the two eyes, for calling him a liar; and, in troth, it's very well it was in Latin the offince was conveyed, for, if it had been in the vernacular, there's no saying what 'ud ha' been the consequence. His Riv'rence was mighty angry anyhow.—"*Tu senex lathro,*" says he, "*quomodo audes me mendacem prædicare?*"

"*Et tu, sacrilege nebulo,*" says the Pope, "*quomodo audacitatem habeas, me Dci in terris vicarium, lathronem conwiciari?*"

"*Interroga circumcirca,*" says his Riv'rence.

"*Abi ex ædibus meis,*" says the Pope.

"*Abi tu in malem crucem,*" says his Riv'rence.

"*Excumnicabo te,*" says the Pope.

"*Diabolus curat,*" says his Riv'rence.

"*Anathema sis,*" says the Pope.

"*Oscula meum pod,*"—says his Riv'rence—but, my dear, afore he could finish what he was going to say, the Pope broke out into the vernacular, "Get out o' my house, you reprobate!" says he in sich a rage that he could contain himself widin the Latin no longer.

"Ha, ha, ha!—ho, ho, ho!" says his Riv'rence, "Who's the hare now, your Holiness? Oh, by this and by that, I've sacked you clane! Clane and clever I've done it, and no mistake! You see what a bit ov desate will do wid the wisest, your Holiness—sure it was joking I was, on purpose to aggrawate you—all's fair, you know, in love, law, and conthravarsy. In troth if I'd thought you'd have taken it so much to heart, I'd have put my head into the fire afore I'd have said a word to offend you," says he, for he seen that the Pope was very vexed. "Sure, God forbid that I'd say anything agin your Holiness, barring it was in fun: for aren't you the father ov the faithful, and the thure vicar ov God upon earth? And amn't I ready to go down on my two knees this blessed minit and beg your apostolical pardon for every word that I said to your displasement?"

"Are you in earnest that it is in fun you wor?" says the Pope.

"May I never die if I amn't," says his Riv'rence.

"It was all to provoke your Holiness to commit a brache ov the Latin that I tuck the small liberties I did," says he.

"I'd have you to take care," says the Pope, "how you take sich small liberties again, or maybe you'll provoke me to commit a brache ov the pace."

"Well, and if I did," says his Riv'rence, "I know a sartan preparation ov chemicals that's very good for curing a brache either in Latinity or frindship."

"What's that?" says the Pope, quite mollified, and sitting down again at the table that he had ris from in the first pluff of his indignation. "What's that?" says he, "for, 'pon my Epistolical 'davy, I think it 'udn't be asy to bate this mirac'lous mix-thir that we've been thrying to anilize this two hours back," says he, taking a mighty scientific swig out ov the bottom ov his tumbler.

"It's good for a beginning," says his Riv'rence; "it lays a very nate foundation for more sarious operation: but we're now arrived at a period of the evening when it's time to proceed wid our shuper-structhure by compass and square, like free and excipted masons as we both are."

My time's up for the present; but I'll tell you the rest in the evening at home.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW FATHER TOM AND HIS HOLINESS DISPUTED IN METAPHYSICS
AND ALGEBRA.

God be wid the time when I went to the classical seminary ov Firdramore! when I'd bring my sod o' turf undher my arm, and sit down on my shnug boss o' straw, wid my back to the masther and my shins to the fire, and score my sum in Dives's denominations or the double rule o' three, or play fox-and-geese wid purty Jane Cruise that sat next me, as plisantly as the day was long, widout any one so much as saying, "Mikey Hefernan, what's that you're about?"—for ever since I was in the one lodge wid poor ould Mat I had my own way in his school as free as ever I had in my mother's shebeen. God be wid them days, I say again, for its althered times wid me, I judge, since I got under Carlisle and Whateley. Sich sthictness! sich ordher! sich dhrilling, and lecthiring, and tuthoring as they do get on wid! I wisht to gracious the one-half of their rules and rigilations was sunk in the say. And they're getting so sthict, too, about having fair play for the heretic childher! We've to have no more schools in the chapels, nor masses in the schools. Oh, by this and by that it'll never do at all! The ould plan was twenty times betther; and, for my own part, if it wasn't that the clargy supports them in a

manner, and the grant's a thing not easily done widout these hard times, I'd see if I couldn't get a sheltered spot nigh-hand the chapel, and set up again on the good ould principle: and faix, I think our Metropolitan 'ud stand to me, for I know that his Grace's motto was ever and always, that "Ignorance is the thrue mother ov piety."

But I'm running away from my narrative entirely, so I am. "You'll plase to ordher up the housekeeper, then," says Father Tom to the Pope, "wid a pint ov sweet milk in a skillet, and the bulk ov her fist ov butther, along wid a dust ov soft sugar in a saucer, and I'll show you the way of producing a decoction that, I'll be bound, will hunt the thirst out ov every nook and corner in your Holiness's blessed carcidge."

The Pope ordhered up the ingredients, and they were brought in by the head butler.

"That'll not do at all," says his Riv'ence, "the ingredients won't combine in due proportion unless ye do as I bid yez. Send up the housekeper," says he, "for a faynale hand is ondispinsably necessary to produce the adaptation ov the particles and the concurrence ov the corpuscles, widout which you might boil till morning, and never fetch the cruds off ov it."

Well, the Pope whispered to his head butler, and by-and-by up there comes an ould faggot ov a *Caillean*, that was enough to frighten a horse from his oats.

“Don't thry for to desave me,” says his Riv'rence, “for it's no use, I tell yez. Send up the housekeeper, I bid yez: I seen her presarving gooseberries in the panthry as I came up: she has eyes as black as a sloc,” says he, “and cheeks like the rose in June; and sorra taste of this celestial mixthir shall crass the lips ov man or mortal this blessed night till she stirs the same up wid her own delicate little finger.”

“Misther Maguire,” says the Pope, “it's very unproper ov you to spake that way ov my housekeeper: I won't allow it, sir.”

“Honour bright, your Holiness,” says his Riv'rence, laying his hand on his heart.

“Oh, by this and by that, Misther Maguire,” says the Pope, “I'll have none of your insiniuations: I don't care who sees my whole household,” says he; “I don't care if all the faymales undher my roof was paraded down the High Street of Room,” says he.

“Oh, it's plain to be seen how little you care who see's them,” says his Riv'rence. “You're afeared, now, if I was to see your housekeeper, that I'd say she was too handsome.”

“No, I'm not!” says the Pope; “I don't care who sees her,” says he. “Anthony,” says he to the head butler, “bid Eliza throw her apron over her head, and come up here.” Wasn't that stout in the blessed man? Well, my dear, up she came, stepping like a three-year-old, and blushing like

the brake o' day : for though her apron was thrown over her head as she came forrid, till you could barely see the tip ov her chin—more be token there was a lovely dimple in it, as I've been tould—yet she let it shlip a bit to one side, by chance like, jist as she got fornenst the fire, and if she wouldn't have given his Riv'rence a shot if he hadn't been a priest, it's no matther."

"Now, my dear," says he, "you must take that skillet, and hould it over the fire till the milk comes to a blood-hate ; and the way you'll know that will be by stirring it ons't or twice wid the little finger ov your right hand, afore you put in the butther : not that I misdoubt," says he, "but that the same finger's fairer nor the whitest milk that ever came from the tit."

"None of your deludhering talk to the young woman, sir," says the Pope, mighty stern. "Stir the posset as he bids you, Eliza, and then be off wid yourself," says he.

"I beg your Holiness's pardon ten thousand times," says his Riv'rence ; "I'm sure I meant no-thing onproper ; I hope I'm uncapable ov any sich dirilection of my duty," says he. "But, marcifful Saver!" he cried out, jumping up on a suddent, "look behind you, your Holiness—I'm blest but the room's on fire!"

Sure enough the candle fell down that minit, and was near setting fire to the windy-curtains, and

there was some bustle, as you may suppose, getting things put to rights. And now I have to tell you ov a raally onpleasant occurrence. If I was a Prodesan that was in it, I'd say that while the Pope's back was turned, Father Tom made free wid the two lips ov Miss Eliza; but, upon my conscience, I believe it was a mere mistake that his Holiness fell into on account of his being an ould man, and not having aither his eyesight or his hearing very perfect. At any rate it can't be denied but that he had a sthrong imprission that sich was the case; for he wheeled about as quick as thought, jist as his Riv'rence was sitting down, and charged him wid the offince plain and plump. "Is it kissing my housekeeper before my face you are, you villain?" says he. "Go down out o' this," says he to Miss Eliza; "and do you be packing off wid you," he says to Father Tom, "for it's not safe, so it isn't, to have the likes ov you in a house where there's temptation in your way."

"Is it me?" says his Riv'rence; "why, what would your Holiness be at, at all? Sure I wasn't doing no sich thing."

"Would you have me doubt the evidence ov my sinses?" says the Pope; "would you have me doubt the testimony ov my eyes and ears?" says he.

"Indeed I would so," says his Riv'rence, "if they pretend to have informed your Holiness ov any sich foolishness."

"Why," says the Pope, "I seen you afther kissing Eliza as plain as I see the nose on your face; I heard the smack you gave her as plain as ever I heard thundher."

"And how do you know whether you see the nose on my face or not?" says his Riv'rence; "and how do you know whether what you thought was thundher, was thundher at all? Them operations of the sineses," says he, "comprises only particular corporayal emotions, connected wid sartain confused percptions called sinsations, and isn't to be depended upon at all. If we were to follow them blind guides, we might jist as well turn heretics at ons't. 'Pon my secret word, your Holiness, it's naither charitable nor orthodox ov you to set up the testimony ov your eyes and ears agin the character of a clergyman. And now, see how aisy it is to explain all them phwenomena that perplexed you. I ris and went over beside the young woman because the skillet was boiling over, to help her to save the dthrop ov liquor that was in it; and as for the noise you heard, my dear man, it was neither more nor less nor myself dhrawing the cork out ov this blissid bottle."

"Don't offer to thrape that upon me!" says the Pope; "here's the cork in the bottle still, as tight as a wedge."

"I beg your pardon," says his Riv'rence, "that's not the cork at all," says he; "I dhrew the cork a good two minits ago, and it's very purtily spitted

on the end ov this blessed cork-shcrew at this prisint moment; howandiver you can't see it, because it's only its raal prisence that's in it. But that appearance that you call a cork," says he, "is nothing but the outward spacies and external qualities of the cortical nathur. Them's nothing but the accidents of the cork that you're looking at and handling; but, as I tould you afore, the real cork's dhrew, and is here prisint on the end ov this nate little instrhument, and it was the noise I made in dhrawing it, and nothing else, that you mistook for the sound ov the *pogue*."

You know there was no conthravening what he said; and the Pope couldn't openly deny it. How-andiver he thried to pick a hole in it this way. "Granting," says he, "that there is the differ you say betwixt the reality ov the cork and them cortical accidents, and that it's quite possible, as you allidge, that the throe cork is really prisint on the end ov the shrew, while the accidents keep the mouth ov the bottle stopped—still," says he, "I can't undherstand, though willing to acquit you, how the dhrawing ov the real cork, that's onpalpable and widout accidents, could produce the accident of that sinsible explosion I heard jist now."

"All I can say," says his Riv'rence, "is, that I'm sinsible it was a real accident, anyhow."

"Ay," says the Pope, "the kiss you gev Eliza, you mane."

"No," says his Riv'rence, "but the report I made."

"I don't doubt you," says the Pope.

"No cork could be dhrew with less noise," says his Riv'rence.

"It would be hard for anything to be less nor nothing, barring algebra," says the Pope.

"I can prove to the conthrary," says his Riv'rence. "This glass ov whisky is less nor that tumbler ov punch, and that tumbler of punch is nothing' to this jug ov *scaltheen*."

"Do you judge by superficial misure or by the liquid contents?" says the Pope.

"Don't stop me betwixt my premisses and my conclusion," says his Riv'rence; "*Ergo*, this glass ov whisky is less nor nothing; and for that raison I see no harm in life in adding it to the contents ov the same jug, just by way ov a frost-nail."

"Adding what's less nor nothing," says the Pope, "is subtraction according to algebra; so here goes to make the rule good," says he, filling his tumbler wid the blessed stuff, and sitting down again at the table, for the anger didn't stay two minits on him, the good-hearted ould sowl.

"Two minuses makes one plus," says his Riv'rence, as ready as you plase, "and that'll account for the increased daycrement I mane to take the liberty of producing in the same mixed quantity," says he, follying his Holiness's epistolical example.

“By all that’s good,” says the Pope, “that’s the best stuff I ever tasted; you call it a mixed quantity, but I say it’s prime.”

“Since it’s ov the first ordher, then,” says his Riv’rence, “we’ll have the less deffecquilty in reducing it to a simple equation.”

“You’ll have no fractions at my side, anyhow,” says the Pope. “Faix, I’m afeared,” says he, “it’s *only too asy ov solution our sum is like to be.*”

“Never fear for that,” says his Riv’rence, “I’ve a good stock of surds here in the bottle; for I tell you it will take us a long tyme to extrahct the root ov it, at the rate we’re going on.”

“What makes you call the blessed quart an irrational quantity?” says the Pope.

“Becase it’s too much for one, and too little for two,” says his Riv’rence.

“Clear it ov its coefficient, and we’ll thry,” says the Pope.

“Hand me over the exponent, then,” says his Riv’rence.

“What’s that?” says the Pope.

“The shrew, to be sure,” says his Riv’rence.

“What for?” says the Pope.

“To dhraw the cork,” says his Riv’rence.

“Sure the cork’s dhrew,” says the Pope.

“But the sperits can’t get out on account of the accidents that’s stuck in the neck ov the bottle,” says his Riv’rence.

"Accident ought to be passable to sperit," says the Pope, "and that makes me suspect that the reality ov the cork's in it aftler all."

"That's a barony-masia," says his Riv'rence, "and I'm not bound to answer it. But the fact is, that it's the accidents ov the sperits too that's in it, and the reality's passed out through the cortical spacies as you say; for, you may have observed, we've both been in real good sperits ever since the cork was dhrawn, and were else would the real sperits come from if they wouldn't come out ov the bottle?"

"Well, then," says the Pope, "since we've got the reality, there's no use troubling ourselves wid the accidents."

"Oh, begad," says his Riv'rence, "the accidents is very essential too; for a man may be in the best ov good sperits, as far as his immaterial part goes, and yet need the accidental qualities ov good liquor to hunt the sinsible thirst out ov him." So he dhraws the cork in earnest, and sets about brewing the other skillet ov *scalthen*; but, faix, he had to get up the ingredients this time by the hands ov ould Molly; though devil a taste ov her little finger he'd let widin a yard ov the same decoction.

But, my dear, here's the *Freeman's Journal*, and we'll see what's the news afore we finish the residuary proceedings of their two Holinesses.

CHAPTER V.

THE REASON WHY FATHER TOM WAS NOT MADE A CARDINAL.

Hurroo, my darlings!—didn't I tell you it 'ud never do? Success to bould John Tuam and the ould siminary ov Firdramore! Oh, more power to your Grace every day you rise, 'tis you that has broken their Boord into shivers undher your feet! Sure, and isn't it a proud day for Ireland, this blessed feast ov the chair ov Saint Pether? Isn't Carlisle and Whateley smashed to pieces, and their whole college of swaddling teachers knocked into smidhereens. John Tuam, your sowl, has tuck his pasthoral staff in his hand and beathen them out o' Connaught as fast as ever Pathrick druve the sarpints into Clew Bay. Poor ould Mat Kavanagh, if he was alive this day, 'tis he would be the happy man. "My curse upon their g'ographies and Bibles," he used to say; "where's the use ov perplexing the poor childer wid what we don't undherstand ourselves?" no use at all, in troth, and so I said from the first myself. Well, thank God and his Grace, we'll have no more thrigonometry nor scripther in Connaught. We'll hould our lodges every Saturday night, as we used to do, wid our chairman behind the masther's desk, and we'll hear our mass every Sunday morning wid the blessed priest standing afore the same. I wisht to goodness I

hadn't parted wid my Seven Champions ov Christendom and Freney the Robber; they're books that'll be in great requisit in Leithrim as soon as the pasthoral gets wind. Glory be to God! I've done wid their leethirs—they may all go and be d——d wid their consumption and production. I'm off to Tullymactaggart before daylight in the morning, where I'll thry whether a sod or two o' turf can't consume a cartload ov heresy, and whether a weekly meeting ov the lodge can't produce a new thayory ov rints. But afore I take my lave ov you, I may as well finish my story about poor Father Tom that I hear is coming up to whale the heretics in Adam and Eve during the Lint.

The Pope—and indeed it ill becomes a good Catholic to say anything agin him—no more would I, only that his Riv'rence was in it—but you see the fact ov it is, that the Pope was as envious as ever he could be, at seeing himself sacked right and left by Father Tom, and bate out o' the face, the way he was, on every science and subjec' that was started. So, not to be outdone altogether, he says to his Riv'rence, "You're a man that's fond ov the brute crayation, I hear, Misther Maguire?"

"I don't deny it," says his Riv'rence, "I've dogs that I'm willing to run agin any man's, ay, or to match them agin any other dogs in the world for genteel edication and polite manners," says he.

"I'll hould you a pound," says the Pope, "that

I've a quadhruped in my possession that's a wiser baste nor any dog in your kennel."

"Done," says his Riv'rence, and they staked the money.

"What can this larned quadhruped o' yours do?" says his Riv'rence.

"It's my mule," says the Pope, "and, if you were to offer her goolden oats and clover off the meadows o' Paradise, sorra taste ov aither she'd let pass her teeth till the first mass is over every Sunday or holiday in the year."

"Well, and what 'ud you say if I showed you a baste ov mine," says his Riv'rence, "that, instead ov fasting till first mass is over only, fasts out the whole four-and-twenty hours ov every Wednesday and Friday in the week as reg'lar as a Christian?"

"Oh, be asy, Masther Maguire," says the Pope.

"You don't b'lieve me, don't you?" says his Riv'rence; "very well, I'll soon show you whether or no," and he put his knuckles in his mouth, and gev a whistle that made the Pope stop his fingers in his ears. The aycha, my dear, was hardly done playing wid the cobwebs in the cornish, when the door flies open, and in jumps Spring. The Pope happened to be sitting next the door, betuxt him and his Riv'rence, and, may I never die, if he didn't clear him, thriple crown and all, at one spang. "God's presence be about us!" says the Pope, thinking it was an evil spirit come to fly away wid him for the lie that he had tould in regard ov his

mule (for it was nothing more nor a thrick that consisted in grazing the brute's teeth) : but, seeing it was only one ov the greatest beauties ov a greyhound that he'd ever laid his epistolical eyes on, he soon recovered ov his fright, and began to pat him, while Father Tom ris and went to the sideboard, where he cut a slice ov pork, a slice ov beef, a slice ov mutton, and a slice of salmon, and put them all on a plate thegither. "Here, Spring, my man," says he, setting the plate down afore him on the hearthstone, "here's your supper for you this blessed Friday night." Not a word more he said nor what I tell you ; and, you may believe it or not, but it's the blessed truth that the dog, afther jist tasting the salmon, and spitting it out again, lifted his nose out o' the plate, and stood wid his jaws wathering, and his tail wagging, looking up in his Riv'rence's face, as much as to say, "Give me your absolution, till I hide them temptations out o' my sight."

"There's a dog that knows his duty," says his Riv'rence ; "there's a baste that knows how to conduct himself aither in the parlour or the field. You think him a good dog, looking at him here ; but I wisht you seen him on the side ov Slieve-an-Eirin ! Be my soul, you'd say the hill was running away from undher him. Oh I wisht you had been wid me," says he, never letting on to see the dog at all, "one day, last Lent, that I was coming from mass. Spring was near a quarther ov a mile behind me, for the childher was delaying him wid bread and

butther at the chapel door ; when a lump ov a hare jumped out ov the plantations ov Grouse Lodge and ran across the road ; so I gev the whilloo, and knowing that she'd take the rise ov the hill, I made over the ditch, and up through Mullaghcashel as hard as I could pelt, still keeping her in view, but afore I had gone a perch, Spring seen her, and away the two went like the wind, up Drumrewy, and down Clooneen, and over the river, widout his being able ons't to turn her. Well, I run on till I come to the Diffagher, and through it I went, for the wather was low and I didn't mind being wet sh'd, and out on the other side, where I got up on a ditch, and seen sich a coorse as I'll be bound to say was never seen afore or since. If Spring turned that hare ons't that day, he turned her fifty times, up and down, back and for'ard throughout and about. At last he run her right into the big quarryhole in Mullagh-bawn, and when I went up to look for her fud, there I found him sthretched on his side, not able to stir a foot, and the hare lying about an inch afore his nose as dead as a door-nail, and divil a mark of a tooth upon her. Eh, Spring, isn't that throe ?" says he. Jist at that minit the clock sthruck twelve, and, before you could say thrap-sticks, Spring had the plateful of mate consaled. " Now," says his Riv'rence, " hand me over my pound, for I've won my bate fairly."

" You'll excuse me," says the Pope, pocketing his money, " for we put the clock half an hour back, out

ov compliment to your Riv'rence," says he, "and it was Sathurday morning afore he came up at all."

"Well, it's no matther," says his Riv'rence, putting back his pound-note in his pocket-book, "only," says he, "it's hardly fair to expect a brute baste to be so well skilled in the science ov chronology."

In troth his Riv'rence was badly used in the same bate, for he won it clever; and, indeed, I'm afeard the shabby way he was thrated had some effect in putting it into his mind to do what he did. "Will your Holiness take a blast ov the pipe?" says he, dhrawing out his dhudeen.

"I never smoke," says the Pope, "but I haven't the least objection to the smell of the tobaccay."

"Oh, you had betther take a dhraw," says his Riv'rence, "it'll relish the dhrink, that 'ud be too luscious entirely, widout something to flavour it."

"I had thoughts," said the Pope, wid the laste sign ov a hiccup on him, "ov getting up a broiled bone for the same purpose."

"Well," says his Riv'rence, "a broiled bone 'ud do no manner ov harm at this present time; but a smoke," says he, "'ud flavour both the devil and the dhrink."

"What sort o' tobaccay is it that's in it?" says the Pope.

"Raal nagur-head," says his Riv'rence; "a very mild and salubrious species of the philosophic weed."

"Then, I don't care if I do take a dhraw," says

the Pope. Then Father Tom held the coal himself till his Holiness had the pipe lit; and they sat widout saying anything worth mentioning for about five minutes.

At last the Popè says to his Riv'rence, "I dunna what gev me this plaguy hiccup," says he. "Dhrink about," says he—"Begorra," he says, "I think I'm getting merrier nor's good for me. Sing us a song, your Riv'rence," says he.

Father Tom then sung him Monatagrenoge and the Bunch o' Rushes, and he was mighty well pleased wid both, keeping time wid his hands, and joining in in the choruses, when his hiccup 'ud let him. At last, my dear, he opens the lower buttons ov his waistcoat, and the top one of his waistband, and calls to Masther Anthony to lift up one ov the windys. "I dunna what's wrong wid me, at all at all," says he, "I'm mortal sick."

"I thrust," says his Riv'rence, "the pasthry that you ate at dinner hasn't disagreed wid your Holiness's stomach."

"Oh my! oh!" says the Pope, "what's this at all?" gasping for breath, and as pale as a sheet, wid a could swate bursting out over his forehead, and the palms ov his hands spread out to catch the air. "Oh my! oh my!" says he, "fetch me a basin!—Don't spake to me. Oh!—oh!—blood alive!—Oh, my head, my head, hould my head!—oh!—ubh!—I'm poisoned!—ach!"

"It was them plaguy pasthries," says his Riv'-

rence. "Hould his head hard," says he, "and clap a wet cloth over his timplles. If you could only thry another dhraw o' the pipe, your Holiness, it 'ud set you to rights in no time."

"Carry me to bed," says the Pope, "and never let me see that wild Irish priest again. I'm poisoned by his manes—ubplsch!—ach!—ach!—He dined wid Cardinal Wayld yestherday," says he, "and he's bribed him to take me off. Send for a confessor," says he, "for my lather end's approaching. My head's like to split—so it is!—Oh my! oh my! —ubplsch!—ach!"

Well, his Riv'rence never thought it worth his while to make him an answer; but, when he seen how ungratefully he was used, afther all his throuble in making the evening agreeable to the ould man, he called Spring, and put the but-end ov the second bottle into his pocket, and left the house widout once wishing "Good-night, an' plaisant dhrames to you;" and, in troth, not one of *them* axed him to lave them a lock ov his hair.

That's the story as I heard it tould; but myself docsn't b'lieve over one-half of it. Howandiver, when all's done, it's a shame, so it is, that he's not a bishop this blessed day and hour: for, next to the goiant of St Jarlath's, he's out and out the cleverest fellow ov the whole jing-bang.

LA PETITE MADELAINE.

BY MRS SOUTHEY.

[*MAGA.* AUGUST 1831.]

I WAS surprised the other day by a visit from a strange old lady, brought hither to be introduced to me, at her own request, by some friends of mine with whom she was staying in this neighbourhood. Having been, I was informed, intimately acquainted, in her early years, with a branch of my mother's family, to which she was distantly related, she had conceived a desire to see one of its latest descendants, and I was in consequence honoured with her visit. But if the honour done me was unquestionable, the motive to which I was indebted for it was not to be easily divined; for, truth to speak, little indication of good-will towards me, or of kindly feeling, was discernible in the salutation of my visitor, in her stiff and stately curtsy, her cold ceremonious expressions, and in the sharp and severe scrutiny of the keen grey eyes, with which she leisurely took note of me from head to foot.

Mrs Ormond's appearance was that of a person far advanced in years; older than my mother would have been if still living; but her form, of uncommon height, gaunt, bony, and masculine, was firm and erect as in the vigour of life, and in perfect keeping with the hard-featured, deep-lined countenance, surmounted by a coiffure that, perched on the summit of a roll of grizzled hair, strained tight from the high and narrow forehead, was, with the rest of her attire, a fac-simile of that of my great-aunt Barbara (peace be to her memory!) as depicted in a certain invaluable portrait of that virtuous gentlewoman, now deposited, for more inviolable security, in the warmest corner of the lumber-room. .

Though no believer in the influence of "the evil eye," there was something in the expression of the large, prominent, light grey orbs, so strangely fixed upon me, that had the effect of troubling me so far, as to impose a degree of embarrassment and restraint on my endeavours to play the courteous hostess, and very much to impede all my attempts at conversation.

As the likeliest means of breaking down the barrier of formality, I introduced the subject most calculated, it might be supposed, to awaken feelings of mutual interest. I spoke of my maternal ancestry—of the Norman blood and Norman land from which the race had sprung, and of my inhe-

rited love for the birthplace of those nearest and dearest to me in the last departed generation; though the daughter of an English father, his country was my native, as well as my "Fatherland."

Mrs Ormond, though the widow of an English husband, spoke with a foreign accent so familiar to my ear, that, in spite of the sharp thin tones of the voice that uttered them, I could have fancied musical, had there been a gleam of kindness in her steady gaze. But I courted it in vain. The eyes of Freya were never fixed in more stony hardness on a rejected votary, than were those of my stern inspectress on my almost deprecating face; and her ungracious reserve baffled all my attempts at conversation.

All she allowed to escape her, in reference to the Norman branches of our respective families, was a brief allusion to the intimacy which had subsisted between her mother and my maternal grandmother; and when I endeavoured from that slight clue to lead her farther into the family relations, my harmless pertinacity was rebuked by a shake of the head as portentous as Lord Burleigh's, accompanied by so grim a smile, and a look of such undefinable meaning, as put the finishing-stroke to my previous bewilderment, and prevented me from recalling to mind, as I should otherwise have done, certain circumstances associated with a proper name—that of

her mother's family, which she spoke with peculiar emphasis—and having done so, and in so doing (as she seemed persuaded) "spoken daggers" to my conscience, she signified by a stately sign to the ladies who had accompanied her that she was ready to depart, and, the carriage being announced, forthwith arose, and honouring me with a farewell curtsy, as formal as that which had marked her introduction, sailed out of the apartment, if not with swan-like grace, with much of that sublimer majesty of motion with which a heron on a mud-bank stalks deliberately on, with head erect and close depending pinions. And as if subjugated by the strange influence of the sharp grey eyes, bent on me to the last with sinister expression, unconsciously I returned my grim visitor's parting salutation with so profound a curtsy, that my knees (all unaccustomed to such Richardsonian ceremony) had scarcely recovered from it, when the closing door shut out her stately figure, and it was not till the sound of carriage-wheels certified her final departure, that, recovering my own identity, I started from the statue-like posture in which I had remained standing after that unwonted genuflection, and sank back on the sofa to meditate at leisure on my strange morning adventure.

My ungracious visitor had left me little cause, in truth, for pleasing meditation, so far as her gaunt self was immediately concerned, but a harsh strain,

or an ungraceful object, will sometimes (as well as the sweetest and most beautiful) revive a long train of interesting associations, and the plea alleged for her introduction to me had been of itself sufficient to awaken a chord of memory, whose vibration ceased not at her departure. On the contrary, I fell forthwith into a dreaming mood, that led me back to recollections of old stories, of old times—such as I had loved to listen to in long-past days, from those who had since followed in their turn the elders of our race (whose faithful historians they were) to the dark and narrow house appointed for all living.

Who that has ever been addicted to the idle, and I fear me profitless, speculation of waking dreams, but may call to mind how, when the spell was on him, as outward and tangible things (apparently the objects of intent gaze) faded on the eye of sense, the inward vision proportionately cleared and strengthened—and circumstances long unremembered—names long unspoken—histories and descriptions once attended to with deep interest, but long passed from recollection, are drawn forth, as it were, from the dark recesses of the mind, at first like wandering atoms confused and undefined, but gradually assuming distinctness and consistency, till the things *that be* are to us the *unreal* world, and we live and move again (all intervening space a blank) among the things that have been?

Far back into that shadowy region did I wander, when left as described by "the grim white woman," to ponder over the few words she had vouchsafed to utter, and my own "thick-coming fancies." The one proper name she had pronounced—that of her mother's family—had struck on my ear like a familiar sound; yet—how could I have heard it? If ever, from one person only—from *my* dear mother's lips—"De St Hilaire!"—again and again I slowly repeated to myself—and then—I scarce know how—the Christian name of Adrienne rose spontaneously to my lips; and no sooner were the two united than the spell of memory was complete, and fresh on my mind, as if I had heard it but yesterday, returned the whole history of Adrienne de St Hilaire.

Adrienne de St Hilaire and Madelaine du Résnél were far-removed cousins; both "demoiselles de bonnes familles," residing at contiguous chateaux, near a small hamlet not far from Caen, in Normandy; both well born and well connected, but very unequally endowed with the gifts of fortune. Mademoiselle de St Hilaire was the only child and heiress of wealthy parents, both of whom were still living. Madelaine du Résnél, the youngest of seven, left in tender infancy to the guardianship of a widowed mother, whose scanty dower (the small family estate devolving on her only son) would have been insufficient for the support of herself and her

younger children (all daughters), had she not continued mistress of her son's house and establishment during his minority.

"La petite Madelaine" (as, being the latest born, she was long called by her family and friends) opened her eyes upon this mortal scene but a week before her father was carried to his grave, and never was poor babe so coldly welcomed under circumstances that should have made her doubly an object of tenderness.

"Petite malheureuse! je me serais bien passée de toi," was the maternal salutation, when her new-born daughter was first presented to Madame du Résnél—a cold-hearted, strong-minded woman, more absorbed in the change about to be operated in her own situation by her approaching widowhood, than by her impending bereavement of a most excellent and tender husband. But one precious legacy was in reserve for the forlorn infant. She was clasped to the heart of her dying father—his blessing was breathed over her, and his last tears fell on her innocent, unconscious face. "Mon enfant! tu ne connaîtra jamais ton père, mais il veillera sur toi," were the tender, emphatic words with which he resigned her to the arms of the old servant, who failed not to repeat them to her little charge when she was old enough to comprehend their affecting purport. And well and holily did la petite Madelaine treasure that saying in her heart

of hearts; and early reason had the poor child to fly for comfort to that secret source. Madame du Résnél could not be accused of over-indulgence to any of her children—least of all to the poor little one whom she looked on from the first almost as an intruder; but she felt maternal pride in the resemblance already visible in her elder daughters to her own fine form and handsome features,—while la petite Madelaine, a small creature from her birth, though delicately and perfectly proportioned—fair and blue-eyed, and meek-looking as innocence itself, but without one feature in her face that could be called handsome, had the additional misfortune, when about five years old, to be marked—though not seamed—by the small-pox, from which cruel disease her life escaped almost miraculously.

“Qu'elle est affreuse!” was the mother's tender exclamation at the first full view of her restored child's disfigured face. Those words, young as she was, went to the poor child's heart, that swelled so to bursting, it might have broken, (who knows?) but for her hoarded comfort: and she sobbed herself to sleep that night, over and over again repeating to herself, “Mon papa veille sur moi.”

If there be much truth in that poetical axiom,

“A favourite has no friend,”

it is at least as frequently evident, that even in

domestic circles the degree of favour shown by the head of the household to any individual member too often regulates the general tone of consideration; and that even among the urchins of the family, an instinctive perception is never wanting, of how far, and over whom, they may tyrannise with impunity.

No creature in whose nature was a spark of human feeling could tyrannise over la petite Madeleine,—she was so gentle, so loving (when she dared show her love), so perfectly tractable and unoffending; but in the Chateau du Résnél no one could have passed two whole days without perceiving she was no favourite, except with one old servant—the same who had placed her in her dying father's arms, and recorded for her his last precious benediction—and with her little brother, who always vowed to those most in his confidence, and to Madelaine herself, when her tears flowed for some short, sharp sorrow, that when he was a man, “toutes ces demoiselles”—meaning his elder sisters and monitresses—should go and live away where they pleased, and leave him and la petite Madelaine to keep house together.

Except from these two, any one would have observed that there were “shortcomings” towards her; “shortcomings” of tenderness from the superiors of the household—“shortcomings” of observances from the menials; anything was good enough

for Madelaine—any time was time enough for Madelaine. She had to finish wearing out all her sisters' old frocks and wardrobes in general, to eat the crumb of the loaf they had pared the crust from, and to be satisfied with half a portion of soupe au lait, if they had chosen to take double allowance; and, blessedly for la petite Madelaine, it was her nature to be satisfied with everything not embittered by marked and intentional unkindness. It was her nature to sacrifice itself for others. Might that sacrifice have been repaid by a return of love, her little heart would have overflowed with happiness. As it was, she had not yet learnt to reason upon the want of sympathy; she felt without analysing. She was not harshly treated,—was seldom found fault with, though far more rarely commended,—was admitted to share in her sisters' sports, with the proviso that she had no choice in them,—old Jeannette and le petit frère Armand loved her dearly; so did Roland, her father's old faithful hound,—and on the whole, la petite Madelaine was a happy little girl.

And happier she was, a thousand times happier, than her cousin Adrienne—than Adrienne de St Hilairo, the spoilt child of fortune and of her doting parents, who lived but in her and for her, exhausting all the ingenuity of love, and all the resources of wealth, in vain endeavours to perfect the felicity of their beautiful but heartless idol.

The families of St Hilaire and Du Résuél were, as has been mentioned, distantly related, and the ties of kindred were strengthened by similarity of faith, both professing that of the Reformed Church, and living on that account very much within their own circle, though on terms of perfect good-will with the surrounding Catholic neighbourhood. Mlle. de St Hilaire might naturally have been expected to select among the elder of her cousins her companion and intimate, their ages nearly assimilating with her own; but, too cold-hearted to seek for sympathy, too proud to brook companionship on equal terms, and too selfish and indolent to sacrifice any caprice, or make any exertion for the sake of others, she found it most convenient to patronise la petite Madelaine, whose gentle spirit and sweet temper insured willing though not servile compliance with even the unreasonable fancies of all who were kind to her, and whose quickness of intellect and excellent capacity more than fitted her for companionship with Adrienne, though the latter was six years her senior. Besides all, there was the pleasure of patronage—not the least influential motive to a proud and mean spirit, or to the heart of a beauty, well-nigh satiated, if that were possible, by the contemplation of her own perfections. When la petite Madelaine was ten years old, and la belle Adrienne sixteen, it therefore happened that the former was much oftener to be found at Chateau St

Hilaire than at le Manoir du Résné; for whenever the parental efforts of Monsieur and Madame de St Hilaire failed (and they failed too often) to divert the ennui and satisfy the caprices of their spoiled darling, the latter was wont to exclaim, in the pettish tone of peevish impatience, "Faites donc venir la petite Madelaine!" and the innocent charmer was as eagerly sought out and welcomed by the harassed parents as ever David was sought for by the servants of Saul, to lay with the sweet breathings of his harp the evil spirit that possessed their unhappy master. Something similar was the influence of la petite Madelaine's nature over that of her beautiful cousin. No wonder that her presence could scarcely be dispensed with at Chateau St Hilaire. Had her own home been more a home of love, not all the blandishments of the kindest friends, not all the luxuries of a wealthy establishment, would ever have reconciled her to be so much separated from her nearest connections. But, alas! except when her services were required (and no sparing and light tasks were her assigned ones), she was but too welcome to bestow her companionship on others; and except Roland, and le petit frère, who was there to miss la petite Madelaine? And Roland was mostly her escort to St Hilaire; and on fine evenings, when le petit frère had escaped from his tutor and his sisters, Jeannette was easily persuaded to take him as far as the old mill, half-way between

the chateaux, to meet her on her way home. Those were pleasant meetings. Madelaine loved often, in after-life, to talk of them with that dear brother, always her faithful friend. So time went on—Time, the traveller whose pace is so variously designated by various humours, is always the restless, the unpausing—till Mademoiselle de St Hilaire had attained the perfection of blooming womanhood—the glowing loveliness of her one-and-twentieth summer—and la petite Madelaine began to think people ought to treat her more like a woman—for was she not fifteen complete? Poor little Madelaine! thou hadst indeed arrived at that most womanly era. But, to look at that small slight form, still childishly attired in frock and sash, of the simplest form and homeliest materials—at that almost infantine face, that looked *more* youthful, and *almost* beautiful, when it smiled, from the effect of a certain dimple in the left cheek (Adrienne always insisted it was a pock-mark);—to look at that form and face, and the babyish curls of light-brown hair that hung about it quite down the little throat, and lay clustering on the girlish neck—who could ever have thought of paying thee honour due as to the dignity of confirmed womanhood?

So it was Madelaine's fate still to be "La petite Madelaine"—still nobody—that anomalous personage who plays so many parts in society,—as often to suit his own convenience as for that of

others; and though people are apt to murmur at being forced into the character, many a one lives to assume it willingly—as one slips off a troublesome costume at a masque, to take shelter under a quiet domino. As for la petite Madelaine, who did not care very much about the matter, though it was a *little* mortifying to be patted on the head, and called "bonne petite," instead of "mademoiselle," as was her undoubted right, from strangers at least, it was better to be *somebody* in one or two hearts (*le petit frère et Jeannette*) than in the mere *respects* of a hundred indifferent people; and as for la belle cousine, Madelaine, though on excellent terms with her, never dreamed of her having a heart,—one cause, perhaps, of their mutual good understanding; for la petite Madelaine, actuated by instinctive perception, felt that it would be perfectly irrational to expect warmth of affection from one constituted so differently from herself; so she went on, satisfied with the consciousness of giving pleasure, and with such return as was made for it.

But la petite Madelaine was soon to be invested with a most important office; one, however, that was by no means to supersede her character of Nobody, but, enigmatical as it may sound, to double her usefulness in that capacity—while, on private and particular occasions, she was to enact a *somebody* of infinite consequence—that of *confidante* in

a love affair—as la belle cousine was pleased to term her *liaison* with a very handsome and elegant young officer, who, after some faint opposition on the part of her parents, was duly installed at St Hilaire as the accepted and acknowledged lover of its beautiful heiress. Walter Barnard (for he was of English birth and parentage), the youngest of three brothers, the elder of whom was a baronet, was most literally a soldier of fortune, his portion, at his father's death, amounting to no more than a pair of colours in a marching regiment—and the splendid income thereunto annexed. But high in health and hope, and “all the world before him where to choose”—of high principles—simple and unvitiated habits—the object of the love of many friends, and the esteem of all his brother officers—the young man was rather disposed to consider his lot in life as peculiarly fortunate, till the pressure of disease fell heavy on him, and he rose from a sick-bed which had held him captive many weeks, the victim of infectious fever, so debilitated in constitution as to be under the necessity of obtaining leave of absence from his regiment, for the purpose (peremptorily insisted on by his physician) of seeking the perfect change of air and scene which was essential to effect his restoration. He was especially enjoined to try the influence of another climate—that of France was promptly decided on—not only from the proximity of that country (a

consideration of no small weight in the young soldier's prudential calculations), but because a brother officer was about to join a part of his family then resident at Caen in Normandy, and the pleasure of travelling with him settled the point of Walter's destination *so far*—and, as it fell out, even to that *other* station in the route of life, only *second* in awfulness to the "bourne from whence no traveller returns." His English friends, who had been some years inhabitants of Caen, were acquainted with many French families in that town and its vicinity, and, among others, Walter was introduced by them at the Chateau de St Hilaire, where the Protestant English were always welcomed with marked hospitality. The still languishing health of the young soldier excited peculiar interest; he was invited to make frequent trials of the fine air of the chateau and its noble domain. A very few sufficed to convince him that it was far more salubrious than the confined atmosphere of Caen; and very soon the fortunate invalid was installed in all the rights and privileges of "L'Ami de la Maison."

Circumstances having conducted our *dramatis personæ* to this point, how could it fall out otherwise than that the grateful Walter should fall desperately in love (which, by the by, he did at first sight) with la belle Adrienne, and that she should *determine* to fall *obstinately* in love with him! He;

poor fellow! in pure simplicity of heart, really gazed himself into a devoted passion for the youthful beauty, without one interested view towards the charms of the heiress. But, besides thinking him the handsomest man she had ever seen, she was determined in her choice, by knowing it was in direct opposition to the wishes of her parents, who had long selected for her future husband a person so every way unexceptionable, that their fair daughter was very likely to have selected him for herself, had they not committed the fatal error of expressing their wishes with regard to him. There was PERSUASION and DISSUASION—mild opposition and systematic wilfulness—a few tears, got up with considerable effort—vapeurs and migraines in abundance—loss of appetite—hints about broken hearts—and the hearts of the tender parents could hold out no longer—Walter Barnard was received into the family as the future husband of its lovely daughter.

All this time, what had become of la petite Madelaine? What does become of little girls just half-way through their teens, when associated, under similar circumstances, with young ladies who are women grown? Why, they are to be patient listeners to the lover's perfections when he is out of the way, and more patient companions (because perfectly unnoticed at such times) of the lovers' romantic walks; shivering associates (at discreet distance) of their tender communings on

mossy banks, under willow and acacia, by pondsides and brook-sides—by daylight, and twilight, and moonlight—at all seasons, and in all temperatures—so that by the time the pastoral concludes with matrimony, it may be accounted an especial mercy if the "mutual friend" is not crippled with the rheumatism for life, or brought into the first stage of a galloping consumption. No such fatal results were, however, in reserve for the termination of la petite Madelaine's official duties; and those, while in requisition, were made less irksome to her than they are in general to persons so circumstanced,—in part through the happy influence of her own sweet nature, which always apportioned to itself some share of the happiness it witnessed; in part through her long-acquired habits of patience and self-sacrifice; and, in part also, because Walter Barnard was an especial favourite with her—and little wonder that he was so—the gay and happy young man, devoted as he was to Adrienne in all the absorbing interest of a first successful passion, had yet many a kind word and beaming smile to spare for the poor little cousin, who often but for him would have sat quite unnoticed at her tent-stitch, even in the family circle; and when she was the convenient *tiers* in the romantic rambles of himself and his lady-love, thanks to his unfailing good-nature, even then she did not feel herself utterly forgotten.

For even in spite of discouraging looks from la belle Adrienne, of which in truth he was not quick to discern the meaning, he would often linger to address a few words to the silent little girl, who had been tutored too well to speak unspoken to, or even to walk quite within ear-shot of her *soi-disant* companions. And when he had tenderly assisted Adrienne to pass over some stile or brooklet in their way, seldom it happened but that his hand was next at the service of Madelaine; and only those whose spirits have been long subdued by a sense of insignificance, impressed by the slighting regards or careless notice of cold friends or condescending patrons, can conceive the enthusiastic gratitude with which those trivial instances of kindness were treasured up in her heart's records. So it was, that la petite Madelaine, far from wearying of Walter's praises, when it pleased Adrienne to descant upon them in his absence, was apt to think her fair cousin did him scant justice, and that if she had been called on as his eulogist, oh! how far more eloquently could she speak! In short, la-petite Madelaine, inexperienced as of course she was in such matters, saw with the acuteness of feeling, that Walter had obtained an interest only in the vanity and self-love, not in the heart of his fair mistress. "Poor Adrienne! she cannot help it, if she *has* no heart," was Madelaine's sage soliloquy. "Mais quel dommage pour ce bon Walter, qui en a tant!"

"Le bon Walter" might possibly have made the same discovery, had the unrestricted intercourse of the lovers been of long continuance; and he might have also ascertained another point, respecting which certain dubious glimmerings had begun at intervals to intrude themselves on his meditations *couleur de rose*,—was it possible that the moral and intellectual perfections of his idol *could* be less than in perfect harmony with her outward loveliness? The doubt was sacrilegious, detestable, dismissed with generous indignation, but again and again some demon (or was it his *good genius*?) recalled a startling frown, an incautious word or tone, a harsh or fretful expression from the eye and voice of his beloved, addressed to *la petite cousine* or to himself, when in lightness of spirit, and frank-hearted kindness, he had laughed and talked with the latter, as with a young engaging sister. And then, except on one topic, his passion for la belle Adrienne, and her transcendent charms, of which, as yet, he was ever ready to pour out the heart's eloquent nonsense, somehow their conversations always languished. She had no eye for the natural beauties, of which he was an enthusiastic admirer; yawned or looked puzzled or impatient, when he stopped to gaze upon some glorious sunset, or violet-hued distance, melting into the roseate sky. And though she did not reject his offering of wild roses, or dewy honeysuckles, it was received with a half-contemptuous

indifference, that invited no frequent renewal of the simple tribute ; and from the date of a certain walk, when the lover's keen glance observed that the bunch of wild-flowers, carelessly dropt by Adrienne a few minutes after he had given them to her, was furtively picked up by la petite Madelaine as she followed in the narrow woodpath, and placed as furtively within the folds of her fichu—if Monsieur Walter, from that time forth, pulled a wild rose from the spray, or a violet from the bank, it was tendered with a smile to one whose *hand* at least was less careless than Adrienne's ; and for her heart, that mattered not (farther than in brotherly kindness) to the *reputed* possessor of la belle St Hilaire's. Yet, in long after days, when silver threads began to streak the soft fair hair of Madelaine du Résnél, and the thick black clustering curls of Walter Barnard were more than sprinkled with the same paly hue, he found in turning over the leaves of an old French romance, in which her name was inscribed, the dried, faded, scentless forms of what had been a few sweet wild-flowers. On the margin of the page, to which time had glued them, was a date, and a few written words. And the sight of those frail memorials, associated with those ago-tinted characters, must have awakened tender and touching recollections in his heart who gazed upon them ; for a watery film suffused his eyes as he raised them from the volume, and

turned with a half-pensive smile to one who sat beside him, quietly busied with her knitting needles in providing for his winter comfort.

"Mais revenons à nos moutons." Our present business is with the young lover and his fair mistress, and the still younger Madelaine. Time will overtake them soon enough. We need not anticipate his work. The old inexorable brought to a conclusion Walter's leave of absence, just as certain discoveries to which we have alluded were beginning to break upon him; just as la belle Adrienne began to weary of playing at *parfait amour*, enacting the adorable to her lover, and the *aimable* to her cousin *in his presence*; just as Monsieur and Madame, her weak but worthy parents, were secretly praying for their future son-in-law's departure, in the forlorn hope (as they had stipulated that even *les fiançailles* should not take place for a twelve-month to come) that some unexpected page might yet turn over in the chapter of accidents, whereon might be written the name of Jules Marquis d'Arval, instead of that of the landless, untitled Walter Bernard, for the husband of their beautiful heiress.

Just at this critical juncture arrived the day of separation—of separation for a year certain! Will it be doubted that with the parting hour, rushed back upon Walter's heart a flood of tenderness, even more impassioned than that with which it had first pledged itself to the beautiful Adrienne? The

enthusiasm of his nature, acting as a stimulus to her apathetic temperament, communicated to her farewell so much of the appearance of genuine feeling, that the young soldier returned to his country, and to his military duties, imbued with the blissful assurance that, whatever unworthy doubts had been suggested occasionally by fallacious appearances, the heart of his fair betrothed was as faultless as her person, and exclusively devoted to himself. So wholly had the "sweet sorrow" of that farewell absorbed his every faculty, that it was not till he was miles from St Hilaire on his way to the coast, that Walter remembered la petite Madelaine; remembered that he had bid HER no farewell; that she had slipped away to her own home the last evening of his stay at St Hilaire, unobserved by all but an old *bonne*, who was commissioned to say Mademoiselle Madelaine had a headache, and that she had not reappeared the next morning, the morning of his departure. "Dear little Madelaine! how could I forget her?" was the next thought to that which had recalled her. "But she shall live with us when we are married." So having laid the flattering unction to his conscience, by that satisfactory arrangement for her future comfort, he "whistled her image down the wind" again, and betook himself with redoubled ardour to the contemplation of Adrienne.

And where was la petite Madelaine?—What be-

came of her, and what was she doing that livelong day? Never was she so much wanted at St Hilairo—to console—to support—to occupy the "fair forsaken;" and yet she came not. "What insensibility!—what ingratitude! at such a time!"—exclaimed the parents of the lovely desolate—so interesting in her becoming character of a lone bird "reft of its mutual heart," so amiable in her attempted exculpation of the neglectful Madelaine! "She does not mean to be unkind—to be cruel—as her conduct seems"—sweetly interposed the meek apologist.—"But she is thoughtless—*insouciant*e—and you know, chère Maman! I always told you la petite Madelaine has no sensibility—Ah Ciel!"—That mine were less acute!—was, of course, the implied sense of that concluding apostrophe—and every one will feel the eloquence of the appeal, so infinitely more affecting than the full-length sentence would have been. If vagueness is one great source of the sublime—it is also a grand secret in the arcana of sensibility.

But we may remember that poor little Madelaine had slipped away to her own home the preceding evening, pleading a headache as the excuse for her evasion. Perhaps the same cause—(was it headache?) holds her still captive in her little chamber, the topmost chamber in the western pepper-box turret, four of which flank the four corners of the old Chateau du Résnél. Certain it is, from that

same lofty lodging Madelaine has not stirred the livelong day—scarcely from that same station;—

“There at her chamber window high,
The lonely maiden sits—
Its casement fronts the western sky,
And balmy air admits.

And while her thoughts have wandered far
From all she hears and sees,
She gazes on the evening star,
That twinkles through the trees.—

Is it to watch the setting sun,
She does that seat prefer?
Alas! the maiden thinks of one,
Who *little* thinks of her.”

“Eternal fidelity”—being, of course, the first article agreed and sworn to in the lovers’ parting covenant, “Constant correspondence,” as naturally came second in the list, and never was eagerness like Walter’s to pour out the first sorrows of absence in his first letter to the beloved, or impatience like his for the appearance of her answer. After some decorous delay—(a *little* maiden coyness was thought decorous in those days)—it arrived, the delightful letter! Delightful it would have been to Walter, in that second effervescence of his first passion, had the penmanship of the fair writer been barely legible, and her epistolary talent not absolutely below the lowest degree of mediocrity. Walter (to say the truth) had felt certain involuntary misgivings on that subject. Himself

not only an ardent admirer of nature, but an unaffected lover of elegant literature, he had been frequently mortified at Adrienne's apparent indifference to the one, and seeming distaste to the other. Of her style of writing he had found no opportunities of judging. Albums were not the fashion in those days—and although, on the few occasions of his absence from St Hilaire after his engagement with Adrienne (Caen being still his ostensible place of residence), he had not failed to indite to her sundry billets, and even full-length letters, dispatched (as on a business of life and death) by bribed and special messengers,—either Mlle. de St Hilaire was engaged or abroad when they arrived—or otherwise prevented from replying; and still more frequently the lover trod on the heels of his despatch. So it chanced that he had not carried away with him one hoarded treasure of the fair one's writing. And as to books—he had never detected the "dame de ses pensées" in the act of reading anything more intellectual than the words for a new Vaudeville, or a letter from her Paris milliner. He had more than once proposed to read aloud to her—but either she was seized with a fit of unconquerable yawning before he proceeded far in his attempt—or the migraine, or the vapours, to which distressing ailments she was constitutionally subject—were sure to come on at the unfortunate moment of his proposition—and thus, from a com-

bination of untoward accidents, he was not only left in ignorance of his mistress's higher attainments, but at certain moments of disappointed feeling reduced to form conjectures on the subject, compared to which "ignorance was bliss;" and to some lingering doubts of the like nature, as well as to lover-like impatience, might be attributable the nervous trepidation with which he broke the seal of her first letter. That letter!—The first glimpse of its contents was a glimpse of Paradise!—The first hurried reading transported him to the seventh heaven—and the twentieth (of course, dispassionately critical) confirmed him in the fruition of its celestial beatitudes. Seriously speaking, Walter Barnard must have been a fool, as well as an ingrate, if he had not been pleased—enraptured with the sweet, modest, womanly feeling that breathed through every line of that dear letter. It was no long one—no laboured production—(though perfectly correct as to style and grammar); but the artless affection that evinced itself in more than one sentence of those two short pages, would have stamped perfection on the whole, in Walter's estimation, had it not (as was the case) been throughout characterised by a beautiful, yet singular simplicity of expression, which surprised not less than it enchanted him. And then—how he reproached himself for the mixed emotion!—Why should it surprise him that Adrienne wrote thus? His was

the inconceivable dulness—the want of discernment—of intuitive penetration into the intellectual depths of a character, veiled from vulgar eyes by the retiringness of self-depreciating delicacy, but which to him would gradually have revealed itself, if he had applied himself sedulously to unravel the interesting mystery.

Thenceforward, as may well be imagined, the correspondence, so happily commenced, was established on the most satisfactory footing, and nothing could exceed the delightful interest with which Walter studied the beautiful parts of a character, which gradually developed itself as their epistolary intercourse proceeded, now enchanting him by its peculiar naïveté and innocent sportiveness, now affecting him more profoundly, and not less delightfully, by some tone of deep feeling and serious sweetness, so well in unison with all the better and higher feelings of his own nature, that it was with more than lover-like fervour he thanked Heaven for his prospects of happiness with the dear and amiable being, whose personal loveliness had now really sunk to a secondary rank in his estimation of her charms. A slight shade of the reserve which, in his personal intercourse with Adrienne, had kept him so unaccountably in the dark with respect to her true character, was still perceptible, even in her delightful letters, but only sufficiently to give a more piquant interest to their correspondence. It

was evident that she hung back, as it were, to take from his letters the tone of her replies; that on any general subject, it was for him to take the lead, though, having done so, whether in allusion to books, or on any topic connected with taste or sentiment, she was ever modestly ready to take her part in the discussion, with simple good sense and unaffected feeling. It was almost unintentionally that he made a first allusion to some favourite book; and the letter, containing his remark, was despatched before he recollected that he had once been baffled in an attempt to enjoy it with Adrienne by the manner (more discouraging than indifference) with which she received his proposition, that they should read it together. He wished he had not touched upon the subject. Adrienne, excellent as was her capacity—spiritual as were her letters, might not love reading. He would, if possible, have recalled his letter. But its happy inadvertence was no longer matter of regret when the reply reached him. *That very book*—his favourite poet—was Adrienne's also! and more than one sweet passage she quoted from it! *His favourite passages* also! Was ever sympathy so miraculous! And that the dear diffident creature should so unaccountably have avoided, when they were together, all subjects that might lead to the discovery!

The literary pretensions of the young soldier were by no means those of profound scholarship, of

deep reading, or even of a very regular education; but his tastes were decidedly intellectual, and the charm of his intercourse with Adrienne was in no slight degree enhanced by the discovery that, on all subjects with which they were mutually acquainted, she was fully competent to enter with equal interest.

Absence and lengthened separation are generally allowed to be great tests of love, or, more properly speaking, of its truth. In Walter's case, they hardly acted as such, for distance had proved to him but a *lunette d'approche*, bringing him acquainted with those rare qualities in his fair mistress which had been imperceptible during their personal intercourse. With what impatience, knowing her as he now did, did he anticipate the hour of their union! But it was with something like a feeling of disappointment that he remarked in her letters a degree of uneasiness on that tender subject, to which (as the period of separation drew nearer to a close) he was fain to allude more frequently and fondly. One other shade of alloy had crossed at intervals his pleasure in their correspondence. Many kind inquiries had he made for la petite Madelaine, and many affectionate messages had he sent her. But they were either wholly unnoticed, or answered in phrase the most formal and laconic,—

“Mlle. du Résnél was well, obliged to Monsieur Walter for his polite inquiries.—Desired her compliments.”

It was in vain that Walter ventured a half-sportive message in reply to this ceremonious return for his frank and affectionate remembrances—that, in playful mockery, he requested Adrienne to obtain for him “*Mademoiselle du Résné’s* forgiveness for his temerity in still designating her by the familiar title of *La Petite Madelaine.*” The reply was, if possible, more brief and chilling—so unlike (he could not but remark) to that he might reasonably have expected from his grateful and warm-hearted little friend, that a strange surmise, or rather a revived suspicion, suggested itself as the possible solution of his conjectures. But was it possible—(Walter’s face flushed as he thought of his own *possible* absurdity in so suspecting)—was it in the nature of things—that Adrienne, the peerless, the lovely and beloved, should conceive one jealous thought of the poor little Madelaine? The supposition was almost too ridiculous to be harboured for a moment—and yet *he* remembered certain passages in their personal intercourse, when the strangeness (to use no harsher word) of Adrienne’s behaviour to her cousin, had awakened in him an indefinite consciousness that his good-humoured notice of the poor little girl, and the kind word he was ever prompt to speak in her praise when she was absent, were likely to be anything but advantageous to her in their effect on the feelings of her patroness. One circumstance, in particular, recurred to him,—

the recollection of a certain *jour de fête*, when la petite Madelaine (who had been dancing at a village gala, kept annually at the Mânoir du Résné in honour of Madame's name-day) presented herself, late in the evening, at St Hilaire, so blooming from the effects of her recent exhilarating exercise—her meek eyes so bright with the excitement of innocent gaiety, and her small delicate figure and youthful face set off so advantageously by her simple holiday dress, especially by her hat, *à la bergère*, garlanded with wild roses, that even the old people, M. and Mad. de St Hilaire, complimented her on her appearance, and himself (after whispering aside to Adrienne, "La Petite est jolie à ravir,") had sprung forward, and whirled her round the salon in a *tour de danse*, the effect of which impromptu was assuredly not to lessen the bloom upon her cheeks, which flushed over neck and brow, as, with the laughing familiarity of a brother, he commended her tasteful dress, and especially the pretty hat, which she must wear, and that only, he assured her, when she wished to be perfectly irresistible. Walter's sportive sally was soon over, and Madelaine's flush of beauty (the magical effect of happiness) soon faded. Both yielded to the influence of another spell—that wrought by the coldly discouraging looks of Adrienne, and by the asperity of the few sentences, which were all she condescended to utter during

the remainder of the evening. When la petite Madelaine reappeared the next morning with her cousin (who, on the plea of a migraine, remained till late in her own apartments), Walter failed not to remark that her eyes were red and heavy, and that her manner was more constrained than usual; neither did it escape his observation when Sunday arrived, that the tasteful little hat had been strangely metamorphosed, and that when he rallied her on her capricious love of changes, which had only spoiled what was before so becoming, she stole a half-fearful glance at Adrienne, while rather confusedly replying that "it was not her *own* doing, but that Ma'amselle Justine, her cousin's femme-de-chambre, had been permitted by the latter to arrange it more fashionably." The subject dropped then, and was never resumed; but Walter *then* made his own comments on it. And now that the peculiar tone of Adrienne's letters in referring to Madelaine brought former circumstances vividly to mind, it is not surprising that he fell into a fit of musing on the *possibility*, which he yet rebuked himself for suspecting. It must be confessed that his reflections on the subject were of a less displeasing nature than those which had suggested themselves on former occasions, before epistolary correspondence with his fair betrothed had given him that insight into her character and feelings which, strange to say, he had failed to

obtain during their personal communication. Now he felt assured, that if indeed she were susceptible of the weakness he had dared to suspect, it was mingled with no unkindly feelings towards her unoffending cousin, but sprang solely from the peculiar sensitiveness of her nature, and the exclusive delicacy of her affection for himself.

Where ever was the lover—(we say not the husband)—who could dwell but with tenderest indulgence on an infirmity of love so flattering to his own self-love and self-complacency? We suspect that Walter's fervour was anything but cooled by the fancied discovery; and his doubts on the subject, if he still harboured any, were wholly dispelled by a postscript to Adrienne's next letter, almost amounting, singular as was the construction, to an avowal of her own weakness.

In the three fair pages of close writing of which that letter consisted, was vouchsafed no word of reply to an interrogatory—the last, he secretly resolved, he would ever venture on that subject—whether his "little cousin Madelaine," as he had sometimes sportively called her by anticipation, had quite forgotten her friend Walter. But on one of the outside folds, evidently an after-thought, written hurriedly, and, as it seemed, with a trembling hand, was the following postscript:—

"La Petite Madelaine se souvient toujours du bon Walter—Comment ferait-elle autrement?"

“ Mais, cependant, qu’il ne soit plus question d’elle dans les lettres de Mons. Walter.”

“ A most strange fancy! an unaccountable caprice of this dear Adrienne’s!” was Walter’s smiling soliloquy. “ Some day she shall laugh at it with me—but for the present and for ever, be the dear one’s will my law.” Thenceforth “ il n’était plus question de la Petite Madelaine” in Walter’s letters, and in those of Adrienne she was never more alluded to.

Mademoiselle de St Hilaire’s mind was about this time engrossed by far more important personages than her absent lover, or her youthful friend. The present occupants, herself (no *new* one truly), and a certain Marquis d’Arval, who would probably have been her first choice, if he had not been the selected of her parents. Not that she had by any means decided on the rupture of her engagement with Walter (if indeed such a contingency had ever formed the subject of her private musings); neither, at any rate, would she have dissolved it, till his return should compel her to a decision. For his letters were too agreeable, too spiritual—too full of that sweet incense that never satiated her vanity, to be voluntarily relinquished.

But in the mean time, the correspondence, piquant as it was—a charming *passé-temps*!—could not be expected to engross her wholly. Many vacant hours still hung upon her hands, wonderful to say,

in spite of those intellectual and elegant pursuits, the late discovery of which had so enraptured the unsophisticated Walter. Who so proper as the Marquis d'Arval, then on a visit at the Chateau, —her cousin too—besides being the especial favourite of her parents—(dutiful Adrienne!)—to be the confidential friend of la belle *délaissée*?—to be in fact the substitute of the absent lover, in all those *petits soins* that so agreeably divert the ennui of a fine lady's life, and for which the most sentimental correspondence can furnish no equivalent? In the article of *petits soins* indeed (the phrase is perfectly untranslatable), the merits of d'Arval were decidedly superior to those of his English competitor, whose English feelings and education certainly disqualified him for evincing that peculiar tact and nicety of judgment in all matters relating to female decoration and occupation, so essential in the *cavalier servente* of a French beauty. Though an excellent French scholar, Walter never could compass the nomenclature of shades and colours, so familiar and expressive to French tongues and tastes. He blundered perpetually between "rose tendre," and "rose foncée;" and was quite at fault if referred to as arbitrator between the respective merits of "Boue de Paris," or "Crapeau mort d'amour."

Achilles, in his female weeds, was never more awkward at his task than poor Walter, when

appointed, by especial favour, to the office of arranging the ribbon collar, or combing the silken mane and ruffled paws of *Silvie*, *Adrienne's* little *chien lion*. And though ready enough (as we have seen) to importune his mistress with worthless offerings of paltry wild-flowers, it never entered his simple fancy to present her with small, compact bouquets, sentimentally and scientifically combined (the *pensée* never omitted, if in season), the stems wound together with silk of appropriate hue, or wrapped round with a motto, or well-turned couplet. In these, and all accomplishments of a similar nature, *Walter Barnard's* genius was immeasurably distanced by that of the *Marquis d'Arval*.

The latter was also peculiarly interesting in his character of a despairing lover; and his attentions were particularly well-timed, at a season when the absence of the happy lover had made a vacuum in the life (of course not the *heart*) of *Adrienne*, who on her part was actuated by motives of pure humanity in consoling *d'Arval* (as far as circumstances permitted) for the success of his rival, by proofs of her warmest friendship and tenderest commiseration.

Since the *Marquis's* arrival at *S^t Hilaire*, his universal genius had in great measure superseded *la petite Madelaine* in her office of exorcist to the demon of ennui, her fair cousin's relentless persecutor. She was therefore less frequently, or rather less

constantly, at the Chateau—though still summoned to secret conference in Adrienne's boudoir, and often detained there for hours by consultations or occupations of that private and confidential nature, so interesting to the generality of young ladies who have lovers in their hearts or heads, though the details might be insipid to the general reader, if it were even allowable to reveal mysteries little less sacred than the Eleusinian.

It might have been inferred, however, that la petite Madelaine was but an unwilling sharer of those secret conferences; for she often retired from them with looks of more grave and even careful expression, than were well in character with the youthful countenance, and an air of dejection that ill suited the recent listener to a happy love-tale. And when her services (whatever were their nature) were no longer required, Adrienne evinced no inclination to detain her at St Hilaire.

She was still, however, politely and even kindly welcomed by the owners of the Chateau; but when no longer necessary to the contentment of their idolised daughter, the absence or presence of la petite Madelaine became to them a matter of the utmost indifference, and by degrees she became painfully sensible that there is a wide difference in being accounted *nobody* with respect to our individual consequence, or in relation to our capabilities for contributing, however humbly, to the com-

fort and happiness of others. To the first species of insignificance Madelaine had been early accustomed, and easily reconciled; but the second pressed heavily on her young heart—and perhaps the more so, at St Hilaire, for the perpetually recurring thoughts of a time still recent—(“the happy time,” as that poor girl accounted it in her scant experience of happiness)—when she had a friend there who, however his heart was devoted to her cousin, had never missed an occasion of showing kindness to herself, and of evincing to her, by those attentions which pass unnoticed when accepted as a duc, but are so precious to persons situated as was la petite Madelaine, that to him at least her pains and pleasures, her tastes, her feelings, and her welfare, were by no means indifferent or unimportant. The dew of kindness never falls on any soil so grateful as the young heart unaccustomed to its genial influence. After-benefits, more weighty and important, fail not in noble natures to inspire commensurate gratitude—but they cannot call forth that burst of enthusiastic feeling, awakened by the first experienced kindness, like the sudden verdure of a dry seed-bed called into life and luxuriance by the first warm shower of spring.

La petite Madelaine's natural home was at no time, as has been observed, a very happy one to her. And now that it was more her home than for some years it had been, time had wrought no

favourable change in her circumstances there. Time had not infused more tenderness towards her into the maternal feelings of Madame du Résnél—though it had worked its usual effect of increasing the worldliness, and hardening the hardness, of her nature. Time had not dulcified the tempers of the three elder Mademoiselles du Résnél, by providing with husbands the two cadettes between them and Madelaine. And time had cruelly curtailed the few home joys of the poor Madelaine, by sending le petit frère to college, and by delivering up to his great receiver, Death—her only other friend—the faithful and affectionate Jeannette. Of the few that had once loved her in her father's house, only the old dog was left to welcome her more permanent abode there; and one would have thought he was sensible of the added responsibilities death and absence had devolved upon him. Forsaking his long-accustomed place on the sunny pavement of the south stone courtyard, he established himself at the door of the salon if she was within it, himself not being privileged to enter there—or with his young mistress in her own little turret-chamber, where he had all *entrées*—or even to her favourite arbour in the garden he contrived to creep with her, though his old limbs were too feeble to accompany her beyond that short distance. And when they were alone together, he would look up in her face with such a "human meaning" in his dim eyes, as spoke to

Madelaine's heart, as plainly and more affectingly than words could have spoken—"I only am left to love my master's daughter, and who but she cares for old Roland?"

In the mean time, Walter's year of probation was fast drawing to a close; and his return to St Hilaire, and all thereon depending, was looked forward to with very different feelings by himself (the happy expectant!) by the inhabitants of the Chateau, and by its still occasional inmate, the little Maiden of the Manoir, whose meditations on the subject were not the less frequent and profound, because to her it was obviously one of little personal interest. Monsieur and Madame de St Hilaire had watched with intense anxiety the fancied progress of the Marquis d'Arval in supplanting the absent Walter in the affections of their daughter. But experience had taught them that the surest means of effecting their wishes was to refrain from expressing them to the dutiful Adrienne. So they looked on, and kept silence, with hopes that became fainter as the decisive period approached, and they observed that the lovers' correspondence was unslackened, and the Marquis made no interesting communication to them of that success on his part which, he was well aware, they would receive as most gratifying intelligence. On the contrary, he found it necessary, about this time, to make a journey to Paris, and to his estates in Languedoc; but as

he still seemed devoted to Adrienne, and his devotions were evidently accepted with the sweetest complacency, the bewildered parents still cherished a belief that the young people mutually understood each other—that d'Arval's temporary absence had been concerted between them, from motives of prudence and delicacy with respect to Walter, and that when the latter arrived, their daughter would either require him to release her from her rash engagement, or empower them to acquaint him with her change of sentiments.

Nothing could be farther from truth, however, than this fancied arrangement of the worthy elders. Whatever were d'Arval's ultimate views and hopes, he had contented himself during his visit with playing the favourite lover *pro tempore*. Perhaps he was too honourable to take further advantage of his rival's absence—perhaps too delicate, too romantic, to owe his mistress's hand to any but her cool after-decision, unbiassed by his fascinating presence. In short, whatever was the reason, he was *au désespoir!*—*accablé!*—*anéanti!* But he departed, leaving la belle Adrienne very much in doubt whether his departure was desirable or otherwise. It certainly demolished a pretty little airy fabric she had amused herself with constructing at odd idle moments of tender reverie; such as a meeting of the rivals—jealousy—reproaches—an interesting dilemma—desperation on one side (she had not settled

which)—rapture on the other—defiance to mortal combat—bloodshed, perhaps. But these feelings drew a veil over the imaginary picture, and passed on to the sweet anticipation of rewarding the survivor. If the marring of so ingenious a fancy sketch were somewhat vexatious, on the other hand it would be agreeable enough to be quite at liberty (for a time at least), after Walter's return, to resume her former relations with him. And as to the result, whatever was *his* impatience, that might still be delayed, and the Marquis would return. She was sure of him, if after all she should decide in his favour; and then, who could tell—the fancy sketch might be completed at last. La petite Madeleine was not of course made the depositary of her fair cousin's private cogitations; but she had her own, as has been observed, and she saw, and thought, and drew her inferences—devoutly hated Le Marquis d'Arval—could not love her cousin—and pitied—Oh! how she pitied le bon Walter!

Le bon Walter, whose term of banishment was now within three weeks of expiration, would have accounted himself the most enviable of mortals, but for his almost ungovernable impatience at the tedious interval which was yet to separate him from his beloved; and for a slight shade of disquietude at certain rumours respecting a certain Marquis d'Arval, which had reached him through the medium of the friend (the chaplain of his regiment), whose visit

to his family established at Caen had been the means of inducing Walter to accompany him thither, little dreaming, while quietly acquiescing in his friend's arrangements, to what conclusions (so momentous for himself) they were unwittingly tending. The brother and sister-in-law of Mr Seldon (the clerical friend alluded to) were still resident at Caen, and acquainted, though not on terms of intimacy, with the families of St Hilaire and Du Résnél. La petite Madelaine was, however, better known to them than any other individual of the two households. They had been at first kindly interested for her, by observing the degree of unmerited slight to which she was subjected in her own family, and the species of half dependence on the capricious kindness of others to which it had been the means of reducing her. The subdued but not servile spirit with which she submitted to undeserved neglect and innumerable mortifications, interested them still more warmly in her favour; and on the few occasions when they obtained permission for her to visit them at Caen, the innocent playfulness of her sweet and gentle nature shone out so engagingly in the sunshine of encouragement, and her affectionate gratitude evinced itself so artlessly, that they felt they could have loved her tenderly, had she been at liberty to give them as much of her society as she was inclined to do. But heartlessness and jealousy are not incompatible, and Mlle. de St

Hilaire was jealous of everything she condescended to patronise. Besides, la petite Madelaine had been too useful to her in various ways to be dispensed with ; and when, latterly, the capricious beauty became indifferent, or rather averse to her continuance at the Chateau beyond the stated period of secret service in the mysterious boudoir, Madelaine was well content to escape to her own unkindly home ; and, strange to say, better satisfied with the loneliness of her own little turret-chamber, or the dumb companionship of poor Roland, and with the drudgery of household needlework (always her portion at home), than even in the society of her amiable friends at Caen, to which she might then have resorted more unrestrainedly. But though they saw her seldom, the depression of her spirits and her altered looks passed not unnoticed by them. And although she uttered no complaint of her cousin, it was evident that at St Hilaire she was no longer treated even with the fitful kindness and scant consideration which was all she had ever experienced. These remarks led naturally, on the part of the Seldons, to close observance of the conduct of Mlle. de St Hilaire with the Marquis d'Arval—a subject to which common report had already drawn their attention, and which, as affecting the welfare of their friend Walter Barnard, could not be indifferent to them. They saw and heard and ascertained enough to convince them that his honest affections and

generous confidence were unworthily bestowed, and that a breach of faith the most dishonourable was likely to prove the ultimate reward of his high-raised expectations. So satisfied, they felt it a point of conscience to communicate to him, through the medium of his friend (and in the way and to the extent judged advisable by the latter), such information as might, in some degree, prepare him for the shock they anticipated, or at least stimulate him to sharp investigation. The office devolved upon Mr Seldon was by no means an enviable one; but he was too sincerely Walter's friend to shrink from it, and by cautious degrees he communicated to him that information which had cast the first shade over his love-dream of speedy reunion with the object of his affections.

It was well for the continuance of their friendship that Mr Seldon, in his communication to Walter, had not only proceeded with infinite caution, but had armed himself with coolness and forbearance in the requisite degree, for the young man's impetuous nature flamed out indignantly at the first insinuation against the truth of his beloved. And when, at last—after angry interruptions, and wrathful sallies innumerable—he had been made acquainted with the circumstances which, in the opinion of his friends, warranted suspicions so unfavourable to her, he professed utter astonishment, not unmixed with resentment, at their supposing

his confidence in Adrienne could be for one moment shaken by appearances or misrepresentations, which had so unworthily imposed on their own judgment and candour.

After the first burst of irritation, however, Walter professed his entire conviction of, and gratitude for, the good intentions of his friends; but requested of Seldon that the subject, which he dismissed from his own mind as perfectly unworthy of a second thought, should not be revived in their discussions; and Seldon, conscientiously satisfied with having done as much as discretion warranted in the discharge of his delicate commission, gladly assented to the proposition.

But in such cases it is easier to disbelieve than to forget; and it is among the countless perversenesses of the human mind, to retain most tenaciously, and recur most pertinaciously to, that which the will professes most peremptorily to dismiss. Walter's disbelief was spontaneous and sincere. So was his immediate protest against ever recurring, even in thought, to a subject so contemptible. But, like the little black box that haunted the merchant Abudah, it lodged itself, spite of all opposition, in a corner of his memory, from which not all his efforts could expel it at all times; though the most successful exorcism (the never-failing *pro tempore*) was a reperusal of those precious letters, in every one of which he found evidence of the lovely writer's

ingenuousness and truth, worthy to outweigh, in her lover's heart, a world's witness against her. But from the hour of Seldon's communication, Walter's impatience to be at St Hilaire became so ungovernable, that finding his friend (Mr — was again to be the companion of his journey) not unwilling to accompany him immediately, he obtained the necessary furlough, although it yet wanted nearly three weeks of the prescribed year's expiration; and although he had just despatched a letter to the lady of his love, full of anticipation, relating only to that period, he was on his way to the place of embarkation before that letter had reached French ground, and arrived at Caen (though travelling, to accommodate his friend, by a circuitous route) but a few days after its reception at St Hilaire.

The travellers reached their place of destination so early in the day, that, after a friendly greeting with Mr and Mrs Charles Seldon (though not without a degree of embarrassment on either side, from recollection of a certain proscribed topic), Walter excused himself from partaking their late dinner, and with a beating heart (in which, truth to tell, some undefinable fear mingled with delightful expectation) took his impatient way along the well-remembered footpaths that led through pleasant fields and orchards, by a short cut, to the Chateau de St Hilaire. He stopped for a moment at the old mill, near the entrance-gate of the domain, to

exchange a friendly greeting with the miller's wife, who was standing at her door, and dropt him a curtsy of recognition. The mill belonged to the Manoir du Résnél, and its respectable rentiers were, he knew, humble friends of la petite Madelaine ; so, in common kindness, he could do no otherwise than linger a moment, to make inquiries for *her* welfare, and that of her fair cousin, and their respective families. It may be supposed that Walter's latent motive for so general, as well as particular an inquiry, was to gain from the reply something like a glance at the Carte du Pays he was about to enter—not without a degree of nervous trepidation, with the causelessness of which he reproached himself in vain, though he had resisted the temptation of putting one question to the Seldons, who might have drawn from it inferences of misgivings on his part, the existence of which he was far from acknowledging even to his own heart.

“Mademoiselle Madelaine was at the Chateau that evening,” the dame informed him—“and there was no other company, for M. le Marquis left it for Paris three days ago.”—Walter drew breath more freely at *that* article of intelligence.—“Some people had thought M. le Marquis would carry off Mademoiselle after all”—(Walter bit his lip);—“but now Monsieur was returned, doubtless”—and a look and simper of vast knowingness supplied the conclusion of the sentence. “Au reste—Made-

moiselle was well, and as beautiful as ever; but for 'cette chère petite,' [meaning la petite Madeleine],—she was sadly changed of late, though she did not complain of illness—*she never* complained, though every body knew her home was none of the happiest, and (for what cause the good dame knew not) she was not so much as formerly at St Hilaire."

Walter was really concerned at the *bonne femme's* account of his little friend, but at that moment he could spare but a passing thought to any subject save one; and having gleaned all the intelligence he was likely to obtain respecting it, he cut short the colloquy with a hasty "Bon soir," and bounded on his way with such impetuous speed, that the entrance-gate of St Hilaire was still vibrating with the swing with which it had closed behind him, when he was half through the avenue, and just at one of its side openings into a little grove, or labyrinth, in which was a building, called Le Pavillon de Diane. He stopped to gaze for a moment at the gleam of its white walls, discernible through an opening in the thicket, for the sight was associated with many "blissful memories." But the present *was all* to him, and again he was starting onward, when his steps were arrested by sounds that mingled with the cooing of the wood-pigeon among "the umbrageous multitude of leaves."

Other sounds were none at that stillest hour of

the still sultry evening; and among the mingled tones, Walter's ear caught some not to be mistaken, for the voice that uttered them was that of Adrienne. Its breathings were, however, in a higher and less mellifluous key than those of the plaintive bird; but a third voice, sweeter than either, uttered a low undertone, and *that* voice was the voice of Madeline. Quick was the ear of Walter to recognise and distinguish those familiar accents, but its sense of melody yielded *of course* to the fond prejudice, which could not have been expected to find harshness in the tones of his mistress, or allow superior sweetness to those of another voice. Whatever were his secret thoughts on that head, it is not to be supposed that at such a moment he stopped to compare the "wood-notes wild," as coolly and critically as if he were weighing the merits of a pair of opera-singers. No—after a second of attention—not half a one of doubt—he sprang aside from the road leading to the mansion, and was lightly and swiftly threading the tortuous wood-path, and could now discern, through one of its bowery archways, the sparkling of the little fountain that played before one of the three entrances to the pavilion, and another turn of the sylvan puzzle would have brought him to the spot; but in his impatience he lost the well-known clue, and in a moment found himself at the back, instead of the front of the small temple. The corner would have

been rounded at three steps; but at that critical moment, a word spoken by the most vehement of the fair colloquists—spoken at the highest key of a voice, whose powers Walter was now for the first time fully aware of—arrested his steps as by art magic. His own name was uttered, associated with words of such strange import, that Walter's astonishment, overpowering his reflective faculties, made him excusable in remaining, as he did, rooted to the spot, a listener to what passed within.

That strange colloquy consisted, on one side, of taunts, and accusations, and menaces. On the other, of a few deprecating words—a sigh or two—and something like a suppressed sob—and lastly, of an assurance, uttered with a trembling voice, that the speaker "never had harboured the slightest thought of betraying the secret she was privy to, or entertained any hope less humble than to be permitted to stay unnoticed and unremembered in her own home"—where she "would be equally uncared for," was probably her heart's muttered conclusion, for the word *home* trembled on her tongue, and she burst into an agony of tears.

Neither the gentle appeal, nor the gush of distressful feeling in which it terminated, seemed to touch the heartless person it was addressed to, for there was no softening in the voice with which, as she quitted the pavilion, she issued her commands, that on her return some half-hour hence, "the letter

should be finished, and not more stupidly than usual, or it would be *à refaire*." And so departed the imperious task-mistress, and as her steps died away, and the angry rustling of her robes, the tinkling of the little fountain was again heard chiming with the stock-doves' murmurs, and within the temple all was profoundly still, except at intervals a smothered sob, and then a deep and heart-relieving sigh, the last audible token of subsiding passion. And Walter was still rooted, spell-bound—immovable in the same spot. Lost in a confusion of thoughts, that left him scarcely conscious of his own identity, of the reality of the scene around him, or of the strange circumstances in which he found himself so suddenly involved—more than a few moments it required to restore to him the power of clear perception and comprehension, but not one, when that was regained, to decide on the course he should pursue.

Quickly and lightly he stepped round the angle of the building to the side entrance (like the two others, an open archway), through which his eye glanced over the whole interior, till it rested on the one living object of interest. At some little distance, with her back towards him, sat la petite Madelaine, one elbow resting on the table before her, her head disconsolately bowed on the supporting hand, which half concealed her face; the other, with a pen held nervously by the small fingers, lay

idle beside the half-finished letter outspread before her. Once she languidly raised her head and looked upon it, with a seeming effort dipped her pen in the ink, and held it a moment suspended over the line to be filled up. But the task seemed too painful to her, and with a heavy sigh she suffered her head to drop aside into its former position, and her hand, still loosely holding the inactive pen, to fall listlessly upon the paper. During this short pantomime, Walter had stolen noiselessly across the matted floor, to the back of Madelaine's chair, and knowing *all he now knew*, felt no conscientious scruple about the propriety of reading over her shoulder the contents of the unfinished letter. They were but what he was prepared to see, and yet his trance of amazement was for a moment renewed by ocular demonstration to the truth of what had been hitherto revealed to one of his senses only. The letter was to himself—the reply to his last, addressed to Mlle. de St Hilaire—the continuation of that delightful series he had for the last twelve-month nearly been in the blissful habit of receiving from his adored Adricenne. Here was the same autograph—the same tournure de phrase—the same tone of thought and feeling (though less lively and unembarrassed than in her earlier letters)—and yet the hand that traced, the mind that guided, and the heart that dictated, were the hand and mind and heart of Madelaine du Résnél!

“Madelaine! dear Madelaine!” were the first whispered words by which Walter ventured to make his presence known to her. But low as was the whisper—gentle as were the accents—a thunder-clap could not have produced an effect more electric. Starting from her seat with a half shriek, she would have fallen to the ground from excess of agitation and surprise, but for Walter’s supporting arm, and it required a world of soothing and affectionate gentleness to restore her to any degree of self-possession. Her first impulse, on regaining it, was the honourable one of endeavouring to remove from Walter’s observation the letter that had been designed for his perusal under circumstances so different; but quietly laying his hand upon the outspread paper, as she turned to snatch it from the table, with the other arm he gently drew her from it to himself, and with a smile in which there was more of tender than bitter feeling, said—“It is too late, Madelaine—I know all—who could have thought you such a little impostor!” Poor little Madelaine! never was mortal maiden so utterly confounded, so bewildered as she, by the detection, and by her own hurried and almost unintelligible attempts to deprecate what, in the simplicity of her heart, she fancied must be the high indignation of Walter at *her* share of the imposition so long practised on him.

Whether it was that, in the course of her agitated

pleading, she spied relenting in the eyes to which hers were raised so imploringly, or a *something* even more encouraging in their expression, or in the pressure of the hands which clasped hers, upraised in the vehemence of supplication, certain it is that she stopped short in the middle of a sentence—with a tear in her eye and a blush on her cheek, and something like a dawning smile on the lip that still quivered with emotion, and that "Le bon Walter" magnanimously illustrated by his conduct the hackneyed maxim, that

"Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,"—

and that plenary absolution, and perfect reconciliation, *were* granted and effected, may be fairly inferred from the testimony of the miller's wife, who, still lingering at the threshold when the grey twilight was brightening into cloudless moonlight, spied Walter and Madelaine advancing slowly down the dark chestnut avenue, so intent in earnest conversation (doubtless on grave and weighty matters), that they passed through the gate, and by the door where she stood, without once looking to the right or left, or, in consequence, observing their old friend as she stepped forward to exchange the evening salutation. The same deponent, moreover, testified, that (from no motive of curiosity, but motherly concern for the safety of Madelaine, should Walter, striking off into the road to Caen, leave her at that

late hour to pursue her solitary way through the Manoir) she took heed to their further progress, and ascertained, to her entire satisfaction, that so far from unknighly desertion of his fair charge, Walter (seemingly inclined to protect his guardianship to the last possible moment) accompanied her through her home domain till quite within sight of the Chateau, and even there lingered so long in his farewell, that it might have tired out the patience of the miller's wife, if the supper-bell had not sounded from the mansion, and broken short as kind a leave-taking as ever preceded the separation of dearest friends.

It must be quite needless to say, that Walter Barnard appeared not that night at the Chateau de St Hilaire, where his return to Normandy was of course equally unknown with his late visit to the pavilion. Great was the wrath of the lovely Adrienne, when, on her return thither, soon after the expiration of the time she had allotted for the performance of Madelaine's task, she found *la place vide* — that the daring impertinent had not only taken the liberty of departing undismissed (doubtless in resentment of fancied wrongs), but had taken with her the letter that was to have been finished in readiness for the postman's call that evening on his way to Caen. The contretemps was absolutely too much for the sensitive nerves of la belle Adrienne, agitated as they had been during the day by

a communication made to her parents, and through them "to his adorable cousin," by the Marquis d'Arval, that his contract of marriage with a rich and beautiful heiress of his own province was on the point of signature.

"Le perfide!" was the smothered ejaculation of his fair friend on receiving this gratifying intelligence from her dejected parents, thus compelled to relinquish their last feeble hope of seeing their darling united to the husband of their choice. To the darling herself the new return of Walter became suddenly an object of tender interest. Nothing could be so natural as her immediate anxiety to express this impatience in a reply to his last letter, and nothing could be more natural than that she should fall into a paroxysm of nervous irritation at the frustration of this amiable design, by the daring desertion of her *chargée-d'affaires*. But she was too proud to send for her, or to her: it would look like acknowledgment of error. She would "die first," and "the little impertinent would return of her own accord, humble enough, no doubt, and she *should* be humbled." But for the next two days nothing was heard or seen of "the little impertinent" at the Chateau de St Hilaire. On the third, still no sign of her repentance, by reappearance, word, or token. On the fourth, Adrienne's resolution could hold out against her necessities no longer, and she was on the point of going herself

in quest of the guilty Madelaine, when she learned the astounding tidings that Walter had been five days returned to Caen, and on that very morning when the news first reached her,—

But Walter's proceedings must be briefly related more veraciously than by the blundering tongue of common rumour, which reported them to Adrienne. He had returned to Caen, and to the hospitable home of his English friends, to whose ear, of course, he confided his tale of disappointed hopes. But, as it should seem by the mirthful bearing of the small party assembled that night round the supper-table after his affecting disclosure, not only had it failed in exciting sympathy for the abused lover, but he himself, by some unaccountable caprice, was, to all appearance, the happiest of the social group.

Grave matters, as well as trivial, were, however, debated that night round the supper-table of the English party; and of the four assembled, as neither had attained the coolness and experience of twenty-six complete summers, and two of the four (the married pair) had forfeited all pretensions to worldly wisdom by a romantic love-match, it is not much to be wondered at that Prudence was scarcely admitted to a share in the consultation, and that she was unanimously outvoted in conclusion.

The cabinet council sat till past midnight, yet Walter Barnard was awake next morning, and "stirring with the lark," and brushing the dew-

drops from the wild-brier sprays, as he bounded by them through the fields, on his way to—not St Hilaire.

Again in the gloaming he was espied by the miller's wife, threading the same path to the same trysting-place—for that it *was* a trysting-place she had ocular demonstration—and again the next day matins and vespers were as duly said by the same parties in the same oratory, and Dame Simonne was privy to the same, and yet she had not whispered her knowledge even to the reeds. How much longer the unnatural retention might have continued, would have been a curious metaphysical question, had not circumstances, interfering with the ends of science, hurried on an "unforeseen conclusion."

On the third morning the usual tryst was kept at the accustomed place, at an earlier hour than on the preceding days; but shorter parley sufficed on this occasion, for the two who met there with no cold greeting, turned together into the pleasant path, so lately traced on his way from the town with beating heart, by one who retraced his footsteps even more eagerly, with the timid companion, who went consentingly, but not self-excused.

Sharp and anxious was the watch kept by the miller's wife for the return of the pair, whose absence for the next two hours she was at no loss to account for; but they tarried beyond that period,

and Dame Simonne was growing fidgety at their non-appearance, when she caught sight of their advancing figures, at the same moment that the gate of the Manoir swung open, and forth issued the stately forms of Madame and Mesdemoiselles du Résnél!

Dame Simonne's senses were well-nigh confounded at the sight, and well they might, for well she knew what one so unusual portended—and there was no time—not a moment—not a possibility to warn the early pedestrians who were approaching, so securely unconscious of the impending crisis. They were to have parted as before at the Manoir gate—to have parted for many months of separation—one to return to England, the other to her nearer home, till such time as——. But the whole prudential project was in a moment overset. The last winding of the path was turned, and the advancing parties stood confronted! For a moment, mute, motionless as statues—a smile of malicious triumph on the countenances of Mesdemoiselles du Résnél—on that of their dignified mother, a stern expression of concentrated wrath, inexorable, implacable. But her speech was even more calm and deliberate than usual, as she requested to know what business of importance had led the young lady so far from her home at that early hour, and to what fortunate chance she was indebted for the escort of Monsieur Barnard? The *grand secret* might still have been

kept. Walter was about to speak—he scarce knew what—perhaps to divulge *in part*—for to tell all prematurely was ruin to them both. But before he could articulate a word, Madame du Résnél repeated her interrogatory in a tone of more peremptory sternness, and la petite Madelaine, trembling at this sound, quailing under the cold and searching gaze that accompanied it, and all unused to the arts of deception and prevarication, sank on her knees where she had stopped at some distance from her incensed parent, and faltered out with uplifted hands,—“Mais —mais, maman ! je viens de me marier !”

The truth was told—the full, the simple truth—and no sooner told than Walter's better nature rejoiced at the disclosure, rejoiced at its release from the debasing shackles imposed by worldly considerations, and grateful to the young ingenuous creature whose impulsive honesty had saved them both from perseverance in the dangerous paths of deception, even at the cost of those important advantages which might have resulted from a temporary concealment of their union. Tenderly raising and supporting her he was now free to call his own in the sight of men and angels, he drew her gently towards the incensed parent, the expected storm of whose just wrath he prepared himself to meet respectfully, and to deprecate with all due humility. But the preparation proved perfectly unnecessary. Madame du Résnél, whose rigidity

of feature had relaxed into no change of line or muscle indicative of surprise or emotion at her daughter's abrupt confession, now listened with equally imperturbable composure to Walter's rather hurried and confused attempts at excusing what was, in the strict sense, inexcusable; and to his frank and manly professions of attachment to her daughter, and of his desire, if he might be received as a son by that daughter's mother, to prove, by every act of his future life, his sense of such generous forgiveness. Having heard him to the end, with the most exemplary patience and faultless good-breeding, Madame du Résnéel begged to assure Monsieur Barnard, that, "so far from assuming to herself any right of censure over him or his actions, past, present, or to come, she begged leave to assure him she was incapable of such impertinent interference; and that, with regard to the lady who had ceased to be her daughter on becoming the wife of Monsieur Barnard, she resigned from that moment all claims on the duty she had violated, and all control over her future actions. Les effets appartenant à Mademoiselle Madelaine du Résnéel — [poor little Madelaine, few and little worth were thy worldly goods!] — should be ready for delivery to any authorised claimant." "Au reste" — Madame du Résnéel had the honour to felicitate Monsieur and Madame Barnard on their auspicious union, and to wish them a very good morning — an

adieu sans au revoir—with which tender conclusion she dropped a profound and dignified curtsy, and with her attendant daughters (who dutifully followed the maternal example) passed through the gate of the Manoir, and closed it after her, with no violence, but a deliberate firmness, that spoke to those without more convincingly than words could have expressed it—"Henceforward, and for ever, this barrier is closed against you."

That moment was one of bitterness to the new-made wife—to the discarded daughter; and, for a time, all the feelings that had led to her violation of filial duty—all the excuses she had framed to herself for breaking its sacred obligations—all the "shortcomings" of love she had been subjected to in her own home—and all—ay, even all the love, passing speech, which had bound up her life with Walter Barnard's—all was forgotten—merged in one absorbing agony of distress, at the sudden and violent wrench-asunder of Nature's first and holiest ties. She clung to the side-post of the old gate that opened to her paternal domain—to the house of her fathers. She kissed the bars that excluded her for ever. Was it for ever? A gleam of hope brightened in her streaming eyes—"Her dear Armand! Le petit frère would return to the Manoir, and *he* would never shut its gates against poor Madelaine."

Her husband availed himself of the auspicious

moment; he encouraged her hopes, and she listened with the eager simplicity of a child; he spoke words of comfort, and she was comforted; of love, and she forgot her fault and her remorse—her home—her friends—the world—and everything in it but himself.

Three days from that ever-memorable morning, la petite Madelaine stood with her husband upon English ground, but for him, a stranger in a strange land—the portionless bride of a poor subaltern. For though she had brought with her all the “effets” which, through Madame’s special indulgence, she had been permitted to remove from her own little turret-chamber, they helped but poorly towards the future ménage, consisting only of her scanty wardrobe, a few books (her most precious property), a little embroidered purse, containing a louis-d’or, sundry old silver coins, and pièces de dix sous, a bonbonnière full of dragées, a birthday present from le petit frère, a gold etui, the gift of her grandmother, and a pair of silver sugar-tongs, the bequest of old Jeannette. To this splendid inventory she was, however, graciously allowed to annex the transfer of honest Roland, her father’s ancient servitor, who, as if endowed with rational comprehension, made shift to leap into the cart which conveyed to Caen the poor possessions of his master’s daughter, and came crouching to her feet, with looks and actions needing no interpreta-

tion to speak intelligibly—"Mistress! lead on, and I will follow thee."

The married pair were indeed embarked together on a rough sea, with little provision for the voyage, to which they had been in a manner prematurely driven; but, by the blessing of Providence, they weathered out its storms, now sheltering for a season in some calm and friendly haven, and anon compelled (but with recruited courage) to renew their conflict with the winds and waves. But throughout, their hearts were strong, for they were faithfully united; and that devoted affection for her husband, which had saved the heart of Madelaine from breaking in its first and sharpest agony (the sharpest, because mingled with remorse), was the continued support and sweetener of her after-life, through a lot of infinite vicissitude.

If haply I have evinced some partiality to poor little Madelaine, even in the detail of her unsanctioned nuptials, accuse me not, reader, of making light of the sin of filial disobedience. I have told you that *she judged herself*;—let you and I do likewise, and abstain from passing sentence on others. But if your Christian charity, righteous reader! is so rigidly exacting as to require punishment as well as penitence, be comforted even on that score, and lay the assurance to your feeling heart, that la petite Madelaine *had* her full share of worldly troubles; the last and crowning one of all,

that she was doomed to be, by some years, the survivor of the husband of her youth—the friend and companion of her life—the prop and staff of her declining days.

But she was not long an outcast from her own people and her early home. “Le petit frère” found means, soon after the attainment of his majority, and the full rights and titles it conferred on him, as lord of himself and the Manoir du Résnél, to prevail on his lady-mother (who still remained mistress of the establishment) to receive, on the footing of occasional guests, her long-banished child, with her English husband. From that time, Monsieur du Résnél proved himself, on all occasions, the affectionate brother and unfailing friend of Walter and Madelaine; and the good understanding then established between themselves and Madame du Résnél was never interrupted, though jealousies among the elder sisters were always at work to undermine it by innumerable petty artifices. Madame was not their dupe, however. Nature had formed her with a cold heart, but a strong understanding. She felt and knew that the respect and attention invariably shown towards her by Madelaine and her husband, were the fruits of right principle and kindly disposition, unswayed by any interested consideration, and that her other daughters were actuated by the sordid view of appropriating to themselves exclusively, at her decease, the small hoard she might

have accumulated in the long course of her rigid and undeviating economy. As the burden of years pressed more heavily upon her, she became more and more sensible of the worth and tenderness of her once-slighted Madelaine; and when circumstances made it expedient that she should remove from her son's roof, she took up her last lodging among the living under that of the dutiful child, whose widowed sorrows were soothed by her tender performance of the sacred duty which had thus unexpectedly devolved upon her.

When the mother and daughter were reunited under circumstances so affecting, the latter had almost numbered the threescore years, so near the age of man; and the former, with all her mental faculties in their full vigour, and retaining her bodily strength and all her senses to an extraordinary degree, was on the verge of fourscore years and five. But the tender and unremitting cares of her filial guardian were blessed for three years longer in their pious aim,—

“T” explore the wish—explain the asking eye,
And keep awhile one parent from the sky.”

Then the full of days was summoned to depart, and *I*—yes—*I* remember well the last scene of her long pilgrimage, though a little child when present at it, and carried in my nurse's arms to the chamber of death. *My* mother was there also, for she was the

granddaughter of that aged dying woman—the daughter of Walter Barnard and Madelaine du Rés-nél. And so it came to pass that la petite Madeleine was my own dear grandmother, and that the fact was (I suppose) written on my forehead, for the future investigation of that “grim white woman,” the daughter of Adrienne de St Hilaire, who, impelled by curiosity, and armed with hereditary hate, dismayed me by that mysterious visit, which, opening up the forgotten sources of old traditional memories, gave rise to my after daydream and to this long story.

BOB BURKE'S DUEL WITH ENSIGN BRADY.

BY THE LATE WILLIAM MAGINN, LL.D.

[MAGA. MAY 1834.]

CHAPTER I.

HOW BOB WAS IN LOVE WITH MISS THEODOSIA MACNAMARA.

“WHEN the 48th were quartered in Mallow, I was there on a visit to one of the Purcells, who abound in that part of the world, and, being some sixteen or seventeen years younger than I am now, thought I might as well fall in love with Miss Theodosia Macnamara. She was a fine grown girl, full of flesh and blood, rose five foot nine at least when shod, had many excellent points, and stepped out slappingly upon her pasterns. She was somewhat of a roarer, it must be admitted, for you could hear her from one end of the Walk to the other ; and I am told, that as she has grown somewhat aged, she shows symptoms of vice, but I knew nothing of the latter, and did not mind the former, because I never had a fancy for your mimini-pimini

young ladies, with their mouths squeezed into the shape and dimensions of a needle's eye. I always suspect such damsels as having a very portentous design against mankind in general.

“She was at Mallow for the sake of the Spa, it being understood that she was consumptive—though I'll answer for it, her lungs were not touched; and I never saw any signs of consumption about her, except at meal times, when her consumption was undoubtedly great. However, her mother, a very nice middle-aged woman—she was of the O'Regans of the West, and a perfect lady in her manners, with a very remarkable red nose, which she attributed to a cold which had settled in that part, and which cold she was always endeavouring to cure with various balsamic preparations taken inwardly,—maintained that her poor chicken, as she called her, was very delicate, and required the air and water of Mallow to cure her. Theodosia (she was so named after some of the Limerick family), or, as we generally called her, Dosy, was rather of a sanguine complexion, with hair that might be styled auburn, but which usually received another name. Her nose was turned up, as they say was that of Cleopatra; and her mouth, which was never idle, being always employed in eating, drinking, shouting, or laughing, was of considerable dimensions. Her eyes were piercers, with a slight tendency to a cast; and her complexion was equal to a footman's plush

breeches, or the first tinge of the bloom of morning bursting through a summer-cloud, or what else verse-making men are fond of saying. I remember a young man who was in love with her writing a song about her, in which there was one or other of the similes above mentioned, I forget which. The verses were said to be very clever, as no doubt they were; but I do not recollect them, never being able to remember poetry. Dossy's mother used to say that it was a hectic flush—if so, it was a very permanent flush, for it never left her cheeks for a moment, and had it not belonged to a young lady in a galloping consumption, would have done honour to a dairymaid.

"Pardon these details, gentlemen," said Bob Burke, sighing, "but one always thinks of the first loves. Tom Moore says that 'there's nothing half so sweet in life as young love's dram;' and talking of that, if there's anything left in the brandy-bottle, hand it over to me. Here's to the days gone by; they will never come again. Dear Dossy, you and I had some fun together. I see her now with her red hair escaping from under her hat, in a pea-green habit, a stiff-cutting whip in her hand, licking it into Tom the Devil, a black horse, that would have carried a sixteen stoner over a six-foot wall, following Will Wrixon's hounds at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, and singing out, 'Go it, my

trumps.' These are the recollections that bring tears in a man's eyes."

There were none visible in Bob's, but as he here finished his dram, it is perhaps a convenient opportunity for concluding a chapter.

CHAPTER II.

HOW ENSIGN BRADY WENT TO DRINK TEA WITH MISS THEODOSIA MACNAMARA.

"THE day of that hunt was the very day that led to my duel with Brady. He was a long, straddling, waddle-mouthed chap, who had no more notion of riding a hunt than a rhinoceros. He was mounted on a showy-enough-looking mare, which had been nerved by Rodolphus Bootiman, the horse-doctor, and though 'a good 'un to look at, was a run 'un to go;' and before she was nerved, all the work had been taken out of her by long Lanty Philpot, who sold her to Brady after dinner for fifty pounds, she being not worth twenty in her best day, and Brady giving his bill at three months for the fifty. My friend the ensign was no judge of a horse, and the event showed that my cousin Lanty was no judge of a bill—not a cross of the fifty having been paid from that day to this; and it is out of the question now, it being long past the statute of limi-

tations, to say nothing of Brady having since twice taken the benefit of the Act. So both parties jockeyed one another, having that pleasure which must do them instead of profit.

"She was a bay chestnut, and nothing would do Brady but he must run her at a little gap which Miss Dosy was going to clear, in order to show his gallantry and agility; and certainly I must do him the credit to say that he did get his mare *on* the gap, which was no small feat, but there she broke down, and off went Brady, neck and crop, into as fine a pool of stagnant green mud as you would ever wish to see. He was ducked regularly in it, and he came out, if not in the jacket, yet in the colours, of the Rifle Brigade, looking rueful enough at his misfortune, as you may suppose. But he had not much time to think of the figure he cut, for before he could well get up, who should come right slap over him but Miss Dosy herself upon Tom the Devil, having cleared the gap and a yard beyond the pool in fine style. Brady ducked, and escaped the horse, a little fresh daubing being of less consequence than the knocking out of his brains, if he had any; but he did not escape a smart rap from a stone which one of Tom's heels flung back with such unlucky accuracy as to hit Brady right in the mouth, knocking out one of his eye-teeth (which, I do not recollect). Brady clapped his hand to his mouth, and bawled, as any man might do in such a

case, so loud, that Miss Dosy checked Tom for a minute to turn round, and there she saw him making the most horrid faces in the world, his mouth streaming blood, and himself painted green from head to foot with as pretty a coat of shining slime as was to be found in the province of Munster. 'That's the gentleman you just leapt over, Miss Dosy,' said I, for I had joined her, 'and he seems to be in some confusion.' 'I am sorry,' said she, 'Bob, that I should have in any way offended him or any other gentleman, by leaping over him, but I can't wait now. Take him my compliments, and tell him I should be happy to see him at tea at six o'clock this evening, in a different suit.' Off she went, and I rode back with her message (by which means I was thrown out); and would you believe it, he had the ill manners to say 'the h——;' but I shall not repeat what he said. It was impolite to the last degree, not to say profane, but perhaps he may be somewhat excused under his peculiar circumstances. There is no knowing what even Job himself might have said, immediately after having been thrown off his horse into a green pool, with his eye-tooth knocked out, his mouth full of mud and blood, on being asked to a tea-party.

"He—Brady, not Job—went, nevertheless—for, on our return to Miss Dosy's lodgings, we found a triangular note, beautifully perfumed, expressing his gratitude for her kind invitation, and telling her

not to think of the slight accident which had occurred. How it happened, he added, he could not conceive, his mare never having broken down with him before—which was true enough, as that was the first day he ever mounted her—and she having been bought by himself at a sale of the Earl of Darlington's horses last year, for two hundred guineas. She was a great favourite, he went on to say, with the Earl, who often rode her, and ran at Doncaster by the name of Miss Russell. All this latter part of the note was not quite so true, but then, it must be admitted, that when we talk about horses we are not tied down to be exact to a letter. If we were, God help Tattersal's!

"To tea, accordingly, the ensign came at six, wiped clean, and in a different set-out altogether from what he appeared in on emerging from the ditch. He was, to make use of a phrase introduced from the ancient Latin into the modern Greek, togged up in the most approved style of his Majesty's 48th foot. Bright was the scarlet of his coat—deep the blue of his facings."

"I beg your pardon," said Antony Harrison, here interrupting the speaker; "the 48th are not royals, and you ought to know that no regiment but those which are royal sport blue facings. I remember, once upon a time, in a coffee-shop, detecting a very smart fellow, who wrote some clever things in a Magazine published in Edinburgh by

one Blackwood, under the character of a military man, not to be anything of the kind, by his talking about ensigns in the fusiliers—all the world knowing that in the fusiliers there are no ensigns, but in their place second lieutenants. Let me set you right there, Bob; the facings your friend Brady exhibited to the wondering gaze of the Mallow tea-table must have been buff—pale buff.”

“Buff, black, blue, brown, yellow, Pompadour, brick-dust, no matter what they were,” continued Burke, in nowise pleased by the interruption, “they were as bright as they could be made, and so was all the lace, and other traps which I shall not specify more minutely, as I am in presence of so sharp a critic. He was, in fact, in full dress—as you know is done in country quarters—and being not a bad plan and elevation of a man, looked well enough. Miss Dosy, I perceived, had not been perfectly ignorant of the rank and condition of the gentleman over whom she had leaped, for she was dressed in her purple satin body and white skirt, which she always put on when she wished to be irresistible, and her hair was suffered to flow in long ringlets down her fair neck—and, by Jupiter, it was fair as a swan’s, and as majestic too—and no mistake. Yes! Dosy Macnamara looked divine that evening.

“Never mind! Tea was brought in by Mary Keefe, and it was just as all other *teas* have been

and will be. Do not, however, confound it with the wafer-sliced and hot-watered abominations which are inflicted, perhaps justly, on the wretched individuals who are guilty of haunting *soirées* and *conversaciones* in this good and bad city of London. The tea was congou or souchong, or some other of these Chinese affairs, for anything I know to the contrary; for, having dined at the house, I was nixing my fifth tumbler when tea was brought in, and Mrs Macnamara begged me not to disturb myself; and she being a lady for whom I had a great respect, I complied with her desire; but there was a potato-cake, an inch thick and two feet in diameter, which Mrs Macnamara informed me in a whisper was made by Dosy after the hunt.

"'Poor chicken,' she said, 'if she had the strength, she has the willingness; but she is so delicate. If you saw her handling the potatoes to-day.'

"'Madam,' said I, looking tender, and putting my hand on my heart, 'I wish I was a potato!'"

CHAPTER III.

HOW ENSIGN BRADY ASTONISHED THE NATIVES AT MISS THEODOSIA MACNAMARA'S.

"I THOUGHT this was an uncommonly pathetic wish, after the manner of the Persian poet Hafiz, but it was scarcely out of my mouth, when Ensign Brady, taking a cup of tea from Miss Dosy's hand,

looking upon me with an air of infinite condescension, declared that I must be the happiest of men, as my wish was granted before it was made. I was preparing to answer, but Miss Dosy laughed so loud that I had not time, and my only resource was to swallow what I had just made. The ensign followed up his victory without mercy.

“Talking of potatoes, Miss Theodosia, said he, looking at me, ‘puts me in mind of truffles. Do you know this most exquisite cake of yours much resembles a *gateau aux truffes*? By Gad! how Colonel Thornton, Sir Harry Millicent, Lord Mortgagehire, and that desperate fellow, the Honourable and Reverend Dick Sellenger, and I, used to tuck in truffles when we were quartered in Paris. Mortgagehire—an uncommon droll fellow; I used to call his Lordship Morty—he called me Brad—we were on such terms; and we used to live together in the Rue de la Paix, that beautiful street close by the Place Vendôme, where there’s the pillar. You have been at Paris, Miss Macnamara?’ asked the ensign, filling his mouth with a half-pound bite of the potato-cake at the same moment.

“Dosy confessed that she had never travelled into any foreign parts except the kingdom of Kerry; and on the same question being repeated to me, I was obliged to admit that I was in a similar predicament. Brady was triumphant.

“‘It is a loss to any man,’ said he, ‘not to have

been in Paris. I know that city well, and so I ought; but I did many naughty things there.'

" 'O fie!' said Mrs Macnamara.

" 'O, madam,' continued Brady, 'the fact is, that the Paris ladies were rather too fond of us English. When I say English, I mean Scotch and Irish as well; but, nevertheless, I think Irishmen had more good-luck than the natives of the other two islands.'

" 'In my geography book,' said Miss Dosy, 'it is put down only as one island, consisting of England, capital London, on the Thames, in the south; and Scotland, capital Edinburgh, on the Forth, in the north; population'——

" 'Gad! you are right,' said Brady—'perfectly right, Miss Macnamara. I see you are quite a blue. But, as I was saying, it is scarce possible for a good-looking young English officer to escape the French ladies. And then I played rather deep—on the whole, however, I think, I may say I won. Mortgageshire and I broke Frascati's one night—we won a hundred thousand francs at rouge, and fifty-four thousand at roulette. You would have thought the croupiers would have fainted; they tore their hair with vexation. The money, however, soon went again—we could not keep it. As for wine, you have it cheap there, and of a quality which you cannot get in England. At Very's, for example, I drank chambertin—it is a kind of claret—for three francs two sous a-bottle, which was,

beyond all comparison, far superior to what I drank, a couple of months ago, at the Duke of Devonshire's, though his Grace prides himself on that very wine, and sent to a particular binn for a favourite specimen, when I observed to him I had tasted better in Paris. Out of politeness, I pretended to approve of his Grace's choice; but I give you my honour—only I would not wish it to reach his Grace's ears—it was not to be compared to what I had at Very's for a moment.'

“So flowed on Brady for a couple of hours. The Tooleries, as he thought proper to call them; the Louvre, with its pictures, the removal of which he deplored as a matter of taste, assuring us that he had used all his influence with the Emperor of Russia and the Duke of Wellington to prevent it, but in vain; the Boulevards, the opera, the theatres, the Champs Elysées, the Montagnes Russes—everything, in short, about Paris, was depicted to the astonished mind of Miss Dosy. Then came London—where he belonged to I do not know how many clubs—and cut a most distinguished figure in the fashionable world. He was of the Prince Regent's set, and assured us, on his honour, that there was never anything so ill-founded as the stories afloat to the discredit of that illustrious person. But on what happened at Carlton House, he felt obliged to keep silence, the Prince being remarkably strict in exacting a promise from every

gentleman whom he admitted to his table, not to divulge anything that occurred there—a violation of which promise was the cause of the exclusion of Brummell. As for the Princess of Wales, he would rather not say anything.

“And so forth. Now, in those days of my innocence, I believed these stories as gospel, hating the fellow all the while from the bottom of my heart, as I saw that he made a deep impression on Dossy, who sat in open-mouthed wonder, swallowing them down as a common-councilman swallows turtle. But times are changed. I have seen Paris and London since, and I believe I know both villages as well as most men, and the deuce a word of truth did Brady tell in his whole narrative. In Paris, when not in quarters (he had joined some six or eight months after Waterloo), he lived *au cinquantième* in a dog-hole in the Rue Git-le-Cœur (a street at what I may call the Surrey side of Paris), among carters and other such folk; and in London I discovered that his principal domicile was in one of the courts now demolished to make room for the fine new gimcrackery at Charing Cross; it was in Round Court, at a pieman’s of the name of Dudfield.”

“Dick Dudfield?” said Jack Ginger; “I knew the man well—a most particular friend of mine. He was a duffer besides being a pieman, and was transported some years ago. He is now a flourishing merchant in Australasia, and will, I suppose,

in due time be grandfather to a member of Congress."

"There it was that Brady lived then," continued Bob Burke, "when he was hobnobbing with Georgius Quartus, and dancing at Almack's with Lady Elizabeth Conynghame. Faith, the nearest approach he ever made to royalty was when he was put into the King's own Bench, where he sojourned many a long day. What an ass I was to believe a word of such stuff! but, nevertheless, it goes down with the rustics to the present minute. I sometimes sport a duke or so myself, when I find myself among yokels, and I rise vastly in estimation by so doing. What do we come to London or Paris for, but to get some touch of knowing how to do things properly? It would be devilish hard, I think, for Ensign Brady, or Ensign Brady's master, to do me nowadays by flammng off titles of high life."

The company did no more than justice to Mr Burke's experience, by unanimously admitting that such a feat was all but impossible.

"I was," he went on, "a good deal annoyed at my inferiority, and I could not help seeing that Miss Dosy was making comparisons that were rather odious, as she glanced from the gay uniform of the Ensign on my habiliments, which having been perpetrated by a Mallow tailor with a hatchet, or pitchfork, or pickaxe, or some such tool, did not stand the scrutiny to advantage. I was, I think, a

better-looking fellow than Brady. Well, well—laugh if you like. I am no beauty, I know; but then, consider that what I am talking of was sixteen years ago, and more; and a man does not stand the battering I have gone through for these sixteen years with impunity. Do you call the thirty or forty thousand tumblers of punch, in all its varieties, that I have since imbibed, nothing?"

"Yes," said Jack Ginger, with a sigh, "there was a song we used to sing on board the *Brimstone*, when cruising about the Spanish main—

‘If Mars leaves his scars, jolly Bacchus as well
Sets his trace on the face, which a toper will tell;
But which a more merry campaign has pursued,
The shedder of wine, or the shedder of blood?’

I forget the rest of it. Poor Ned Nixon! It was he who made that song—he was afterwards bit in two by a shark, having tumbled overboard in the cool of the evening, one fine summer day, off Port Royal."

"Well, at all events," said Burke, continuing his narrative, "I thought I was a better-looking fellow than my rival, and was fretted at being sung down. I resolved to outstay him—and though he sate long enough, I, who was more at home, contrived to remain after him, but it was only to hear him extolled.

"‘A very nice young man,’ said Mrs Macnamara.

“ ‘An extreme nice young man,’ responded Miss Theodosia.

“ ‘A perfect gentleman in his manners ; he puts me quite in mind of my uncle, the late Jerry O’Regan,’ observed Mrs Macnamara.

“ ‘Quite the gentleman in every particular,’ ejaculated Miss Theodosia.

“ ‘He has seen a great deal of the world for so young a man,’ remarked Mrs Macnamara.

“ ‘He has mixed in the best society, too,’ cried Miss Theodosia.

“ ‘It is a great advantage to a young man to travel,’ quoth Mrs Macnamara.

“ ‘And a very great disadvantage to a young man to be always sticking at home,’ chimed in Miss Theodosia, looking at me ; ‘it shuts them out from all chances of the elegance which we have just seen displayed by Ensign Brady of the 48th Foot.’

“ ‘For my part,’ said I, ‘I do not think him such an elegant fellow at all. Do you remember, Dossy Macnamara, how he looked when he got up out of the green puddle to-day?’

“ ‘Mr Burke,’ said she, ‘that was an accident that might happen any man. You were thrown yourself this day week, on clearing Jack Falvey’s wall—so you need not reflect on Mr Brady.’

“ ‘If I was,’ said I, ‘it was as fine a leap as ever was made ; and I was on my mare in half a

shake afterwards. Bob Buller of Ballythomas, or Jack Prendergast, or Fergus O'Connor, could not have it rode it better. And you too'—

" 'Well,' said she, 'I am not going to dispute with you. I am sleepy, and must get to bed.'

" 'Do, poor chicken,' said Mrs Macnamara, soothingly, 'and, Bob, my dear, I wish it was in your power to go travel, and see the Booteries and the Tooleyvards, and the rest, and then you might be, in course of time, as genteel as Ensign Brady.'

" 'Heigho!' said Miss Dossy, ejecting a sigh. 'Travel, Bob, travel.'

" 'I will,' said I, at once, and left the house in the most abrupt manner, after consigning Ensign Brady to the particular attention of Tisiphone, Alecto, and Megara, all compressed into one emphatic monosyllable.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW BOB BURKE, AFTER AN INTERVIEW WITH BARNEY PULVERTAFT, ASCERTAINED THAT HE WAS DESPERATELY IN LOVE WITH MISS THEODOSIA MACNAMARA.

" ON leaving Dossy's lodgings, I began to consult the state of my heart. And I really, said I, so much in love, as to lose my temper if this prating ensign should carry off the lady? I was much puzzled to resolve the question. I walked up and

down the Spa-Walk, whiffing a cigar, for a quarter of an hour, without being able to come to a decision. At last, just as the cigar was out, my eye caught a light in the window of Barney Pulvertaft, the attorney—old Six-and-Eightpence, as we used to call him. I knew he was the confidential agent of the Macnamaras; and as he had carried on sixteen lawsuits for my father, I thought I had a claim to learn something about the affairs of Miss Dossy. I understood she was an heiress, but had never, until now, thought of inquiring into the precise amount of her expectancies. Seeing that the old fellow was up, I determined to step over, and found him in the middle of law-papers, although it was then rather late, with a pot-bellied jug, of the beehive pattern, by his side, full of punch—or rather, I should say, half-full; for Six-and-Eightpence had not been idle. His snuff-coloured wig was cocked on one side of his head—his old velveted breeches open at the knee—his cravat off—his shirt unbuttoned—his stockings half down his lean legs—his feet in a pair of worsted slippers. The old fellow was, in short, relaxed for the night, but he had his pen in his hand.

“ ‘ I am only filling copies of *capiases*, Bob,’ said he; ‘ light and pleasant work, which does not distress one in an evening. There are a few of your friends booked here. What has brought you to me so late to-night?—but your father’s son is always

welcome. Ay, there were few men like your father—never stagg'd in a lawsuit in his life—saw it always out to the end—drove it from court to court;—if he was beat, why, so much the worse, but he never fretted—if he won, faith! he squeezed the opposite party well. Ay, he was a good-hearted, honest, straightforward man. I wish I had a hundred such clients. So here's his memory anyhow.'

"Six-and-Eightpence had a good right to give the toast, as what constituted the excellence of my father in his eyes had moved most of the good acres of Ballyburke out of the family into the hands of the lawyers; but from filial duty I complied with the attorney's request—the more readily, because I well knew, from long experience, that his skill in punch-making was unimpeachable. So we talked about my father's old lawsuits, and I got Barney into excellent humour, by letting him tell me of the great skill and infinite adroitness which he had displayed upon a multiplicity of occasions. It was not, however, until we were deep in the second jug, and Six-and-Eightpence was beginning to show symptoms of being *cut*, that I ventured to introduce the subject of my visit. I did it as cautiously as I could, but the old fellow soon found out my drift.

"'No,' hiccuped he—'Bob—'twont—'twont—do. Close as green—green wax. Never te-tell profess - profess - professional secrets. Know her expec—hiccup—tances to a ten-ten-penny. So

you are after—after—her? Ah, Bo-bob! She'll be a ca-catch—but not a wo-word from me. No—never. Bar-ney Pe-pulverta-taft is game to the last. Never be-betrayed ye-your father. God rest his soul—he was a wo-worthy man.'

“On this recollection of the merits of my sainted sire, the attorney wept; and in spite of all his professional determinations, whether the potency of the fluid or the memory of the deceased acted upon him, I got at the facts. Dosal had not more than a couple of hundred pounds in the world—her mother's property was an annuity which expired with herself; but her uncle, by the father's side, Mick Macnamara of Kawleash, had an estate of at least five hundred a-year, which, in case of his dying without issue, was to come to her—besides a power of money saved; Mick being one who, to use the elegant phraseology of my friend the attorney, would skin a flea for the sake of selling the hide. All this money, ten thousand pounds, or something equally musical, would in all probability go to Miss Dosal—the L.500 a-year was hers by entail. Now, as her uncle was eighty-four years old, unmarried, and in the last stage of the palsy, it was a thing as sure as the bank, that Miss Dosal was a very rich heiress indeed.

“‘So—so,’ said Six-and-Eightpence—‘this—this—is strictly confiddle-confid-confiddledential. Do—do not say a word about it. I ought not to

have to-told it—but, you do-dog, you wheedled it out of me. Da-dang it, I co-could not ref-refuse your father's son. You are ve-very like him—as I sa-saw him sitting many a ti-time in that cha-chair. But you nev-never will have his spu-spunk in a sho-shoot (suit). There, the lands of Arry-arry-arry-bally-bally-be-beg-clock-clough-macde-de-duagh—confound the wo-word—of Arryballybeg-cloughmacduagh, the finest be-bog in the co-coun-try—are ye-yours—but you haven't spu-spunk to go into Cha-chancery for it, like your worthy fa-ther, Go-god rest his soul. Blow out that se-second ca-candle, Bo-bob, for I hate waste.'

"'There's but one in the room, Barney,' said I.

"'You mean to say,' hiccuped he, 'that I am te-te-tipsy? Well, well, ye-young fe-fellows, well, I am their je-joke. However, as the je-jug is out, you must be je-jogging. Early to bed, and early to rise, is the way to be——. However, le-lend me your arm up the sta-stairs, for they are very slip-slippery to-night.'

"I conducted the attorney to his bedchamber, and safely stowed him into bed, while he kept stam-mering forth praises on my worthy father, and up-braiding me with want of spunk in not carrying on a Chancery suit begun by him some twelve years before, for a couple of hundred acres of bog, the value of which would scarcely have amounted to the price of the parchment expended on it. Having

performed this duty, I proceeded homewards, labouring under a variety of sensations.

“How delicious is the feeling of love, when it first takes full possession of a youthful bosom! Before its balmy influence vanish all selfish thoughts—all grovelling notions. Pure and sublimated, the soul looks forward to objects beyond self, and merges all ideas of personal identity in aspirations of the felicity to be derived from the being adored. A thrill of rapture pervades the breast—an intense but bland flame permeates every vein—throbs in every pulse. Oh, blissful period, brief in duration, but crowded with thoughts of happiness never to recur again! As I gained the Walk, the moon was high and bright in heaven, pouring a flood of mild light over the trees. The stars shone with sapphire lustre in the cloudless sky—not a breeze disturbed the deep serene. I was alone. I thought of my love—of what else could I think? What I had just heard had kindled my passion for the divine Theodosia into a quenchless blaze. Yes, I exclaimed aloud, I *do* love her. Such an angel does not exist on the earth. What charms! What innocence! What horsemanship! Five hundred a-year certain! Ten thousand pounds in perspective! I'll repurchase the lands of Ballyburke—I'll rebuild the hunting-lodge in the Galtees—I'll keep a pack of hounds, and live a sporting life. Oh, dear, divine Theodosia, how I *do* adore you! I'll shoot

that Brady, and no mistake. How dare he interfere where my affections are so irrevocably fixed?

"Such were my musings. Alas! how we are changed as we progress through the world! That breast becomes arid, which once was open to every impression of the tender passion. The rattle of the dice-box beats out of the head the rattle of the quiver of Cupid—and the shuffling of the cards renders the rustling of his wings inaudible. The necessity of looking after a tablecloth supersedes that of looking after a petticoat, and we more willingly make an assignation with a mutton-chop, than with an angel in female form. The bonds of love are exchanged for those of the conveyancer—bills take the place of billets, and we do not protest, but are protested against, by a three-and-six-penny notary. Such are the melancholy effects of age. I knew them not then. I continued to muse full of sweet thoughts, until gradually the moon faded from the sky—the stars went out—and all was darkness. Morning succeeded to night, and, on awaking, I found that, owing to the forgetfulness in which the thoughts of the fair Theodosia had plunged me, I had selected the bottom step of old Barney Pulvertaft's door as my couch, and was awakened from repose in consequence of his servant-maid (one Norry Mulcaky) having emptied the contents of her—washing-tub, over my slumbering person."

CHAPTER V.

HOW BOB BURKE, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH WOODEN-LEG WADDY, FOUGHT THE DUEL WITH ENSIGN BRADY FOR THE SAKE OF MISS THEODOSIA MACNAMARA.

“AT night I had fallen asleep fierce in the determination of exterminating Brady; but with the morrow, cool reflection came—made probably cooler by the aspersion I had suffered. How could I fight him, when he had never given me the slightest affront? To be sure, picking a quarrel is not hard, thank God, in any part of Ireland; but unless I was quick about it, he might get so deep into the good graces of Dossy, who was as flammable as tinder, that even my shooting him might not be of any practical advantage to myself. Then, besides, he might shoot me; and, in fact, I was not by any means so determined in the affair at seven o'clock in the morning as I was at twelve o'clock at night. I got home, however, dressed, shaved, &c., and turned out. ‘I think,’ said I to myself, ‘the best thing I can do, is to go and consult Wooden-leg Waddy; and, as he is an early man, I shall catch him now.’ The thought was no sooner formed than executed; and in less than five minutes I was walking with Wooden-leg Waddy in his garden, at the back of his house, by the banks of the Blackwater.

“Waddy had been in the Hundred-and-First, and had seen much service in that distinguished corps.”

"I remember it well during the war," said Antony Harrison; "we used to call it the Hungry-and-Worst;—but it did its duty on a pinch nevertheless."

"No matter," continued Burke; "Waddy had served a good deal, and lost his leg somehow, for which he had a pension besides his half-pay, and he lived in ease and affluence among the Bucks of Mallow. He was a great hand at settling and arranging duels, being what we generally call in Ireland a *judgmatical* sort of man—a word which, I think, might be introduced with advantage into the English vocabulary. When I called on him, he was smoking his meerschaum, as he walked up and down his garden in an old undress-coat, and a fur cap on his head. I bade him good morning; to which salutation he answered by a nod, and a more prolonged whiff.

"'I want to speak to you, Wooden-leg,' said I, 'on a matter which nearly concerns me.' On which, I received another nod, and another whiff in reply.

"'The fact is,' said I, 'that there is an Ensign Brady of the 48th quartered here, with whom I have some reason to be angry, and I am thinking of calling him out. I have come to ask your advice whether I should do so or not. He has deeply injured me, by interfering between me and the girl of my affections. What ought I to do in such a case?'

“‘Fight him, by all means,’ said Wooden-leg Waddy.

“‘But the difficulty is this—he has offered me no affront, direct or indirect—we have no quarrel whatever—and he has not paid any addresses to the lady. He and I have scarcely been in contact at all. I do not see how I can manage it immediately with any propriety. What then can I do now?’

“‘Do not fight him, by any means,’ said Wooden-leg Waddy.

“‘Still these are the facts of the case. He, whether intentionally or not, is coming between me and my mistress, which is doing me an injury perfectly equal to the grossest insult. How should I act?’

“‘Fight him, by all means,’ said Wooden-leg Waddy.

“‘But then I fear if I were to call him out on a groundless quarrel, or one which would appear to be such, that I should lose the good graces of the lady, and be laughed at by my friends, or set down as a quarrelsome and dangerous companion.’

“‘Do not fight him then, by any means,’ said Wooden-leg Waddy.

“‘Yet as he is a military man, he must know enough of the etiquette of these affairs to feel perfectly confident that he has affronted me; and the opinion of a military man, standing, as of course he does, in the rank and position of a gentleman,

could not, I think, be overlooked without disgrace.'

" 'Fight him, by all means,' said Wooden-leg Waddy.

" 'But then, talking of gentlemen, I own he is an officer of the 48th, but his father is a fish-tackle seller in John Street, Kilkenny, who keeps a three-halfpenny shop, where you may buy everything, from a cheese to a cheese-toaster, from a felt hat to a pair of brogues, from a pound of brown soap to a yard of huckaback towels. He got his commission by his father's retiring from the Ormonde interest, and acting as whipper-in to the sham freeholders from Castlecomer; and I am, as you know, of the best blood of the Burkes—straight from the De Burgos themselves—and when I think of that, I really do not like to meet this Mr Brady.'

" 'Do not fight him, by any means,' said Wooden-leg Waddy."

"This advice of your friend Waddy to you," said Tom Meggot, interrupting Burke, "much resembles that which Pantagrue gave Panurge on the subject of his marriage, as I heard a friend of mine, Percy, of Gray's Inn, reading to me the other day."

"I do not know the people you speak of," continued Bob, "but such was the advice which Waddy gave me.

" 'Why,' said I, 'Wooden-leg, my friend, this is like playing battledore and shuttlecock; what is

knocked forward with one hand is knocked back with the other. Come, tell me what I ought to do.'

" 'Well,' said Wooden-leg, taking the meerschaum out of his mouth, '*in dubiis suspice, &c.* Let us decide it by tossing a halfpenny. If it comes down *head*, you fight—if *harp*, you do not. Nothing can be fairer.'

" I assented.

" 'Which,' said he, 'is it to be—two out of three, as at Newmarket, or the first toss to decide?'

" 'Sudden death,' said I, 'and there will soon be an end of it.'

" Up went the halfpenny, and we looked with anxious eyes for its descent, when, unluckily, it stuck in a gooseberry-bush.

" 'I don't like ~~that~~,' said Wooden-leg Waddy; 'for it's a token of bad luck. But here goes again.'

" Again the copper soared to the sky, and down it came—*head*.

" 'I wish you joy, my friend,' said Waddy; 'you are to fight. That was my opinion all along; though I did not like to commit myself. I can lend you a pair of the most beautiful duelling-pistols ever put into a man's hand—Wogden's, I swear. The last time they were out, they shot Joe Brown of Mount Badger as dead as Harry the Eighth.'

" 'Will you be my second?' said I.

" 'Why, no,' replied Wooden-leg, 'I cannot; for

I am bound over by a rascally magistrate to keep the peace, because I barely broke the head of a blackguard bailiff, who came here to serve a writ on a friend of mine, with one of my spare legs. But I can get you a second at once. My nephew, Major Mug, has just come to me on a few days' visit, and, as he is quite idle, it will give him some amusement to be your second. Look up at his bedroom—you see he is shaving himself.'

"In a short time the Major made his appearance, dressed with a most military accuracy of costume. There was not a speck of dust on his well-brushed blue sartout—not a vestige of hair, except the regulation whiskers, on his closely-shaven countenance. His hat was brushed to the most glossy perfection—his boots shone in the jetty glow of Day and Martin. There was scarcely an ounce of flesh on his hard and weather-beaten face, and, as he stood rigidly upright, you would have sworn that every sinew and muscle of his body was as stiff as whipcord. He saluted us in military style, and was soon put in possession of the case. Wooden-leg Waddy insinuated that there were hardly as yet grounds for a duel.

"'I differ,' said Major Mug, 'decidedly—the grounds are ample. I never saw a clearer case in my life, and I have been principal or second in seven-and-twenty. If I collect your story rightly, Mr Burke, he gave you an abrupt answer in the

field, which was highly derogatory to the lady in question, and impertinently rude to yourself?’

“‘He certainly,’ said I, ‘gave me what we call a short answer; but I did not notice it at the time, and he has since made friends with the young lady.’

“‘It matters nothing,’ observed Major Mug, ‘what you may think, or she may think. The business is now in *my* hands, and I must see you through it. The first thing to be done is to write him a letter. Send out for paper—let it be gilt-edged, Waddy—that we may do the thing genteelly. I’ll dictate, Mr Burke, if you please.’

“And so he did. As well as I can recollect, the note was as follows:—

“‘SPA-WALK, MALLOW, *June 3, 18—.*

“‘Eight o’clock in the morning.

“‘SIR,—A desire for harmony and peace, which has at all times actuated my conduct, prevented me, yesterday, from asking you the meaning of the short and contemptuous message which you commissioned me to deliver to a certain young lady of our acquaintance, whose name I do not choose to drag into a correspondence. But now that there is no danger of its disturbing any one, I must say that in your desiring me to tell that young lady she might consider herself as d—d, you were guilty of conduct highly unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman, and sub-

versive of the discipline of the hunt. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

“ ‘ ROBERT BURKE.

“ ‘ P. S.—This note will be delivered to you by my friend, Major Mug, of the 3d West Indian ; and you will, I trust, see the propriety of referring him to another gentleman without further delay.’

“ ‘ That, I think, is neat,’ said the Major. ‘ Now, seal it with wax, Mr Burke, with wax—and let the seal be your arms. That’s right. Now, direct it.’

“ ‘ Ensign Brady?’

“ ‘ No—no—the right thing would be, “Mr Brady, Ensign, 48th foot,” but custom allows “Esquire,” That will do.—“Thady Brady, Esq., Ensign, 48th Foot, Barracks, Mallow.” He shall have it in less than a quarter of an hour.’

“The Major was as good as his word, and in about half an hour he brought back the result of his mission. The Ensign, he told us, was extremely reluctant to fight, and wanted to be off, on the ground that he had meant no offence, did not even remember having used the expression, and offered to ask the lady if she conceived for a moment he had any idea of saying anything but what was complimentary to her.

“ ‘ In fact,’ said the Major, ‘ he at first plumply refused to fight ; but I soon brought him to reason. ‘ Sir,’ said I, ‘ you either consent to fight, or refuse

to fight. In the first case, the thing is settled to hand, and we are not called upon to inquire if there was an affront or not—in the second case, your refusal to comply with a gentleman's request is, of itself, an offence for which he has a right to call you out. Put it, then, on any grounds, you must fight him. It is perfectly indifferent to me what the grounds may be; and I have only to request the name of your friend, as I too much respect the coat you wear to think that there can be any other alternative.' This brought the chap to his senses, and he referred me to Captain Codd, of his own regiment, at which I felt much pleased, because Codd is an intimate friend of my own, he and I having fought a duel three years ago in Falmouth, in which I lost the top of this little finger, and he his left whisker. It was a near touch. He is as honourable a man as ever paced a ground; and I am sure that he will no more let his man off the field until business is done, than I would myself.'

"I own," continued Burke, "I did not half relish this announcement of the firm purpose of our seconds; but I was in for it, and could not get back. I sometimes thought Dosy a dear purchase at such an expense; but it was no use to grumble. Major Mug was sorry to say that there was a review to take place immediately, at which the Ensign must attend, and it was impossible for him to meet me until the evening; 'but,' added he, 'at this time of

the year it can be of no great consequence. There will be plenty of light till nine, but I have fixed *seven*. In the mean time, you may as well divert yourself with a little pistol-practice, but do it on the sly, as, if they were shabby enough to have a trial, it would not tell well before the jury.'

"Promising to take a quiet chop with me at five, the Major retired, leaving me not quite contented with the state of affairs. I sat down, and wrote a letter to my cousin, Phil Purdon of Kanturk, telling him what I was about, and giving directions what was to be done in the case of any fatal event. I communicated to him the whole story—deplored my unhappy fate in being thus cut off in the flower of my youth—left him three pair of buckskin breeches—and repented my sins. This letter I immediately packed off by a special messenger, and then began half-a-dozen others, of various styles of tenderness and sentimentality, to be delivered after my melancholy decease. The day went off fast enough, I assure you; and at five the Major, and Wooden-leg Waddy, arrived in high spirits.

"'Here, my boy,' said Waddy, handing me the pistols, 'here are the flutes; and pretty music, I can tell you, they make.'

"'As for dinner,' said Major Mug, 'I do not much care; but, Mr Burke, I hope it is ready, as I am rather hungry. We must dine lightly, however, and drink not much. If we come off with flying

colours, we may crack a bottle together by-and-by; in case you shoot Brady, I have everything arranged for our keeping out of the way until the thing blows over—if he shoot you, I'll see you buried. Of course, you would not recommend anything so ungenteel as a prosecution? No. I'll take care it shall all appear in the papers, and announce that Robert Burke, Esq., met his death with becoming fortitude, assuring the unhappy survivor that he heartily forgave him, and wished him health and happiness.'

"'I must tell you,' said Wooden-leg Waddy; 'it's all over Mallow, and the whole town will be on the ground to see it. Miss Dosy knows of it, and is quite delighted—she says she will certainly marry the survivor. I spoke to the magistrate to keep out of the way, and he promised that, though it deprived him of a great pleasure, he would go and dine five miles off—and know nothing about it. But here comes dinner. Let us be jolly.'

"I cannot say that I played on that day as brilliant a part with the knife and fork as I usually do, and did not sympathise much in the speculations of my guests, who pushed the bottle about with great energy, recommending me, however, to refrain. At last the Major looked at his watch, which he had kept lying on the table before him from the beginning of dinner—started up—clapped me on the shoulder, and declaring it only wanted six minutes

and thirty-five seconds of the time, hurried me off to the scene of action—a field close by the Castle.

"There certainly was a miscellaneous assemblage of the inhabitants of Mallow, all anxious to see the duel. They had pitted us like game-cocks, and bets were freely taken as to the chances of our killing one another, and the particular spots. One betted on my being hit in the jaw, another was so kind as to lay the odds on my knee. A tolerably general opinion appeared to prevail that one or other of us was to be killed; and much good-humoured joking took place among them, while they were deciding which. As I was double the thickness of my antagonist, I was clearly the favourite for being shot; and I heard one fellow near me say, 'Three to two on Burke, that he's shot first—I bet in ten-pennies.'

"Brady and Codd soon appeared, and the preliminaries were arranged with much punctilio between our seconds, who mutually and loudly extolled each other's gentlemanlike mode of doing business. Brady could scarcely stand with fright, and I confess that I did not feel quite as Hector of Troy, or the Seven Champions of Christendom, are reported to have done on similar occasions. At last the ground was measured—the pistols handed to the principals—the handkerchief dropped—whiz! went the bullet within an inch of my ear—and crack! went mine exactly on Ensign Brady's waistcoat pocket. By

an unaccountable accident, there was a five-shilling piece in that very pocket, and the ball glanced away, while Brady doubled himself down, uttering a loud howl that might be heard half a mile off. The crowd was so attentive as to give a huzza for my success.

“Codd ran up to his principal, who was writhing as if he had ten thousand colics, and soon ascertained that no harm was done.

“‘What do you propose,’ said he to my second — ‘What do you propose to do, Major?’

“‘As there is neither blood drawn nor bone broken,’ said the Major, ‘I think that shot goes for nothing.’

“‘I agree with you,’ said Captain Codd.

“‘If your party will apologise,’ said Major Mug, ‘I’ll take my man off the ground.’

“‘Certainly,’ said Captain Codd, ‘you are quite right, Major, in asking the apology, but you know that it is my duty to refuse it.’

“‘You are correct, Captain,’ said the Major; ‘I then formally require that Ensign Brady apologise to Mr Burke.’

“‘I as formally refuse it,’ said Captain Codd.

“‘We must have another shot then,’ said the Major.

“‘Another shot, by all means,’ said the Captain.

“‘Captain Codd,’ said the Major, ‘you have

shown yourself in this, as in every transaction of your life, a perfect gentleman.'

"'He who would dare to say,' replied the Captain, 'that Major Mug is not among the most gentlemanlike men in the service, would speak what is untrue.'

"Our seconds bowed, took a pinch of snuff together, and proceeded to load the pistols. Neither Brady nor I was particularly pleased at these complimentary speeches of the gentlemen, and, I am sure, had we been left to ourselves, would have declined the second shot. As it was, it appeared inevitable.

"Just, however, as the process of loading was completing, there appeared on the ground my cousin Phil Purdon, rattling in on his black mare as hard as he could lick. When he came in sight he bawled out,—

"'I want to speak to the plaintiff in this action—I mean, to one of the parties in this duel. I want to speak to you, Bob Burke.'

"'The thing is impossible, sir,' said Major Mug.

"'Perfectly impossible, sir,' said Captain Codd.

"'Possible or impossible is nothing to the question,' shouted Purdon; 'Bob, I *must* speak to you.'

"'It is contrary to all regulation,' said the Major.

"'Quite contrary,' said the Captain.

"Phil, however, persisted, and approached me.

'Are you fighting about Dosy Mac?' said he to me in a whisper.

"'Yes,' I replied.

"'And she is to marry the survivor, I understand?'

"'So I am told,' said I.

"'Back out, Bob, then; back out, at the rate of a hunt. Old Mick Macnamara is married.'

"'Married!' I exclaimed.

"'Poz,' said he. 'I drew the articles myself. He married his housemaid, a girl of eighteen; and,'—here he whispered.

"'What,' I cried, 'six months!'

"'Six months,' said he, 'and no mistake.'

"'Ensign Brady,' said I, immediately coming forward, 'there has been a strange misconception in this business. I here declare, in presence of this honourable company, that you have acted throughout like a man of honour, and a gentleman; and you leave the ground without a stain on your character.'

"Brady hopped three feet off the ground with joy at the unexpected deliverance. He forgot all etiquette, and came forward to shake me by the hand.

"'My dear Burke,' said he, 'it must have been a mistake: let us swear eternal friendship.'

"'For ever,' said I. 'I resign you Miss Theodosia.'

" 'You are too generous,' he said, 'but I cannot abuse your generosity.'

" 'It is unprecedented conduct,' growled Major Mug. 'I'll never be second to a *Pekin* again.'

" 'My principal leaves the ground with honour,' said Captain Codd, looking melancholy nevertheless.

" 'Humph!' grunted Wooden-leg Waddy, lighting his meerschaum.

" 'The crowd dispersed much displeased, and I fear my reputation for valour did not rise among them. I went off with Purdon to finish a jug at Carmichael's, and Brady swaggered off to Miss Dosy's. His renown for valour won her heart. It cannot be denied that I sunk deeply in her opinion. On that very evening Brady broke his love, and was accepted. Mrs Mac. opposed, but the red-coat prevailed.

" 'He may rise to be a general,' said Dosy, 'and be a knight, and then I will be Lady Brady.'

" 'Or if my father should be made an earl, angelic Theodosia, you would be Lady Thady Brady,' said the Ensign.

" 'Beautiful prospect!' cried Dosy, 'Lady Thady Brady! What a harmonious sound!'

" 'But why dally over the detail of my unfortunate loves? Dosy and the Ensign were married before the accident which had befallen her uncle was discovered; and if they were not happy, why, then you and I may. They have had eleven chil-

dren, and, I understand, he now keeps a comfortable eating-house close by Cumberland Basin in Bristol. Such was my duel with Ensign Brady of the 48th."

"Your fighting with Brady puts me in mind, that the finest duel I ever saw," said Joe MacGillycuddy, "was between a butcher and bull-dog, in the Diamond of Derry."

"I am obliged to you for your comparison," said Burke, "but I think it is now high time for dinner, and your beautiful story will keep. Has anybody the least idea where dinner is to be raised?"

To this no answer was returned, and we all began to reflect with the utmost intensity.

THE HEADSMAN.

A TALE OF DOOM.

[MAGA. FEBRUARY 1830.]

ON a dark and gusty evening in November 1784, three students at a university in Northern Germany were sitting with Professor N. around the stove of his study. These four individuals had in the morning accompanied a much-valued friend, who was finally quitting the university, on the first stage of his journey homeward, and had returned at the full speed of their jaded horses, to reach the city before the closing of the gates. On arrival within the ramparts, they were invited by the Professor to drown their parting sorrow in a bowl of punch, and accompanied him to his abode, where they sat for some time gazing at the crackling firewood in the stove, and musing in silent melancholy upon the social and endearing qualities of the friend with whom they had parted—perhaps for ever. Meanwhile the materials for the most cheering of all potations lay untouched upon the table, the candles

remained unlighted and forgotten, and, as if by tacit agreement, the friends continued to indulge in retrospective musings until the twilight waned into darkness, and the flickering light from the open door of the stove just enabled each of them to discern the saddened features of his neighbour. When returning to the city, their exhausted spirits had been painfully jarred by the spectacle, so rare in Germany, of a scaffold erecting without the ramparts for the execution of a murderer. Some remarks of the humane Professor upon the crime and punishment of the condemned did not tend to cheer the young men, who replied in monosyllables, and were pondering in mute and melancholy excitement upon the awful catastrophe so near at hand, when a tap at the door made them all start from the reverie in which they had been too deeply absorbed to hear any one ascending the stairs. "Come in," at length shouted the Professor, after pausing a little to recollect himself. The door was gently opened, and the dying flame in the stove threw its last blaze upon the pallid features of a tall and handsome youth, who entered the room with diffidence, and inquired if Professor N. was at home. "Here I am, my dear Julius," answered the kind Professor, as he rose from his chair, and grasped with cordial pressure the hand of the inquirer. "Can I do anything to oblige you?"

"I have called upon you to request a favour,"

answered the stranger hesitatingly, as he surveyed with searching looks the three students, whose features were not distinguishable in the Rembrandt chiaroscuro of the Professor's study.

"If no secret," said the Professor briskly, as he replenished his stove with beechwood, "explain yourself freely. All present are my particular friends, and certainly no enemies of yours. Say, my dear boys! you all know and respect our worthy Harpocrates?"

The students briefly assented, and the Professor invited the stranger to take a seat near the fire, which, darting playfully through the pile of beech, soon roared loudly up the chimney. "I believe that Lieutenant B. is your near relation?" began the pale youth, in tones which betrayed an inward tremor.

"He is my nephew," replied the Professor.

"I have understood," continued the stranger, "that he will command the detachment ordered on duty at the execution to-morrow. I am particularly desirous to stand near the criminal at the moment of decapitation, and wish, through your kind interference with the Lieutenant, to obtain admission within the circle."

"By all means," answered the Professor. "My nephew has invited me to accompany him, but I have declined it, and I must own that your request surprises me no little. How is it, my dear Julius, that you, who are by nature and habit so gentle and

fastidious, can seek such strong aliment as the near inspection of a public execution? Even I, who served three campaigns in the artillery before I betook myself to mathematics, could not face a catastrophe so appalling."

"I study anatomy as an amateur," replied Julius, somewhat disconcerted; "and, as I may eventually embrace the medical profession, it is essential to my purpose to steel my nerves by inuring them to every trying spectacle."

"You are right, Julius!" exclaimed the Professor, with cordial assent. "Trials are the fostering element of great hearts and lofty natures. To become great in anything, we must take the Egyptian test, and purify our feeble minds by passing through fire and water. Call upon me to-morrow morning at seven. I will introduce you to my nephew, and he shall give you a place near the headsman. And now, not another word on this painful subject, which has haunted us ever since we heard the workmen hammering the scaffold this afternoon. So cheer up, my dear boys! Light the candles, and fill your meerschaums, while I compound a bowl of such punch as Anacreon would have made, had he known how.—No, no! my dear Julius," he continued, seizing the arm of the young stranger, who was rising to depart. "A friendly chance has brought you into our cordial circle, and I must insist upon your remaining my guest."

In vain did the three students, by whom Julius was more respected than liked, indicate by significant looks their objection to his stay; the benevolent Professor, who had long observed, with better feelings than curiosity, the pale features and habitual depression of a youth distinguished by great intellectual promise, persevered in his hospitable attempt, and at length succeeded in subduing his visible reluctance to stay.

Julius Arenbourg had been three years a student at the university, but his retiring habits and invincible taciturnity had hitherto prevented any free and amicable communion with his fellow-students. His name was that of a Swiss, or of a Strasburger; and, although he spoke German with facility, there were certain peculiarities of accent and idiom in his language which betrayed a longer familiarity with French: he shunned, however, all intercourse with the Swiss and French students at the university, and his country and connections were still a matter of conjecture. His engaging person and address, and the dejection so legibly written in his countenance, had excited on his arrival an immediate and general impression in his favour, but he shunned alike exclusive intimacy and general intercourse; his replies were either commonplaces or monosyllables; and as the unhappy and reserved find little sympathy from the young and joyous, his fellow-students dubbed him the Harpocrates of the uni-

versity, and left him to solitude and self-communion.

The kind-hearted Professor, desirous to lead this interesting youth into habits of social ease and intimacy with the students present, exerted his colloquial powers, and endeavoured to lead them into general conversation; but his benevolent endeavours were baffled by the ineradicable impression which the approaching execution had made upon the mind of every student of good feeling in the university; and the successive attempts of the Professor were succeeded by long intervals of brooding and melancholy silence. At length, one of the young men, notwithstanding his host's prohibition, could no longer refrain from adverting to this all-absorbing subject. "Excuse me, Professor," he began, "but I find it impossible to withdraw my thoughts, even for a moment, from the present situation of the poor wretch who is so soon to bend his neck to the executioner. It appears to me, that the intervening hours of deadly and rising terror, are the real and atoning punishment, and not the friendly blow which releases him from the fear of death. Even the reprieve, sometimes granted on the scaffold, is no compensation for terrors so intense. The criminal has already died many deaths, and the new existence, thus tardily bestowed, can be compared only with the revival of the seeming dead in his coffin. Gracious Heaven!" he con-

tinued, with shuddering emotion, "how dreadfully bitter must be the sensations of the poor fellow at this moment!"

"In all probability," replied another student, "he has either made up his mind to the impending catastrophe, or he finds sustaining consolation in the hope of a reprieve. At all events, his reflections must have, in my opinion, a more justified character than those of the wretch, who, before another sunset, with a firm eye and unsparing hand, with as little remorse as the butcher who kills a lamb, will shed the blood of a fellow-creature—of one who never injured him in deed or thought—who will kneel to him with folded hands, and humbly stretch his neck to the fatal blow. Verily, I think that I would rather thus suffer death, than thus inflict it."

"Does not this view of the subject," remarked the third student, "justify, in some measure, the so often ridiculed prejudice of the uneducated multitude, who pronounce an executioner infamous, because they cannot otherwise define the disgust which his appearance, even across a street, invariably excites?*" And may not this association of ideas be grounded on a religious feeling? The Mosaic law provided a sanctuary for the blood-

* Throughout Germany, public executioners are called infamous, and are shut out of the pale of society. A similar feeling prevailed in France before the Revolution.

guilty who had committed murder in sudden wrath; and, except in cases of rare enormity, compassion for the criminal must tend to increase the popular detestation of a man, who, in consideration of a good salary, is ever ready to shed the blood of a fellow-creature."

"For the honour of human nature," observed the Professor, "I will hope that, could we read the hearts of many who fulfil this terrible duty to society, we should behold, both before and during its exercise, strong feelings of reluctance and compassion. I can conceive, too, that those who have by long habit become callous to their vocation, are by no means destitute of kindly feeling in matters unconnected with their calling; but I do not comprehend how any man can voluntarily devote himself to an office which excludes him for life from the sympathy and society of his fellow-men; nor do I believe that this terrible vocation is ever adopted, except by those who, through early training, or a long course of crime, have blunted the best feelings of human nature."

Julius, who had hitherto been a silent but attentive listener, now addressed the Professor with an animation which surprised all present. "You must excuse me, Professor," said he, "if I dissent from your last remark. You seem to have overlooked the fact, that the numerous individuals devoted to this melancholy office, in Germany and France,

compose two large families severally connected by intermarriages and adoptions. In France especially, the executioner is under a compulsory obligation to transmit his office to one of his sons, who grows up with a consciousness of this necessity; and, being systematically trained to it, he submits, in most instances, without repining, to his painful lot. If the executioner has only daughters, he adopts a young man, who becomes his son-in-law and successor. I knew an instance of adoption which affords decisive evidence, that even a youth of education and refinement, of spotless integrity, diffident, gentle, and humane to a fault, may be compelled, by the force of circumstances, to undertake an office from which his nature recoils with abhorrence, and from which, in this instance, the party would have been saved by a higher degree of moral courage."

It was here remarked by one of the students, that cruel propensities and a want of courage were perfectly compatible.

"But I am speaking of a *good* man," warmly rejoined Julius, "and good in the best and most comprehensive sense of the word. A man, not only pure from all offence, but of primitive and uncorrupted singleness of heart. For the truth of this I can pledge myself, for I know him well."

At this undisguised avowal of his acquaintance with a public executioner, his auditors looked at

him, and at each other, with obvious dismay. "Oh!" continued he, with a mournful smile, while his pale face was flushed with strong emotion, "wonder not at this acknowledgment. I can assure you, that, on my part, the acquaintance was involuntary, and had we not already devoted too much time to this painful subject, I could, by relating this headsman's strange and eventful history, fully vindicate my opinion of him, and of the unhappy caste to which he belongs."

The Professor, who thought that the detail of an interesting story would excite in the three students a friendly feeling for the melancholy narrator, besought him earnestly to indulge them with the recital. "In our present frame of mind," he added, "your narrative will lay a strong hold, and will doubtless tend to reconcile our various opinions."

The students warmly seconded the Professor's entreaties, and, thus called upon, Julius could no longer hesitate to comply. A flush of timidity, or of some more deeply-seated feeling, darkened his pale forehead, while he paused some moments as if to collect his firmness for a trying effort. He then began, in tones which, although tremulous at first, became deep and impressive as he proceeded; while the Professor and his friends, little prepared to expect any continuous recital from one who rarely uttered a connected sentence, listened with

strong and rising interest to the following narrative.

* * * * *

It is about five-and-thirty years since a murderer was condemned to suffer death by the sword, at a town in western Normandy; and, on the morning of the execution, two senior pupils of the Jesuit-seminary went, by permission of their superiors, to view a spectacle of rare occurrence in that province. The cordial intimacy subsisting between these youths had long been a problem, both to their teachers and schoolfellows. So widely different, indeed, were they in appearance and character, and so harshly did the ferocity and cunning of the one contrast with the pure and gentle habits of the other, that they were called the "Wolf and the Lamb."

The older of them, named Bartholdy, was a native of Strasburg, tall and robust in person, but high-shouldered, stooping, and in dress and gait slovenly and clownish. His yellow visage was deeply furrowed with the smallpox, and his remarkably large and staring eyes, which were of a pale and milky blue, indicated a dulness bordering on imbecility. This appearance, however, was belied by his habitual cunning, and by the dexterity with which he often contrived to exculpate himself under criminatory circumstances. His spreading

jawbones, large mouth, and coarsely-moulded lips, truly betokened his proneness to sensual gratifications; and the collective expression of his forbidding features was so remarkable, that a single glance sufficed to fix it in the memory for ever. It was rumoured in the seminary, that this youth had been sent by his friends to a school so remote from Strasburg in consequence of some highly culpable irregularities; and certainly these rumours were justified by occasional instances of wolfish ferocity and deliberate duplicity, for which he was severely but vainly punished.

Florian, the friend of Bartholdy, although nearly of the same age, was shorter by the head. His figure was slender and elegant—his countenance eminently prepossessing and ingenuous. His complexion was of that pure red and white, through which every flitting emotion is instantaneously legible. His hazel eyes sparkled with intelligence; locks of glossy chestnut curled round his fair and open forehead; and there was about his lips and smile a winning grace, which, at maturer age, would have been thought too feminine. Although not regularly handsome, there was in his form and features that harmonious configuration which is termed beauty of character, and which, when accompanied by the correspondent moral graces of gentleness and refinement, often lays a more enduring hold of the affections than beauty of a more

dignified and masculine order. An habitual and blushing timidity of address, of which he was painfully conscious, made him shrink from a free and general intercourse with his fellow-pupils. He had few friends, because his bashful habits had made him fastidious and reserved; but his gentle and unassuming deportment, and the invariable sweetness of his temper, endeared him to the few who had penetration enough to discern his real merits; and so far recommended him to all, that the existence of an enemy was impossible.

Thus widely opposite in physical and moral attributes were Florian and Bartholdy; and yet so cordial appeared their attachment, so incessant was their intercourse, that the presiding Jesuits could only solve this psychological enigma by conjecturing that Bartholdy, whose fierce temper and great bodily strength made him detested and shunned by every other boy, had found in the gentle sympathies of the unspoiled and credulous Florian a relief which long habit had made essential to him. It is probable, too, that the often guilty, and ever equivocal Bartholdy, had found a protecting influence in the warm adherence of one whose purity of mind and character were universally acknowledged. His specious reasoning rarely failed to convince the confiding Florian that he was unjustly accused, and on several occasions he was screened from well-merited punishment by the

favourable testimony of a friend whose veracity was above all suspicion.

Florian, on the other hand, was flattered by the consciousness of his power to protect one so much feared by all but himself, and whom he thought unjustly persecuted. He was bound to him also by the tie of gratitude, for the protection which he derived from the size and strength of Bartholdy when insulted or aggrieved in the quarrels which so often occur in large seminaries. Gradually, however, this exclusive intercourse with one so generally detested, alienated from Florian the goodwill of his schoolfellows. Even the few who had most esteemed him, now shunned his society; and the two friends, finding themselves excluded from all participation in the sports and feelings of others, became more than ever essential to each other. This enduring intimacy of two beings so opposite had been long watched by the Jesuits who conducted the establishment; but, with their wonted sagacity, they forbore to check this singular friendship; not, however, in the hope of any amelioration in the habits of Bartholdy, but with a view to learn from the unqualified sincerity of Florian what the duplicity of the other would have concealed. Hoping that the trying spectacle of a public execution would make a salutary impression upon the hitherto callous feelings of Bartholdy, the reverend fathers had permitted him and his friend to be present on this awful

occasion. Florian, who, at the urgent and often-repeated entreaties of Bartholdy, had applied for this permission, followed him with reluctant steps, and a heart beating with terror, and was prevented only by the jeers and remonstrances of his companion from running back to school, and burying his head under his bed-clothes, until the rush of the excited multitude, and the deep rolling of the drums and deathbells, had ceased. As usual, however, his complying temper yielded to the persuasion of his plausible and reckless friend, with whom he gained an elevated station, and so near the scaffold as to enable them to discern the features of the hapless criminal. Florian saw him kneel before the headsman; the broad weapon glittered in the sunbeams, and the assumed firmness of the trembling gazer utterly failed him. An ashy paleness overspread his features; his joints shook with terror; and closing his eyes, he saved himself from falling by clinging to the arm of Bartholdy, who, with unshaken nerves, opened to their full extent his large dull eyes, and glutted his savage curiosity by gazing with intense eagerness on the appalling scene. In a few seconds the severed head fell upon the scaffold; the headsman's assistant, grasping the matted locks, held it aloft to the gazing crowd; and Bartholdy exclaimed, with heartless indifference, "Come along, Florian! 'tis all over, and capitally done! I would bet a louis that you saw nothing, and yet your

face looks as white as if it had left your shoulders. Be more a man, Florian. If thus daunted at the sight of another's execution, how would you face your own, if destined to mount the scaffold?"

"Face my own!" exclaimed Florian, shuddering at the suggestion. "God forbid! I shall take good care to avoid it."

"Say not so," rejoined Bartholdy; "no man can avoid his doom; and it may be yours or mine to die upon the scaffold. *Avoid it*, indeed! I wish from my soul that you had never uttered those unlucky words. How often do the very evils we most carefully shun fall upon our devoted heads! My mind has been long made up to avoid nothing; and, soon as I become my own master, I will throw myself on the world, and grapple with it boldly. *Avoid your destiny*, indeed! Beware of using those words again; for, trust me, Florian, they bode no good to you."

The timid Florian felt his blood freeze as he listened; but, recollecting himself, he was about to express his perfect reliance upon the integrity of his life and principles, when he shuddered with new dismay as he recollected the judicial murder of Calas, and considered the complexities of human and circumstantial evidence. In deep and silent dejection, he walked homeward with his friend. He felt as if his existence had been blighted by some sudden and dreadful calamity; and even fan-

ced that he saw his future fate rising before him in storm and darkness, through which menacing images were indistinctly shadowed. Bartholdy, meanwhile, appeared as much exhilarated as if returning from a comedy, and amused himself with making sarcastic and ludicrous remarks upon the saddened countenances of the returning spectators.

The lapse of several months gradually weakened the strong hold which the execution, and the strange comments of Bartholdy, had laid upon the imagination of Florian, but they tended to increase the timid indecision of his character, and induced a disposition to endure, in uncomplaining silence, many school annoyances, which more energy of character would have easily repelled. An extraordinary incident, however, gave a new turn to his situation. About six months after the execution, Bartholdy suddenly disappeared from the seminary; and this unaccountable event, by which Florian was the only sufferer, was neither explained nor even alluded to by the reverend fathers. To the scholars, who in vain sought an explanation of this mystery from the friend of Bartholdy, it was for some weeks a subject of wondering conjecture, which soon, however, subsided into indifference with all save Florian. He had lost his only, and, as he firmly believed, his sincerely attached friend and companion; and as this friendship had deprived him of the sympathy of every other schoolfellow, he had now

no alternative but to retire within himself, and lean upon his own thoughts and resources. For some time he brooded incessantly upon the strange disappearance of his friend. He recollected that for several days preceding the event, the spirits of Bartholdy were so obviously depressed as to create inquiries, to which his replies were vague and unsatisfactory. Notwithstanding the guarded silence of the reverend fathers, it was evident to Florian that his friend had not absconded from the seminary, as not only his clothes and books, but even his bed, had disappeared with him. One article only remained, which had been left in the custody of Florian. It was a large clasp-knife, of excellent workmanship and finish. The handle was of the purest ivory, wrought in curious devices, and the long blade, which terminated in a sharp point, was secured from closing by a powerful spring, thus serving the double purpose of a knife and dagger. The owner of this remarkable weapon had told Florian that it was precious to him, as the legacy of a near relative, and requested him to take charge of it, from an apprehension that, if discovered in his own possession, it would either be stolen by the boys, or taken from him by the Jesuit fathers. "And now," sighed Florian, as he gazed with painful recollections on the knife, "it is too probably lost to him for ever. But if he is still in being, I may yet see and restore to him his favourite knife ;

and that I may be always ready to restore it, as well as in remembrance of the owner, I will henceforth always carry it about me."

During the remainder of Florian's stay at the seminary, his thoughts continually reverted to his lost friend, who had, he feared, from a mysterious expression of the presiding Jesuit, met with some terrible calamity. During confession, he had once expressed his grief for the sudden deprivation of his friend, when, to his great surprise, the venerable priest, placing his hand solemnly upon the fair and innocent brow of Florian, exclaimed with fervent emphasis, "Thank God, my son, that it has so happened!"

Florian often pondered upon these remarkable words, which, until some years after his departure from school, he could never satisfactorily interpret. For a long period he fondly cherished the memory of Bartholdy, and this feeling was prolonged by the knife, which, from habit, he continued to carry about him, even when the lapse of time had reconciled him to the loss of his early friend, and his ripper judgment told him that that friend had unworthily imposed upon his credulity, and that the consequences of their exclusive intimacy still exercised a pernicious influence upon his character and his happiness.

About three years after the disappearance of Bartholdy, the guardians of Florian, who had been

an orphan from infancy, removed him from the seminary, and placed him as a law-student at the University of D. ; but here again, although advantageously introduced and recommended, he found himself a stranger, unheeded, and desolate. His timid and now invincible reserve, which prevented all advances on his part towards a frank and social communion with his fellow-students, chilled that disposition to cultivate his acquaintance, which his graceful person and intelligent physiognomy had excited ; while his hesitating indecision, at every trivial and commonplace incident, made him ridiculous to the few who had been won, by his prepossessing exterior, to occasional intercourse. Thus, amidst numbers of his own age and pursuit, and in the dense population of a city, the timid Florian continued as deficient as a child in all practical acquaintance with society. Without a single friend or associate, he acquired the habits of a solitary recluse ; and, yielding supinely to what now appeared to him his destiny, he became anxious, disconsolate, and misanthropic. Conscious, however, that in France a sound and comprehensive knowledge of jurisprudence was a frequent avenue to honourable civic appointments, and yet overlooking his own incompetency to make any degree of legal knowledge available for this purpose, he pursued his studies for some years with indefatigable assiduity ; and during the last year of his stay at D.

his endeavours to insure himself, by accumulated knowledge, an honourable support, were stimulated by a growing attachment to the lovely daughter of a merchant, through whose agency he drew occasional supplies of money from his guardians.

But even the passion of love, which so often rouses the latent powers of the diffident into life and energy, failed to inspire the timid Florian with that external ardour and prompt assiduity so essential to success; and although the fair object of his regard did not appear insensible to his silent and gentle homage, he never could collect resolution to reveal his feelings. His diffidence was increased, too, by the unmeaning gallantry of two young and lively officers of the garrison, who, although precluded by their nobility from marriage with the daughter of a citizen, employed a portion of their abundant leisure in making skirmishing experiments upon the affections of the lovely Angelique. While these military butterflies were fluttering round the woman he loved, poor Florian, daunted by the painful consciousness of his comparative disadvantages, rarely presumed to enter the villa in which her father resided, about half a league beyond the city gates, and endeavoured to console himself by wandering in a pleasant grove immediately contiguous. Here a majestic elm was endeared to him by the knowledge that his beloved Angelique often took her work to a turf seat beneath its spreading

branches. Here, too, he sometimes left a flower, or other silent token of his regard, the ascertained acceptance of which did not, however, encourage him to any decisive measure. At length arrived the autumnal vacation, which closed his academic studies; and he determined to pass the winter in his native province, where he thought the influence of his guardians, and the favourable testimony of his Jesuit teachers, would procure for him such recommendations as might render his extensive legal knowledge available for his future support. He proposed to return in the ensuing spring to D.; and should his mistress have stood the test of six months' absence, and still regard him with an eye of favour, he would then openly declare himself. He called upon her father at his counting-house, and after explaining to him the probable advantages of his visit to Normandy, bade him farewell, and hastened with a beating heart to the villa, where he had the good fortune to find his Angelique alone. Always timid and irresolute in her presence, the fear of betraying his feelings on this occasion made him tremble as he approached her. Her young cheek glowed with unaffected blushes, as she observed a confusion which led her to anticipate an avowal of his attachment; and when he merely told her that he was going to pass the winter in Normandy, and had called to say farewell, her fine eyes became humid with the starting tears of sudden and uncon-

trollable emotion. Yet even this obvious proof of sympathy failed to encourage the timid and ever-doubting Florian. Persuaded that he had nothing but his sincerity to recommend him, he dreaded a repulse ; and, pressing with gentle fervour her proffered hand, he hastily quitted the apartment without daring to take another look.

After having secured a place in the diligence for the following morning, he called upon the few acquaintances he had in D., and late in the afternoon repaired with eager haste to the grove behind the abode of Angelique. He had determined that his favourite elm, hitherto the only witness of his love, should become the medium of a more palpable declaration of his feelings than he had hitherto dared to convey. Intending to carve in the bark the initial letters of his own and his fair one's names within the outline of a heart, he drew from his pocket the ivory clasp-knife of Bartholdy, which, after seven years of faithful custody, he had begun to consider as his own ; and, kneeling on the bank of turf, he was enabled, by the sharpness of the point, to cut in deep and firm characters the initials of the name so dear to him. Laying down the knife upon the scat, he gazed, with folded arms, upon the beloved cipher, and fell into one of his accustomed reveries. An hour had thus elapsed, when suddenly he was roused from his dream of bliss by tones of loud and vehement contention at no great distance

from the elm. Prompted by his natural aversion for scenes of violence, he concealed himself behind the tree, from whence he was enabled to discern his two military rivals, out of uniform, approaching the elm, and indicating, by furious tones and gestures, feelings of mutual and deadly animosity. Florian, whose sense of the awkwardness of his situation was increased by his timidity, fancied that he should be accused of listening to their conversation, and, retreating unobserved into the wood, he had gained the high-road before he recollected that he had left his knife on the seat of turf. Ashamed of his cowardice, he determined to return and claim it, in the event of its having been discovered and taken by one of the contending parties. He was solicitous, also, to complete the intended cipher on the bark of the elm, while there was light enough for his purpose; and concluding that his angry rivals had walked on in another direction, he hastily retraced his steps. Looking over some tall evergreen shrubs, which were separated by a footpath from the elm, he observed that the turf-seat was unoccupied. Supposing, from the total silence, that the hostile youths had quitted the grove, he emerged from the evergreens with confidence, and approached the tree, but recoiled in sudden horror, as he almost stepped upon the body of one of his rivals, who lay dead on his back, while the blood was issuing in torrents from a wound in his throat, inflicted by the

knife of Bartholdy, the remarkable handle of which protruded from the deep incision. His blood froze as he gazed on this sad spectacle; and covering his face with his hands, he stood for some moments over the body in stolid and sickening horror. Soon, however, his strong antipathy to scenes of bloodshed and violence impelled him to rush, with headlong precipitation, from the fatal spot. Leaving his knife in the wound, he darted forward through the wood, and fortunately without meeting any one within or near it. When he reached the high-road, the darkness had so much increased as to render his features undistinguishable to the passengers, and, running towards the city, he soon reached the public promenade without the barriers, where he threw himself upon a bench, exhausted with terror and fatigue. Looking fearfully around him through the darkness, he endeavoured to collect his reasoning faculties, and immediately the recollection that he had left his knife in the throat of the murdered officer flashed upon him. With this fatal weapon were connected many old associations, which now crowded with sickening potency upon his memory. Again he saw the sarcastic grin with which his friend had said, "What we most carefully shun, is most likely to befall us." And would not the remarkable knife of Bartholdy too probably verify the malignant prophecy of its owner? Forgetful of the improbability that any one had seen in his posses-

sion a knife which, before that evening, he had never used, his senses yielded to an irresistible conviction, that this instrument of another's guilt would betray and lead him to the scaffold. Immediate flight was the only resource which presented itself to his bewildered judgment; and, rising from the bench, he hastened to his lodgings, to complete his preparations for departure the following morning. After a sleepless night, during which he started at every sound with apprehension of a nocturnal visit from the police, he proceeded at daybreak, with a heavy heart, to the post-house, where, observing a carrier's waggon on the point of departure for Normandy, he availed himself of the opportunity to facilitate his escape, by putting a few essentials into a cloak-bag, and forwarding his heavy trunk by the carrier. After some delay, of which every moment appeared an age, the diligence departed; and when the church-towers were lost in distance, the goading terrors of the unhappy fugitive yielded for a time to feelings of comparative security. His apprehensions, however, were renewed by every rising cloud of dust behind the diligence, and by every equestrian who followed and passed the vehicle. In vain did he endeavour to console himself with the consciousness that he was innocent, and under the protection of a just and merciful Providence. The judicial murder of Calas, and of other innocent sufferers, detailed in the *Causes Célèbres* of Pitaval, were ever

present to his fevered fancy; and when he closed his eyes and assumed the semblance of sleep, to avoid the conversation of his fellow-travellers, his imagination conjured up the staring orbs and satanic smile of Bartholdy, who pointed at him jeeringly, and exclaimed, "In vain you seek to shun your destiny! In France, the innocent and the guilty bleed alike upon the scaffold." And then he shouted in the ear of Florian, "Why did you part with the knife I confided to you? Why provoke me to become your evil genius?" Or, with a hoarse and fiendish laugh, he seemed to whisper to the shrinking fugitive—"You are a doomed man, Florian! doomed to the scaffold!"

Thus busily did the frenzied fancy of the unhappy youth call up a succession of imaginary terrors, until at dusk the diligence stopped at a solitary inn, and Florian heard, with new alarm, that here the passengers were to remain the night. "And here," thought the timid fugitive, "I shall certainly be overtaken and arrested by the gens-d'armes." A traveller, who arrived soon after the diligence, and supped with the passengers, afforded him, however, another chance of escape. This man was lamenting that, at a neighbouring fair, he had not been able to sell an excellent horse, and Florian, watching his opportunity, concluded the purchase with little bargaining. Pleading the necessity of going forward on urgent business, he mounted his pur-

chase, and quitted the inn-yard, with a heart lightened by the certainty that he should gain a night upon his pursuers. At that time France was at peace both abroad and at home; passports were not essential to the native traveller; and Florian, turning down the first cross-road, proceeded rapidly all night, and the four following days; pausing occasionally to refresh his wearied steed, changing his name whenever he was required to declare it, and observing a zigzag direction to blind his pursuers. On the fifth morning he found himself in a fertile district of central France; and, considering himself safe from all immediate danger, he pursued his journey more leisurely between the vine-covered and gently-swelling hills, until the noonday heat and dusty road made him sensibly feel the want of refreshment. While gazing around him for some hamlet or cottage to pause at, his attention was caught by sounds of lamentation at no great distance, and a sudden turn in the road revealed to him a prostrate mule, vainly endeavouring to regain his legs, one of which was broken. A tall boy, in peasant garb, was scratching his head in rustic embarrassment at this dilemma, and near him stood a young and very lovely woman, wringing her hands in perplexity, and lamenting over the unfortunate mule, a remarkably fine animal, and caparisoned with a completeness which indicated the easy circumstances of his owner. Florian immediately

stopped his horse, and, with his wonted kindness, dismounted to offer his assistance. The young woman said nothing as he approached, but her beautiful dark eyes appealed to him for aid and counsel with an eloquence which reached his heart in a moment. Examining the mule, he said, after some consideration, "There is no hope for the poor animal; and the most humane expedient will be to shoot him as soon as possible. Your side-saddle can be strapped on my horse, which shall convey you to the next village, or as much farther as you like, if you have no objection to the conveyance."

Expressing her thanks with engaging frankness and cordiality, the fair traveller told him that she was returning from a visit to some relations, and that she was still four leagues from her father's house. She would gladly, she said, avail herself of his kind offer, but insisted that her servant should not kill her favourite mule until she was out of sight and hearing. Then turning briskly towards Florian, she told him that she was ready to proceed, but objected to the exchange of saddles; and, as she was accustomed to ride on a pillion, would rather sit behind him as well as she could, than give him the trouble of walking four leagues. Finding all opposition fruitless, Florian remounted; and, with the assistance of her servant, the fair unknown was soon seated behind him. Blushing

and laughing at the necessity, she put an arm around his waist to support herself, and then begged him to proceed without delay, as she was anxious to reach home before night.

Conversing as they journeyed onward, their communications became every moment more cordial and interesting; and as Florian felt the warm hand of his lovely companion near his heart, he began to feel a soothing sense of gratification, which cheered and elevated his perturbed spirits. He had never before found himself in such near and agreeable relation to a beautiful and lively woman; and whenever he turned his head to speak or listen, he found the finest black eyes, and the most lovely mouth he had ever seen, within a few inches of his own. So potent, indeed, was the charm of her look and language, that he forgot, for a time, the timid graces and less sparkling beauty of her he had lost for ever, and was insensibly beguiled of all his fears and sorrows as he listened to the lively sallies of this laughter-loving fair one. Meanwhile they had quitted the cross-road in which he had discovered her, and pursued, by her direction, the great road from Paris towards eastern France. Here, however, he remarked, with surprise, that she invariably drew the large hood of her cloak over her face when any travellers passed them; and his surprise was converted into uneasiness and suspicion, when, after commencing the last league of their journey,

she drew the hood entirely over her face; and her conversation, before so animated and flowing, was succeeded by total silence, or by replies so brief and disjointed as to indicate that her thoughts were intensely preoccupied.

The sun had reached the horizon when they arrived within a short half-league of the town before them, and here she suddenly asked her conductor whether he intended to travel farther before morning. Florian, hoping to obtain some clue to her name and residence, replied that he was undetermined; on which she advised him to give a night's rest to his jaded horse, and strongly recommended to him an hotel, the name and situation of which she minutely described. He promised to comply with her recommendations; and immediately, by a prompt and vigorous effort, she threw herself from the horse to the ground. Hastily arranging her disordered travelling-dress, she approached him, clasped his hand in both her own, and thanked him, in brief but fervent terms, for the important service he had rendered her. "And now," added she, in visible embarrassment, as she raised her hood, and looked fearfully around, "I have another favour to request. My father would not approve of your accompanying me home, nor must the town gossips see me at this hour with a young man and a stranger: you will, therefore, oblige me by resting your horse here for half an

hour, that I may reach the town before you. Will you do me this favour?" she repeated, with a pleading look. "Most certainly I will," replied the good-natured but disappointed Florian. "Farewell, then," she cordially rejoined, "and may Heaven reward your kindness!"

Bounding forward with a light and rapid step, she soon disappeared round a sharp angle in the road, occasioned by a sudden bend of the adjacent river. Florian, dismounting to relieve his horse, gazed admiringly upon her elastic step and well-turned figure, until she was out of sight. He recollected, with a sigh of regret, the sprightly graces and artless intelligence of her conversation; again the sense of his desolate and perilous condition smote him; he felt himself more than ever forlorn and unhappy, and reproached himself for the helpless bashfulness which had prevented him from inquiring more urgently the name and residence of this charming stranger. While thus painfully musing, the time she had prescribed elapsed; and Florian, remounting, let the bridle fall upon the neck of the exhausted animal, which paced towards the town as deliberately as the unknown fair one could have wished. At a short distance from the town-gate the high-road passed under an archway, composing part of a detached house of Gothic and ancient structure; and on the town side of the arch was a toll-bar, at which a boy was stationed, who held out

his hat to Florian, and demanded half a sous. "For what?" asked Florian.

"A long-established toll, sir," said the boy; "and if you have a compassionate heart, you will give another half-sous to the condemned criminals," he continued, as he pointed to an iron box, placed near the house door, under a figure of the Virgin. Shuddering at the words, Florian threw some copper coins into the box; and, as he hastened forward, endeavoured to banish the painful association of ideas, by fixing his thoughts upon the mysterious fair one. Suspecting, from the pressing manner in which she had recommended a particular hotel to his preference, that, if he went there, he might possibly see or hear from her in the morning, he proceeded to the Henri Quatre, which proved to be an hotel of third-rate importance, but well suited to his limited means, and recommending itself by an air of cleanliness and comfort. The evenings at this season were cool; and as it would have required some time to heat the parlour, the landlord proposed to him to sit down and take some refreshment in his well-warmed kitchen. Florian complied with this invitation, but not without some apprehension of the presence of strangers; and, stepping into the kitchen, was relieved by the discovery that it was occupied only by servants, who were too busily engaged in preparing supper to take notice of him.

Sitting down in a corner near the fire, the combined effects of a genial warmth and excessive fatigue threw him into a sound sleep, which lasted several hours, and would have continued much longer, had he not been roused by the landlord, who told him that his supper had been ready some time, but that he had been unwilling to disturb a slumber so profound. In fact, the repose of the unfortunate fugitive had not, during the five preceding nights, been so continuous and refreshing, so free from painful and menacing visions. Rising drowsily from his chair, he followed the landlord to a table where a roasted capon and a glass jug of bright wine waited his arrival. The servants had all retired for the night,—the landlord quitted the kitchen, and Florian, busily engaged in dissecting the fowl, thought himself the sole tenant of the spacious apartment, when, looking accidentally towards the fire, he saw with surprise that the chair he had just quitted was occupied. Looking more intently, he distinguished a short man of more than middle age, whose square and sturdy figure was partially concealed by a capacious mantle. His hair was grey, his forehead seamed with broad wrinkles, and his bushy brows beetled over a set of features stern and massive as if cast in iron. His eyes were small and deep-set, but of a lustrous black; and Florian observed with dismay that they were fixed upon his countenance with a look of searching scrutiny.

It was near midnight, and in the deep silence which reigned through the house, this motionless attitude, and marble fixedness of look, gave to the stranger's appearance a character so appalling, that, had he not broken the spell by stooping to light his pipe, the excited Florian would ere long have thought him an unearthly object. The stranger now quitted his seat by the fire, took from a table near him a jug of wine, and approached the wondering Florian. "With your leave, my good sir," he began, "I will take a chair by your table. A little friendly gossip is the best of all seasoning to a glass of wine."

Without waiting for a reply, the old man seated himself directly opposite to Florian, and again fixed a scrutinising gaze upon his countenance. The conscious fugitive, who felt a growing and unaccountable dread of this singular intruder, muttered a brief assent, and continued to eat his supper in silent but obvious embarrassment; stealing now and then a timid look at the stranger, but hastily withdrawing his furtive glances as he felt the beams of the old man's small and vivid eyes penetrating his very soul. He observed that the features of his tormentor were cast in a vulgar mould, but his gaze was widely different from that of clownish curiosity, and there was in his deportment a stern and steady self-possession, which suggested to the alarmed Florian a suspicion that he was an agent of the police, who had probably tracked him through

the cross-roads he had traversed in his flight from D. The rich colour of his cheeks turned to an ashy paleness at this appalling conjecture; and, leaving his supper unfinished, he rose abruptly from the table to quit the room, when the old man, starting suddenly from his chair, seized the shaking hand of Florian, and, looking cautiously around him, said in subdued but impressive tones—"It is not accident, young man, which brings us together at this hour. I came in while you were asleep, and begged the landlord would not awaken you, that I might say a few words to you in confidence, after the servants had gone to bed."

"To me?" exclaimed Florian, in anxious wonder.

"Hush!" said the old man, again looking round the kitchen. "My object is to give you a friendly warning; for, if I am not for the first time mistaken in these matters, you are menaced with a formidable danger."

"Danger?" repeated the pallid Florian, in a voice scarcely audible.

"And have you not good reason to expect this danger?" continued the stranger. "Your sudden paleness tells me that you know it. I am an old man, and my life has been a rough pilgrimage, but I have still a warm heart, and can make large allowances for the headlong impetuositities which too often plunge a young man into crime. You may safely trust me," he continued, placing his hand

upon his heart, "in whose bosom the confessions of many hapless fugitives repose, and will repose, so long as life beats in my pulses. I betray no man who confides in me, were he stained even with *blood*."

Pausing a little, he fixed a keenly searching look upon the shrinking youth, and then whispered in his ear—"Young man! you have a *murder* on your conscience!"

For a moment the apprehensions of Florian yielded to a lofty sense of indignation at this groundless charge. "It is false, old man!" he exclaimed with energy. "I swear by the just God who searches all hearts, that I am not conscious of *any* crime."

"I shall rejoice to learn that I am mistaken," replied the old man, with evident gratification, as again he fixed his searching orbs upon the indignant Florian. "If you are innocent, it will be all the better for both of us; but," he continued, after a hasty look around him, "the danger I alluded to still hangs over your head. I trust, however, that with God's help I shall be able to shield you from it."

Florian, too much alarmed to reply, looked at him doubtingly. "I will deal candidly with you," resumed the old man, after a pause of reflection. "When you rode by my house this evening"—

"Who and what are you?" exclaimed Florian, in new astonishment.

"Have a little patience, young man!" replied the stranger, while his iron features relaxed into a good-natured smile. "Do you recollect the tall archway under an old house where a toll of half a sous was demanded from you? That house is mine; and I was sitting by the window as you threw an alms into the box for the condemned criminals. Had you then looked upward, you would have seen a naked sword and a bright axe suspended over your head."

At these words Florian shuddered, and involuntarily retreated some paces from his companion. "I see by your finching," sternly resumed the old man, "that you guess who is before you. You are right, young man! I *am* the town executioner, but an honest man withal, and well inclined to render you essential service. Now, mark me! When you stopped beneath the broad blade, it quivered, and jarred against the axe. Whoever is thus greeted by the headsman's sword is inevitably doomed to come in contact with it. I heard the boding jar, which every executioner in France well knows how to interpret, and I immediately determined to follow and to warn you."

The unhappy youth, who had listened in disheartening emotion to this strange communication, now yielded to a sense of ungovernable terror. Covering with both his hands his pallid face, he

exclaimed, in nameless agony—"O God! in thy infinite mercy, save me!"

"Hah!" ejaculated the headsman sternly, "have I then roused your sleeping conscience? However, whether you conclude to open or to shut your heart, is now immaterial. In either case, I will never betray you—for accusation and judgment belong not to my office. Profit, therefore, as you best may, by my well-intended warning. Alas! alas!" he muttered between his closed teeth, "that one so young should dip his hands in blood!"

"By all that is sacred!" exclaimed Florian, with trembling eagerness, "I am innocent of murder, and incapable of falsehood; and yet so disastrous is my destiny, that I am beset with peril and suspicion. You are an utter stranger to me, but you appear to have benevolence and worldly wisdom. Listen to my tale, and then in mercy give me aid and counsel."

He now unfolded to the executioner the extraordinary chain of circumstances which had compelled him to seek security in flight, and told his tale of trials with an artless and single-hearted simplicity of language, look, and gesture, which carried with it irresistible conviction of his innocence. The rigid features of the headsman gradually relaxed, as he listened, into a cheerful and even cordial expression; then warmly grasping the hand of Flo-

rian as he concluded, he said, "Well! well! I see how it is. In my profession we learn how to read human nature. When I watched your slumber, I thought your sleep looked very like the sleep of innocence; and now I believe from my soul that you are as guiltless of this murder as I am. With God's help I will yet save you from this peril; and, indeed, had you killed your rival in sudden quarrel, I would have done as much for you, for I well know that sudden wrath has made many a good man blood-guilty. There was certainly some danger of your being implicated by the singular circumstances you have detailed; but the real and formidable peril has grown out of your flight. That was a blunder, young man! but I see no reason to despair. 'Tis true, the broad blade has denounced you, and my grandfather and father, as well as myself, have traced criminals by its guidance; but I know that the sword will speak alike to its master and its victim. You have yet to learn, young man, that in this life every man is either an anvil or a hammer, a tool or a victim; and that he who boldly grasps the blade will never be its victim. Briefly, then, I feel a regard for you. I have no sons, but I have a young and lovely daughter. Marry her, and I will adopt you as my successor. You will then fulfil your destiny by coming in contact with the sword; and, if you clutch it firmly, I will pledge myself that you never die by it."

At this strange proposal Florian started on his feet with indignant abhorrence. "Hold!" continued the headsman coolly. "Why hurry your decision? The night is long, and favourable to reflection. Bestow a full and fair consideration upon my proposal, and recollect that your neck is in peril; that all your prospects in life are blasted; and that my offer of a safe asylum, and a competent support, can alone preserve you from despair and destruction. The sword has sent you a helper in the hour of need, and if you reject the friendly warning, you will soon discover that the consciousness of innocence will not protect a blushing and irresolute fugitive from the proverbial ubiquity and prompt severity of the French police."

The headsman now emptied his glass, and with a friendly nod left the kitchen. Soon after his departure the landlord appeared with a night-lamp, and conducted Florian to his apartment. Without undressing, the bewildered youth extinguished his lamp, and threw himself on the bed, hoping that the darkness would accelerate the approach of sleep, and of that oblivion which in his happier days had always accompanied it. Vain, however, for some hours, was every attempt to lull his senses into forgetfulness. The revolting proposal of the old man haunted him incessantly.

"I become an"—he muttered indignantly, but could never utter the hateful word. The

shrinking diffidence which had been a fertile source of difficulty to him through life, had been increased tenfold by his recent calamities; he was conscious even to agony of his total inability to contend with the consequences of his imprudent and cowardly flight; but from *such* means of escape he recoiled with unutterable loathing. He felt that he should never have resolution to grasp the sword which was to save him from being numbered with its victims, and yet his invincible abhorrence of this alternative failed to rouse in him the moral courage which would have promptly rescued him from the toils of the cunning headsman. The broken slumber into which he fell before morning was haunted by bod-
ing forms and tragic incidents. The sword, the axe, the scaffold, and the rack, flitted around him in quick procession, and seemed to close every avenue to escape. He awoke from these visions of horror at daybreak, and left his bed as wearied in body, and as irresolute in mind, as when he entered it. Dreading alike a renewal of the executioner's proposal, and the risk of being arrested and tried for murder, he saw no alternative but flight—immediate flight beyond the bounds of France. While pondering over the best means of accomplishing this now settled purpose, the tin weathercock upon the roof of his bedroom creaked in the morning breeze. Florian, to whose excited fancy the headsman's sword was ever present, thought he heard it

jar against the axe, and started in sudden terror. "Whither shall I fly?" he exclaimed, as tears of agony rolled down his cheeks—"where find a refuge from the sword of justice? Alas! my doom is fixed and unalterable. Anvil or hammer I must be, and I have not courage to become either."

Again the weathercock creaked above him, and more intelligibly than before. Florian, discovering the simple cause of his terrors, rallied his drooping spirits, and hastened down-stairs to order his horse, that he might leave the hotel and the town before the promised visit of the fearful headsman. Notwithstanding his urgency, he found his departure unaccountably delayed. The servants were not visible, and the landlord, insisting that he should take a warm breakfast before his departure, was so dilatory in preparing it, that a full hour elapsed before Florian rode out of the stable-yard. His officious host then persisted in sending a boy to show him the nearest way to the town gate; and the impatient traveller, who would gladly have declined the offer, found himself obliged to submit. His guide accompanied him to the extremity of the small suburb beyond the eastern gate, and quitted him; while Florian, whose ever-ready apprehensions had been roused by the tenacious civility of the landlord, rode slowly forward, looking around occasionally at his returning guide, and determining to take the first cross-road he could find. A little

farther he discovered the entrance of a narrow lane, shaded by a double row of lofty chestnuts; and as he turned towards it his horse's head, he saw the old man, whose promised visit he was endeavouring to escape, issuing from the lane on horseback. "I guessed as much," said the headsman, smiling, as he rode up to the startled fugitive. "I knew you would ^{try} to escape me, but I cannot consent that you should thus run headlong into certain destruction. You have neither sanguine hopes nor a fixed purpose to support you, and you want firmness to answer with discretion the trying questions which will everywhere assail you. You are silent—you feel the full extent of your danger—why not then embrace the certain protection I offer you? Fear not that I shall either repeat or allude to my last night's proposal. My sole object is your immediate protection at this critical period, when you are doubtless tracked in all directions by the bloodhounds of the police. At the frontiers you will inevitably be stopped and identified; but under my roof you will be safe from all pursuit and suspicion. I live secluded from the world; I have no visitors; and your presence will not be suspected by any one. In a few weeks the heat of pursuit will abate, and you may then take your departure with renewed courage and confidence."

"Courage and confidence!" repeated to himself the timid Florian; "would Heaven I had either!"

The good sense, however, of the old man's advice was so obvious, that he determined to avail himself of so kind an offer. Gratefully pressing his hand, he dismissed all doubts of his sincerity, and said, "I will accompany you; and may God reward your benevolence, for I cannot."

"We must return by the road I came," said the headsman, turning his horse. "It will take us outside the town to my house; and, at this hour, we shall arrive there unperceived. Your landlord, who is under obligations to me, sent you this road at my request. He supposes that you are my distant relative, and that, unwilling to appear in public with an executioner, you had made an appointment with me for this early hour on your way homeward."

After a ride of half an hour through the shady lanes which skirted the ramparts, they reached the back entrance of the Gothic building before mentioned, and Florian entered this singular sanctuary with emotions not easily described. The old headsman was in high spirits; and the blunt but genuine kindness and cordiality of his manners soon removed from the mind of his guest every lurking suspicion that some treachery was intended. The table was promptly covered with an excellent breakfast, and the old man sent a message to his daughter, requesting that she would bring a bottle of the best wine in the cellar.

Florian fixed his eyes upon the door in shrinking anticipation. He suspected new attempts to ensnare him to the headsman's purpose; and notwithstanding his firm determination to resist them, he recoiled with fastidious disgust from the possible necessity of contending with the meretricious advances of a bold and reckless female, whose limited opportunities of marriage would impel her to lure him by any means to her father's object. How widely different were his emotions when the door opened, and his lovely travelling-companion, whom, in the terrors of the past night, he had forgotten, entered, in blushing embarrassment, with the bottle of wine. In a tumult of mingled apprehension and delight, he started from his chair, but the cordial greeting he intended was checked by a significant wink from the lively fair one as she passed behind her father to the table. It was obvious to Florian that she wished to conceal their previous acquaintance, and with a silent bow he resumed his seat, while the smiling maid, whom her father introduced to his guest by the name of Madelon, took a chair between them, and the conversation soon became general and exhilarating.

The continued fever of apprehension which had almost unhinged the reason of the timid Florian, now rapidly subsided. The cordial hospitality of the old headsman soon made him feel at home in an abode which he had once contemplated with horror

and disgust; while the artless attentions and fascinating vivacity of the pretty Madelon soon wove around him a magic spell, and invested the Gothic chambers of her father's antique mansion with all the splendours of Aladdin's palace.

Motherless from the age of fourteen, and secluded by her father's vocation from all society save occasional intercourse with relatives of the same degraded caste, the headsman's daughter had been early accustomed to rely upon her own resources.

Most of her leisure hours had been devoted to a comprehensive course of historical reading, from which her unpolished but strong-minded father conceived that she would derive not only amusement and instruction, but that sustaining fortitude so essential to the station in which her lot was cast. Thus her innocent and active mind, untainted by the licentiousness and infidelity of French romance, acquired concentration and strength; the study of sacred and profane history induced habits of salutary reflection, and her character gradually developed a masculine yet unpretending energy, which admirably fitted her to become the helpmate of a man so timid and indecisive as Florian. Her mother was a Parisian, of good manners and education, but an orphan and defenceless. Persecuted by a licentious nobleman, who, in revenge for her firm rejection of his dishonourable addresses, had accused her of theft, she had effected her escape from the

chateau in which she resided as governess to his daughters, to the same town in which Florian had been discovered by the headsman. Circumstances somewhat similar, but not essential to my narrative, had induced her to accept a temporary asylum in the house of the executioner, whose mother was then living; and here, in a moment of despair at her destitute and hopeless condition, she accepted the often-tendered addresses of the enamoured headsman, and became his wife. The life of this amiable and accomplished woman was shortened by her calamities, and by a sense of degradation which she could never subdue. Secluded from all human society save that of an uncultivated husband, who but imperfectly understood her value, she loved her only child with more than a mother's idolatry; and, while her strength permitted, devoted herself, with unceasing solicitude, to the formation of her mind, and to the regulation of her untamable vivacity. Thus happily moulded in her early youth, and judiciously cultivated after her mother's death, Madelon combined, with clear and vigorous perceptions, a degree of personal attraction rarely seen in France, and no small portion of the feminine grace and fascination peculiar to well-educated Frenchwomen, while to these advantages were superadded eyes of radiant lustre, a voice rich in soft and musical inflections, and a smile of irresistible archness and witchery. Accustomed, from

her limited opportunities of observation, to regard men as collectively coarse and uncultivated, she had been immediately and powerfully attracted by the elegant person, the refined and gentle manners, of Florian, during their four leagues' journey; and to one who felt the value of knowledge, and eagerly sought to extend her means of pursuing it, there was, on farther acquaintance, a charm in his comprehensive attainments and in the classic elegance of his diction, which compensated for the unmanly timidity and morbid infirmity of purpose, so easily distinguishable in his character and conduct.

In Florian, whose feelings were fortified by reminiscences of a prior attachment, the progress of sentiment was slower, but not less certain in its tendency. His silent worship of Angelique had always been accompanied by doubts and misgivings innumerable. He thought her lost to him for ever; he felt that all his prospects of professional advancement were blighted by the disastrous incident at D., and his consequent flight; and insensibly he yielded to the charm of daily and hourly intercourse with the bewitching Madelon. The consciousness of her admiring prepossession, and of his own superior attainments, gave to him, while conversing with her, a soothing self-possession, an expansion of thought and feeling, and a glowing facility of elocution, which he had never yet experienced, and which proved a source of exquisite and

inexhaustible gratification. Her unceasing sympathy and kindness, her flattering anticipation of his wishes, lulled the anguish of his recollections, and her sparkling gaiety never failed to rouse his drooping spirits. He soon learned to estimate at its true value the rare combination of gentleness and energy which her character displayed; while her courageous self-possession and unfailing resources under every difficulty, made him regard her as a woman gifted beyond her sex with those qualities in which he felt himself most deficient. In short, feelings of deep and lasting attachment stole insensibly into the hearts of the youthful pair. Florian had surrendered all his sympathies to Madelon before he was conscious of the power she had gained over his happiness, and their mutual affection was betrayed and sealed by word and pledge before he reflected upon the inevitable consequences. Too soon, alas! he was awakened from this dream of bliss to a long reality of terror and anguish. The spell which bound him was broken, and the scene of enchantment was abruptly changed into a chaos of interminable dismay and anxiety.

Some weeks after his arrival in this asylum, the headsman had advised him to prolong his stay until all danger of pursuit had subsided, and the fears of the fugitive soon gave way to cheering sensations of security and confidence. To lovers the present is everything: Florian forgot alike the trying past

and the menacing future ; weeks and months flitted past unobserved by the youthful pair, while the crafty headsman, who had silently watched their growing intelligence, crowed in secret over the now certain success of his stratagem.

Several months had thus elapsed, and the old man, after ascertaining from his daughter that the affections and the honour of Florian were irredeemably plighted, took an opportunity to address him one morning as soon as Madelon had quitted the breakfast-room.

“ I think it is high time, young man,” he said, smiling, “ that you should proceed to business. Come along with me into my workshop.”

Florian looked at him in silent wonder, but unhesitatingly followed him into the capacious cellars, where the old man unlocked a door which his guest had never before observed. Florian entered with his conductor, but started back in dismay as he saw a number of executioner’s swords and axes hanging round the walls of a low vaulted room, in the centre of which several cabbage-heads were fixed with pegs upon an oblong block of wood. The headsman took one of the swords from the wall, drew it from the scabbard, carefully wiped the glittering blade, and then offered it to Florian. “ Now, my son,” he began, “ try your strength upon these cabbage-heads. It is easy work, and requires nothing but a steady hand.”

"Gracious heaven! you cannot be in earnest!" exclaimed Florian, retreating from him in deadly terror.

"Not in earnest?" rejoined the headsman, sternly; "I consider your compliance as a matter of course. You love my daughter—you have won her affections—and surely, Florian, you are not the man to play her false!"

"God forbid!" exclaimed Florian with honest fervour. "I dearly love her, and seek no happier lot than to become her husband."

"I offered her to you, my son!" said the other with returning kindness; "but you did not like the conditions, and declined her. You have since, without my permission, sought and won her affections, and you have no right to flinch from the implied consequences. It is high time to come to a conclusion, and to apply yourself in good faith to the only pursuit through which you can ever obtain my Madelon."

"The only one?" timidly repeated Florian. "I have, 'tis true, abandoned for your daughter's sake the world, and the world's prejudices; but I am young and industrious; I possess valuable knowledge, and surely I may find some employment which will maintain a wife and family. Do, my good father, relinquish this dreadful vocation"—

"And my daughter!" exclaimed the headsman, with loud and bitter emphasis. "What is to be-

come of *her*? If even you could step back within the pale of society, *she* would for ever be excluded. But you have neither moral courage nor animal bravery enough for any worldly pursuit — your original station in society is irrecoverably gone — and if you attempt to leave this safe asylum, the sword of justice will face you at every turn. No, no, Florian! I love my future son-in-law too well to expose him to such imminent and deadly peril. There, read that paper! The contents will bring you to your senses.”

With these words, which struck like a wintry chill into the heart of Florian, he took an old newspaper from his pocket-book. The unhappy fugitive received it with a shaking hand, and read a judicial summons from the authorities of D., seeking intelligence of a student, who had on a certain day quitted the university by the diligence for Normandy, and unaccountably disappeared. His Christian and surname, with an accurate description of his dress and person, were appended. Glancing fearfully down the page, he distinguished some particulars of a murder; his sight grew dim with terror; and after a vain attempt to read farther, he dropped the fatal document, and reeled back, breathless, and almost fainting, against the wall.

“He is the very man!” muttered the headsmen, whose keen eye had been intently fixed upon him during the perusal. “I never asked your real

name, young man," he continued, "but now I know it. Your terrors would betray it to a child. How then are you, without fortitude to face the common evils of life, and bearing in every feature a betrayer, to escape the giant-grasp of the French police? And had this calamity never befallen you, how could you gain a support in a world, which, by your own confession, you have ever found ungenial and repulsive? Believe me, Florian! here, and here only, will you find safety, support, and happiness."

"Happiness?" mournfully repeated Florian.

"Yes, happiness!" rejoined the tempter. "You and Madelon love each other, and in every station, from the highest to the lowest, love is the salt of life, the balm and cordial of existence. My office descends from generation to generation; it insures to the holder not only a good house and landed property, but an income of no mean amount. Every traveller who passes my house pays me a toll, because fifty years since an inundation compelled the town to cut a high-road through my grandfather's garden. Of all these benefits I shall be deprived, when old and disabled, if my children disdain to follow my vocation; and if Madelon were to marry within the pale of that society which regards her father with abhorrence, my house and vineyard would be destroyed by the bigoted and furious populace, and too probably my innocent child along with them. Have you the heart, Florian, to hazard her

destruction and your own, in preference to an office essential to the existence of civil society, and from which that obedience to the laws, which is the first duty of a good citizen, removes all self-reproach? With a due sense of the importance of your official duties, you will find yourself sustained in the performance of them; and a practised hand will soon give you firmness enough to follow a vocation attended with no personal risk; but if you determine to leave me, where will you find resolution to face the perils which surround you? and if you escape them, how are you to compete in the race of life with the daring and the fleet?"

The appalling alternatives held out to Florian by the politic headsmen, and the consciousness of his own inability either to escape the police, or to steer his way successfully through the shoals and quicksands of life, rendered him incapable of argument or reply. He had for some months been cut off from all that freedom has to bestow—he had neither relations nor friends on whose interposition he could firmly rely—he recollected with agony that every heart beyond the limits of his present home was steeled against him—that every hand was ready to seize and betray him. Should he quit this safe asylum, and even establish his innocence of the imputed murder, his ignorance of the world, and his invincible timidity and self-distrust, would make him the prey of any plausible knavery. Bewildered

and stupified by contending emotions, his mind became palsied by despair, and his powers of resistance began to fail him. The headsman saw his advantage; but, satisfied with the impression he had made upon his hapless victim, he ceased to press any immediate decision, told him to consider of the proposal, and went to his vineyard; while Florian, hastening to his Madelon, was assailed by all the witchery of sighs and tears; by looks, which alternately pleaded and upbraided; and by inspiriting and cogent arguments, which shamed him into temporary resolution. Thus alternately intimidated by the deep tones and stern denunciations of the father, encouraged by the specious reasonings of the daughter, or soothed by her resistless fascinations; assured, too, by the headsman, that for some years sentences of decapitation, with rare exceptions, had been commuted for the galleys, his power to contend with his tempter abandoned him: he dropped, like the fascinated bird, into the jaws of the serpent; and, yielding to his destiny, he commenced his training in a vocation from which every feeling in his nature, and every dictate of his understanding, recoiled with abhorrence.

It was no sacrifice, to one of his timid and fastidious habits, to abandon a world in which he had ever found himself an alien, and which he now thought confederated to persecute and destroy him. He submitted in uncomplaining resignation to his

fate, and ere long found relief in the growing attachment of the headsman and his daughter. His pure and affectionate heart, and the undeviating rectitude of his principles and conduct, soon won the entire esteem of the old man, whose better feelings had not been blunted by his official duties; while the light-hearted and bewitching Madelon, who now loved almost to idolatry a man so incomparably superior to any she had hitherto known, delighted to cheer his hours of sadness, and watched his every wish with intense and unwearied solicitude. Meanwhile, the old man had quietly made every requisite preparation, and a month after the assent of Florian to his proposal, the lovers were united. The official appointment of Florian, as adopted successor to the headsman, took place some days before the marriage, and it was stipulated by the town authorities that, on the next ensuing condemnation of a criminal to death, he should prove on the scaffold his competency to succeed the executioner.

For many months after this appointment, every arrival of a criminal in the town prison struck terror into the heart of Florian. Happily, however, the assertion of the headsman that it was a growing practice of the judicial authorities to substitute the galleys for decapitation, was verified by the fact, and Florian enjoyed several years of domestic happiness, disturbed only by apprehensions which he

could never subdue, that sooner or later the evil he so much dreaded would certainly befall him. Meanwhile his beloved Madelon had made him the happy father of three promising boys, and he began to experience a degree of tranquillity to which he had long been a stranger; when, at a period in which the town-prison was untenanted, the long-dreaded calamity burst upon his devoted head like a bolt of lightning from a cloudless sky.

His father-in-law received one morning at breakfast an order from the town authorities to repair early on the following day to a city at ten leagues distance, and there to behead a criminal whose execution had been delayed by the illness and death of the resident headsman. At this unexpected intelligence, the features of Florian were blanched with horror, but the iron visage of the old executioner betrayed not the slightest emotion. Regardless of his son-in-law's terrors, he viewed this unexpected summons as a fortunate incident, and maintained that any unskilfulness in decapitation would be of less importance at a distance than in his native town. He regarded also this brief summons as much more favourable to Florian's success than a longer foreknowledge, and urged in strong and decisive terms the necessity of submission to the call of duty. The blood of Florian froze as he listened, but he acquiesced, as usual, in timid silence. In the afternoon he yielded to the old

man's wish, that he should give what the headsman termed a master-proof of his skill in the science of decapitation, and with cold sweat on his brow severed a number of cabbage-heads to the satisfaction of his teacher. Meanwhile the sympathising but energetic Madelon prepared a palatable meal, and endeavoured, more successfully than her uncompromising parent, to sustain and cheer the drooping spirits of the husband she so entirely loved. She could not, however, always suppress her starting tears; and as the night approached, even the firm nature of the old headsman betrayed symptoms of growing anxiety, notwithstanding his endeavours to exhilarate himself by deep potations of his favourite wine.

After a night of wearying vigilance and internal conflict, the miserable Florian entered at daybreak the vehicle which awaited him and his father-in-law under the arched gateway. With a view to prevent his trembling substitute from witnessing all the preparations for the approaching catastrophe, the old man so measured his progress as to enter the city a few minutes before the appointed hour, and drove immediately to the scene of action, without pausing at the church, to attend, as customary, the mass then performing in presence of the criminal. Soon after their arrival, the melancholy procession approached, and Florian, unable to face the criminal, turned hastily away, ascended the ladder

with unsteady steps, and concealed himself behind the massive person of the old headsman, as the victim of offended justice, with a firm and measured step, mounted the scaffold. The old man felt for his shrinking son-in-law, but kept a stern eye upon him, in hopes to counteract the disabling effects of his rising agony. When, however, the decisive moment approached, he whispered to him encouragingly—"Be a man, Florian! Beware of looking at the criminal before you strike; but when his head is lifted, look him boldly in the face, or the people will doubt your courage."

Florian fixed on him a vacant stare, but these kindly-meant instructions reached not his inward ear. The remembrance of the execution he had witnessed with his friend Bartholdy had flashed upon him, and he recollected the taunting prediction—that he might himself be condemned to the scaffold. His agony rose almost to suffocation; he compared his own destiny with that of the being whom he was about to deprive of life, and he felt that he could not unwillingly have taken his place. At this moment his attention was caught by the admiring comments of the crowd upon the courageous bearing and firm unflinching features of the criminal. Roused by these exclamations to a stinging consciousness of his own unmanly timidity, he made a powerful effort, and rallied his expiring energies into temporary life and action. The headsman now

approached him with the broad axe, and whispered, "Courage, my son! 'tis nothing but a cabbage-head."

With a desperate effort, Florian seized the weapon, fixed his dim gaze upon the white neck of the criminal, and, guided more by long practice than by any estimate of place and distance, he struck the death-stroke. The head fell upon the hollow flooring of the scaffold with an appalling bounce, which petrified the unfortunate executioner. The consciousness that he had deprived a fellow-creature of life now smote him with a withering power, which for some moments deprived him of all volition, and he stood in passive stupor, gazing wildly upon the blood which streamed in torrents from the headless trunk. Immediately, however, his father-in-law again approached him, with a whisper. "Admirably done, my son! I give you joy! But recollect my warning, and look boldly at your work, or the mob will hoot you as a craven headsman from the scaffold."

The old man was obliged to repeat his admonition before it reached the senses of his unconscious son-in-law. Long accustomed to yield unresisting obedience, Florian slowly raised his eyes, at the moment when the executioner's assistant, after showing the criminal's head to the multitude, turned round and held out to him the bleeding and ghastly object.—Gracious Heaven! what were his feelings

when he encountered a well-known face—when he saw the yellow pock-marked visage of Bartholdy, whose widely-opened milk-blue eyes were fixed upon him in the glassy, dim, and vacant stare of death!

Paralysed with sudden and overwhelming horror, he fell senseless into the arms of the headsman, who had watched this critical moment, and, with ready self-possession, loudly attributed to recent illness an incident so puzzling to the spectators. He succeeded ere long in rousing Florian to an imperfect sense of his critical situation, and, supporting his tottering frame, led him to the house of the deceased executioner. For an hour after their arrival, the unhappy youth sat mute and motionless—the living image of despair. Agony in him had passed its wildest paroxysm, and settled down into a blind and mechanical unconsciousness. The old man, who began to suspect some extraordinary reason for emotion so excessive, compelled him to swallow several glasses of wine, and anxiously besought him to explain the cause of his impassioned deportment. It was long, however, before the disconsolate Florian regained the power of utterance. At length a burst of tears relieved him. "I knew him!" he began, in a voice broken by convulsive sobs. "He was once my friend. Oh, my father! there is no hope for me! I am a doomed man—a murderer! He stands before me ever, and demands my

blood in atonement for his destruction. How can I justify such guilt? I never knew his crime—I cannot even fancy him a criminal—but I well remember that he loved and cherished me. Away, my father, if you love me, to the judges! I *must* know his crime, or the pangs I feel will never depart from me.”

The executioner, in whose stern and inflexible nature feelings of pity, and even of repentance, were now at work, hastened to obtain some information, and returned in half an hour, with indications of anxiety and doubt too obvious to escape the unhappy Florian, who, with folded hands, exclaimed, “For God-sake, father, tell me all—I must know it, sooner or later. Your anxiety prepares me for the worst. If you, a man of iron, are thus shaken”——

“I? Nonsense!” retorted the old man, somewhat disconcerted. “The fellow was a notorious villain, and was executed for two murders.”

Florian, relieved by this intelligence, began to breathe more freely, and gazed upon the headsman with looks which sought further explanation. “Florian,” continued the old man, fixing upon him his stern and searching look, “when you told me the tale of your calamities at D., did you tell me *all*? Had you *no* reservations?”

“None, father, by all I hold most sacred!” replied Florian, with emphatic earnestness.

"One of Bartholdy's crimes," resumed the headsman, "was connected with your story. He is said to have slain the officer in whose murder you thought yourself implicated by suspicious appearances."

"*He?*" exclaimed Florian, gasping with horror. "No! by the Almighty God, he did *not* slay him! I have beheaded an innocent man, and the remembrance will cleave to me like a curse!"

"Can you *prove* that he had no share in that murder?" now sternly demanded the headsman, whose suspicions had been roused by Florian's acknowledgment of former intimacy with Bartholdy.

"I can swear to his innocence of *that* murder," vehemently replied Florian, whose energies rose with his excitement. "And the other crime?" he eagerly continued. "In mercy, father, tell me whom else he is said to have murdered?"

"*Yourself!*" said the old man, turning pale as he anticipated the effect of this communication,—"*the name inserted in the judicial summons from D. was really yours.*"

For some moments Florian gazed upon him in speechless despair—his eyes became fixed and glassy—his jaw dropped—and he would have fallen from his chair, had not the old man supported him. The headsman looked with anxious and growing perplexity upon his unfortunate victim.

"After all," he muttered, "he is my daughter's husband, and a good husband. I forced him to the task, and must, if possible, save him from the consequences."

By an abundant application of cold water to the face of Florian, he succeeded at length in restoring him to consciousness. The miserable youth opened his eyes, and, leaning on the old man's shoulders, burst into a passion of tears. When in some measure tranquillised, the headsman asked him soothingly if he was sufficiently collected to listen to him.

"Yes, father, I am," he replied, with an effort.

"Recollect, then, my son," continued the old man, "that you are under the assured protection of the sword, and that you may open your heart to me without fear of consequences. Say, then, in the first place, who are you?"

"I am no other, father," answered Florian, with returning energy, "than I have already acknowledged to you; and I was the early friend and school-fellow of the man whose blood I have shed upon the scaffold. But I must and will have clear proof of *every* crime imputed to Bartholdy," he exclaimed in wild emotion. "Again I see his large dim eyes fixed on me in reproach; and if you cannot give me evidence that he deserved his fate, my remorse will goad me on to suicide or madness."

It was now evident to the old man that the sus-

picious he had founded on Florian's acknowledged intimacy with Bartholdy were groundless. Recollecting, too, the undeviating truth and honesty of Florian's character, he felt all the injustice of his suspicions; and his compassion for the tortured feelings of his son-in-law became actively excited. He clearly saw that nothing but the truth, and the whole truth, would satisfy him; he determined, therefore, to call upon the criminal's confessor; and, after prevailing upon the exhausted Florian to go to bed, he watched by him until he saw his wearied senses sealed up in sleep, and then departed in quest of farther intelligence.

After three hours of undisturbed repose, which restored, in some measure, the exhausted strength of Florian, he awoke, and saw his father-in-law sitting by his bed, with a confident and cheerful composure of look, which spoke comfort to his wounded spirit.

"Florian," he began, "I have cheering news for you. I have seen the confessor of Bartholdy, a good old man, who feels for, and wishes to console you. He has long known the habits and character of the criminal. More he would not say, but he will receive you this evening at his convent, and will not only impart to you the consolations of religion, but reveal as much of the criminal's previous life as the sacred obligations of a confessor will permit. Meanwhile, my son, you must rouse your-

self from this stupor, and accompany me in a walk round the city ramparts."

After a restorative excursion, they repaired, at the appointed hour, to the Jesuit convent, and were immediately conducted to the cell of the confessor, an aged and venerable priest, who gazed for some seconds in silent wonder on the dejected Florian, and then, laying a hand upon his shoulder, exclaimed, "Gracious Heaven! Florian, is it possible that I see you alive?"

The startled youth raised his downcast eyes at this exclamation, and recognised in the Jesuit before him the worthy superior of the school at which he had been educated, and the same who had congratulated him on the disappearance of Bartholdy. This discovery imparted instant and unspeakable relief to the harassed feelings of Florian. The years he had passed under the paternal care of this benevolent old man arose with healing influence in his memory, and losing, in the sudden glow of filial regard and entire confidence, all his wonted timidity, he poured his tale of misery and remorse into the sympathising ear of the good father, with the artless and irresistible eloquence of a mind pure from all offence. The confessor, who listened with warm interest to his recital, forbore to interrupt its progress by questions. "I rejoice to learn," he afterwards replied, "that Bartholdy, although deeply stained with crime, quitted this life with

less of guilt than he was charged with on his conscience. The details of his confession I cannot reveal, without a breach of the sacred trust reposed in me. It is enough to state, that he was deeply criminal. Without reference, however, to his more recent transgressions, I can impart to you some particulars of his earlier life, and of his implication in the murder you have detailed, which will be sufficient to relieve your conscience, and reconcile you to the will of Him who, for wise purposes, made you the blind instrument of well-merited punishment. Know then, my son, that when Bartholdy was supposed by yourself and others to have absconded from the seminary, he was a prisoner within its walls. Certain evidence had reached the presiding fathers, that this reckless youth was connected with a band of plundering incendiaries, who had for some months infested the neighbouring districts. Odious alike to his teachers and school-fellows, repulsed by every one but you, and almost daily subjected to punishment or remonstrance, he sought and found more congenial associates beyond our walls; and, with a view to raise money for the gratification of his vicious propensities, he contrived to scale our gates at night, and took an active part in the plunder of several unprotected dwellings. At the same time, we received a friendly intimation from the police, that he was implicated in a projected scheme to fire and plunder a neigh-

bouring chateau, and that the ensuing night was fixed upon for the perpetration of this atrocity. Upon inquiry it was discovered that Bartholdy had been out all night, and it was now feared that he had finally absconded. Happily, however, for the good name of the seminary, he returned soon after the arrival of this intelligence, and, as I now conjecture, with a view to repossess himself of the knife he had left in your custody. He was immediately secured and committed to close confinement, in the hope that his solitary reflections, aided by our admonitions, would have gradually wrought a salutary change in his character. This confinement, which was sanctioned by his relations, was prolonged three years without any beneficial result; and at length, after many fruitless attempts, he succeeded in making his escape. Joining the scattered remnant of the band of villains dispersed by the police, he soon became their leader in the contrivance and execution of atrocities which I must not reveal, but which I cannot recollect without a shudder. In consequence of high winds and clouds of dust, the public walk and grove beyond the gate of D. had been some days deserted by the inhabitants, and the body of the murdered officer was not discovered until the fourth morning after your departure from the university. A catastrophe so dreadful had not for many years occurred in that peaceful district: a proportionate degree of abhorrence was roused in

the public mind, and the excited people rushed in crowds to view the corpse, in which, by order of the police, the fatal knife was left as when first discovered; while secret agents mingled with the crowd, to watch the various emotions of the spectators. Guided by a retributive providence, Bartholdy, who had that morning arrived in D., approached the body, and gazed upon it with callous indifference, until the remarkable handle of his long-lost knife caught his eye. Starting at the well-remembered object, a deep flush darkened his yellow visage, and immediately the police-officers darted forward and seized him. At first he denied all knowledge of the knife, and, when again brought close to the body, he gazed upon it with all his wonted hardihood; but when told to take the bloody weapon from the wound, he grasped the handle with a shudder, drew it forth with sudden effort, and, as he gazed on the discoloured blade, his joints shook with terror, and the knife fell from his trembling hand. Superstition was ever largely blended with the settled ferocity of Bartholdy's character, and I now attribute this emotion to a fear that his destiny was in some way connected with this fatal weapon, which had already caused his long imprisonment, and would now too probably endanger his life. This ungovernable agitation confirmed the general suspicion excited by his forbidding and savage exterior. He was immediately

conveyed to the hotel of the police, and the knife was placed before him; but when again interrogated, he long persisted in denying all knowledge of it. When questioned, however, as to his name and occupation, and his object in the city of D., his embarrassment increased, his replies involved him in contradictions, and at length he admitted that he *had* seen the knife before, and in *your* possession. This attempt to criminate you by implication, failed, however, to point any suspicion against one whose unblemished life and character were so well known in the university. Your gentle and retiring habits, your shrinking aversion from scenes of strife and bloodshed, were recollected by many present: their indignation was loudly uttered, and a friend of yours expressed his belief that you had quitted the city some days before the murder was committed. In short, this base and groundless insinuation of Bartholdy created an impression highly disadvantageous to him. A few hours later, intelligence arrived that the diligence in which you had left D. had been attacked by a band of robbers, while passing through a forest, the day after your departure. Several of the passengers had been wounded; some killed; others had saved themselves by flight; and, as you had disappeared, it was now conjectured that Bartholdy had murdered you, and taken from your person the knife with which he had afterwards stabbed the young man

in the grove. This presumptive evidence against him was so much strengthened by his sudden emotion at the sight of the weapon, and by the apparent probability that the murder of the young officer had succeeded the robbery of the diligence, that the watch and money found upon the body failed to create any impression in his favour, as it was conjectured, by the strongly excited people, that he had been alarmed by passing footsteps before he had succeeded in rifling his victim. He was put into close confinement until farther evidence could be obtained; and, ere long, a letter arrived to your address from Normandy, stating the arrival of your trunk by the carrier, and expressing surprise at your non-appearance. A judicial summons, detailing your name and person, and citing you to appear and give evidence against the supposed murderer, led to no discovery of your retreat, and the evidence of your wounded fellow-travellers was obscure and contradictory. Meanwhile, however, several of the robbers who had attacked the diligence were captured by the *gens-d'armes*. When confronted with Bartholdy, their intelligence was sufficiently obvious, and he at length confessed his co-operation in the murderous assault upon the travellers; but stoutly denied that he had either injured or even seen you amongst the passengers, and as tenaciously maintained his innocence of the murder committed in the grove. Your entire dis-

appearance however, his emotion on beholding the knife, and his admission that he knew it, still operated so strongly against him that he was tried and pronounced guilty of three crimes, each of which was punishable with death. During the week succeeding his trial, he was supplied by a confederate with tools, which enabled him to escape and resume his predatory habits; nor was he retaken until a month before his execution, while engaged in a robbery of singular boldness and atrocity. He was recognised as the hardened criminal who had escaped from confinement at D.; and as the authorities were apprehensive that no prison would long hold so expert and desperate a villain, an order was obtained from Paris for the immediate execution of the sentence already passed upon him at D. Thus, although guilty of one only of the three crimes for which he suffered, the forfeiture of ten lives would not have atoned for his multiplied transgressions. From boyhood even he had preyed upon society with the insatiable ferocity of a tiger; and you, my son, ought not to murmur at the decree which made your early acquaintance with him the means of stopping his savage career, and your hand the instrument of retribution."

The concluding words of the venerable priest fell like healing balm upon the wounded spirit of Florian, who returned home an altered and a saddened, but a sustained and a devout man: deeply conscious

that the ways of Providence, however intricate, are just; and more resigned to a vocation, to which he now conceived that he had been for especial purposes appointed. He followed, too, the advice of the friendly priest, in leaving the public belief of his own death uncontradicted; and, as he had not actually witnessed the murder in the grove near D., he felt himself justified in withholding his evidence against an individual, of whose innocence there was a remote possibility.

The mental agony of the unfortunate young headsman had been so acute, that a reaction upon his bodily health was inevitable. Symptoms of serious indisposition appeared the next day, and were followed by a long and critical malady, which, however, eventually increased his domestic happiness, by unfolding in his Madelon nobler and higher attributes than he had yet discovered in her character. No longer the giddy and laughter-loving Frenchwoman, she had, for some years, become a devoted wife and mother; but it was not until she saw her husband's gentle spirit for ever blighted, and his life endangered for some weeks by a wasting fever, that she felt all his claims upon her, and bitterly reproached herself as the sole cause of his heaviest calamities. During this long period of sickness, when all worldly objects were waning around this man of sorrows, she watched, and wept, and prayed over him with an untiring assiduity and

self-oblivion, which developed to the grateful Florian all the unfathomable depths of woman's love, and proved her consummate skill and patience in all the tender offices and trying duties of a sick-chamber. Her health was undermined, and her fine eyes were dimmed for ever by long-continued vigilance; but her assiduities were at length rewarded by a favourable crisis; and when the patient sufferer was sufficiently restored to bear the disclosure, she kneeled to him in deep humility, and acknowledged, what the reader has doubtless long conjectured, that *she* had, from an upper window, caused that ominous jarring of the sword and axe which induced her father to suspect and follow him, and which eventually led to their marriage.

Florian started in sudden indignation; but his gentle nature, and the hallowed influences of recent sickness and calamity, soon prevailed over his wrath. What *could* he say? How could he chide the lovely and devoted woman, whose fraud had grown out of her affection for him! In an instant he forgot his own sorrows; and, as he listened to the mournful and beseeching accents of her who was the mother of his children, and had been unto him, in sickness and in health, a ministering angel, his anger melted into love. He had no words; but, like the father of the humbled prodigal, he had compassion, and fell upon her neck and kissed her, and forgave her entirely, and for ever.

The old headsman survived these events several years; and, while his strength continued equal to the effort, he spared his son-in-law from the trying duties of his office. After his death, however, his successor was compelled to encounter the dreadful task. For some time before and after each execution, sadness sat heavy on his soul, but yielded gradually to the sustaining influence of fervent prayer, and to the caresses of his wife and children. In the intervening periods he regained comparative tranquillity, and devoted himself unceasingly to the education of his boys, and to the labours of his field and vineyard. I have been told, however, that since the execution of Bartholdy he was never seen to smile; and that, when gazing on the joyous sports of his unconscious children, his eyes would often fill with tears of sorrowing anticipation. Thus many years elapsed: his boys have become men, and the recent training and nomination of one of them as his successor, have renewed in the heart of the fond father all those bitter pangs which the soothing agency of time and occupation had lulled to comparative repose.

* * * * *

Here the interesting narrator paused. Towards the conclusion of his recital his mournful voice had quivered with suppressed emotion; and, as he finished, his eyes were clouded with tears.

His companions had listened to this affecting nar-

rative with a sympathy which, for some moments, subdued all power of utterance, and the silence which ensued was interrupted only by involuntary and deep-drawn sighs. At length the Professor roused himself, and, prompted by a friendly wish to draw out a more explanatory conclusion, he put the leading question, "Had he, then, *no* alternative?"

"You forget, my dear sir," replied Julius, rallying with sudden effort, "that by the French laws the son of an executioner *must* succeed his father, or see the family estate transferred to strangers. When the old headsman was near his end, his son-in-law pledged himself by oath to train a son as his own successor. His eldest boy, who blended with his father's gentle manners some portion of his mother's courage, evinced, from an early age, such determined antipathy to this vocation, that the appointment was transferred to the second son, who had inherited the masculine spirit and prompt decision of his mother. Unhappily, however, soon after his nomination, he died of a malignant fever. His sorrowing mother, who had for some time observed symptoms of declining health in her husband, and was indescribably solicitous to see him relieved from his official duties, prevailed upon her youngest son, in absence of her first-born, to accept the appointment. But this youth, not then nineteen, and in mind and person the counterpart of his timid father, was equally unsuited to this formidable calling. Well knowing,

however, that his refusal would deprive his parents of the home and the support so essential to their growing infirmities, he strung his nerves to the appalling task, and, at the next execution, he mounted the scaffold as his father's substitute. But, alas! at the decisive moment his strength and resolution failed him. His sight grew dim with horror, and he performed his trying duty so unskilfully, that the people groaned with indignation at the protracted sufferings of the unfortunate criminal, and the town authorities pronounced him unqualified. The consequence of this disastrous failure was an immediate summons to the eldest son, who had for several years thought himself finally released from this terrible appointment. So unexpected a change in his destination fell upon him like a death-blow; and, as he read the fatal summons, he felt the sword and axe grating on his very soul."

"And do you think it possible," exclaimed one of the students, "that after such long exemption he will submit to a life so horrible?"

"Too probably," replied Julius, mournfully, "he *must* submit to it. Indeed, I see no alternative. His refusal would not only deprive his drooping and unhappy parents of every means of support, but too probably expose their lives to the fury of a bigoted and ferocious populace. None but a childless headsman can hold his property during life without a

qualified successor; and, when he dies, the magistrates appoint another."

Here Julius paused again. He gazed for some moments in melancholy abstraction upon the dying embers in the stove—the tears again started to his eyes, and he rose abruptly to depart; nor could the joint efforts of the kind Professor, and the now warmly-interested students, prevail on him to stay out another bowl of punch.

"To-morrow early," said he, in unsteady tones, to the Professor, "I will claim your promised introduction to the lieutenant. Till then, farewell!"

"Promise me, then, my dear Julius," rejoined his host, "that you will give us your company to-morrow evening. After so trying a spectacle, a bowl of punch, and the society of four friends, will recruit and cheer you."

The students successively grasped his hand, and cordially urged him to comply. Overcome by this unexpected sympathy, the agitated youth could not restrain his tears, and in a voice tremulous with emotion, he said, "I shall never forget your kindness, and, if I know my heart, I shall prove myself not unworthy of it. If in my power, I will join your friendly circle to-morrow night; but"—he hesitatingly added—"I have never yet faced an execution, and I know not how far such strong excitement may unfit me for society."

The Professor and his friends accompanied him to the street, where they again shook hands and separated.

* * * * *

On the following evening the three students were again assembled in the Professor's study, and the conversation turned more upon their new friend and his interesting narrative, than upon the tragedy of that morning. The Professor told them that Julius had called early, and been introduced by him to the lieutenant, since which he had not seen or heard of him. One of the students said, that his curiosity to observe the deportment of their mysterious friend had led him early to the ground, where he had seen Julius standing, with folded arms, and pale as death, within a few feet of the scaffold; but that, unable to subdue his own loathing of the approaching catastrophe, he had left the ground before the arrival of the criminal.

An hour elapsed in momentary expectation of the young student's arrival, but he came not. The conversation gradually dropped into monosyllables, and the Professor could no longer disguise his anxiety, when a gentle tap was heard, like that of the preceding night, and without any previous sound of approaching footsteps. "Come in!" cheerfully shouted the relieved Professor, but the door was not unclosed. Again he called, but vainly as before. Then starting from his chair, he opened the door,

but discovered no one. The students, who also fancied they had heard a gentle knock, looked at each other in silent amazement; and the warm-hearted Professor, unable to reason down his boding fears, determined to seek Julius at his lodgings, and requested one of the students to accompany him.

He knew the street, but not the house, in which the young man resided; and as soon as they had entered the street, their attention was excited by a tumultuous assemblage of people at no great distance. Hastening to the spot, the Professor ascertained from a bystander that the crowd had been collected by the loud report of a gun or pistol in the apartments of a student. Struck with an appalling presentiment, the Professor and his companion forced a passage to the house-door, and were admitted by the landlord, to whom the former was well known. "Tell me!" exclaimed the Professor, gasping with terror and suspense—"Is it Julius Arenbourg?"

"Alas! it is indeed," replied the other. "Follow me up-stairs, and you shall see him."

They found the body of the ill-fated youth extended on the bed, and a pistol near him, the ball of which had gone through his heart. His fine features, although somewhat contracted by the peculiar action of a gunshot wound, still retained much of their bland and melancholy character. The

landlord and his family wept as they related that Julius, who was their favourite lodger, had returned home after the execution with hurried steps, and a countenance of death-like paleness. Without speaking to the children, as was his wont, he had locked the door of his apartment, where he remained several hours, and then hastened with some letters to the post-office. In a few minutes after his return, the fatal shot summoned them to his room, where they found him dying and speechless. "But I had nearly forgotten," concluded the landlord, "that he left upon his table a letter addressed to Professor N."

The worthy man opened the letter with a trembling hand, and, in a voice husky with emotion, read the contents to his companion.

"From you, my dear Professor, and from my younger friends, although but friends of yesterday, I venture to solicit the last kindness which human sympathy can offer. If, as I dare to hope, I have some hold upon your good opinion, you will not refuse to see my remains interred with as much decency as the magistrates will permit. In my purse will be found enough to meet the amount of this and every other claim upon me.

"I have yet another boon to ask, and one of vital moment to my unhappy relatives. I have prepared them to expect intelligence of my death by fever; and surely my request, that the subjoined

notice of my decease may be inserted in the papers of Metz and Strasbourg, will not be disregarded by those whose kindness taught me the value of existence when I had no alternative but to resign it.

“That those earthly blessings, which were denied to me and mine, may be abundantly vouchsafed to you, is the fervent prayer of the unhappy

“JULIUS.

“Died of fever, at —, in Germany, Julius Florian Laroche, a native of Champagne, aged 22.”

“Alas!” exclaimed the deeply affected Professor, “the mystery is solved, and my suspicions were too well founded. Sad indeed was thy destiny, my Julius, and sacred shall be thy last wishes.”

Kissing the cold brow of the deceased, he hung over his remains in silent sorrow, and breathed a fervent prayer for mercy to the suicide; then giving brief directions for the funeral, the Professor and his friend paced slowly homeward, in silence and in tears.

THE WEARYFUL WOMAN.

BY JOHN GALT.

[MAGA. MAY 1821.]

“IT happened,” said Mr M‘Waft, “that there were in the smack many passengers, and among others a talkative gentlewoman of no great capacity, sadly troubled with a weakness of parts about her intellectuals. She was indeed a real weak woman ; I think I never met with her like for weakness, just as weak as water. Oh but she was a weak creature as ever the hand of the Lord put the breath of life in, and from morning to night, even between the bockings of the sea-sickness, she was aye speaking ; na, for that matter, it’s a God’s truth, that at the dead hour of midnight, when I happened to be wakened by a noise on the decks, I heard her speaking to herself for want of other companions ; and yet for all that, she was vastly entertaining, and in her day had seen many a thing that was curious, so that it was no wonder she spoke a great deal, having seen so much ; but she had no command of her

judgment, so that her mind was always going round and round and pointing to nothing, like a weather-cock in a squally day.

“ ‘Mrs M‘Adam,’ quoth I to her one day, ‘I am greatly surprised at your ability in the way of speaking.’ But I was well afflicted for the hypocritical compliment, for she then fastened upon me, and whether it was at meal-time or on the deck, she would come and sit beside me, and talk as if she was trying how many words her tongue could utter without a single grain of sense. I was for a time as civil to her as I could be, but the more civility I showed, the more she talked, and the weather being calm, the vessel made but little way. Such a prospect in a long voyage as I had before me!

“ Seeing that my civility had produced such a vexatious effect, I endeavoured to shun the woman, but she singled me out, and even when I pretended to be overwhelmed with the sickness, she would sit beside me, and never cease from talking. If I went below to my bed, she would come down and sit in the cabin, and tell a thousand stories about remedies for the sea-sickness, for her husband had been a doctor, and had a great reputation for skill. ‘He was a worthy man,’ quoth she, ‘and had a world of practice, so that he was seldom at home, and I was obliged to sit by myself for hours in the day, without a living creature to speak to, and obliged to make the iron tongs my companions, by which

silence and solitude I fell into low spirits; in the end, however, I broke out of them, and from that day to this, I have enjoyed what the doctor called a cheerful fecundity of words; but when he, in the winter following, was laid up with the gout, he fashed at my spirits, and worked himself into such a state of irritation against my endeavours to entertain him, that the gout took his head, and he went out of the world like a pluff of pouter, leaving me a very disconsolate widow; in which condition, it is not every woman who can demean herself with the discretion that I have done. Thanks be and praise, however, I have not been tempted beyond my strength; for when Mr Pawkie, the seceder minister, came shortly after the interment to catch me with the tear in my e'e, I saw through his exhortations, and I told him upon the spot that he might refrain, for it was my intent to spend the remainder of my days in sorrow and lamentation for my dear deceased husband. Don't you think, sir, it was a very proper rebuke to the first putting forth of his cloven foot? But I had soon occasion to fear that I might stand in need of a male protector; for what could I, a simple woman, do with the doctor's bottles and pots, pills and other doses, to say nothing of his brazen pestle and mortar, which of itself was a thing of value, and might be coined, as I was told, into a firlof of farthings; not however that farthings are now much in circulation,

the pennies and new bawbees have quite supplanted them, greatly, as I think, to the advantage of the poor folk, who now get the one or the other, where, in former days, they would have been thankful for a farthing; and yet, for all that, there is a visible increase in the number of beggars, a thing which I cannot understand, and far less thankfulness on their part than of old, when alms were given with a scantier hand; but this, no doubt, comes of the spreading wickedness of the times. Don't you think so, sir? It's a mystery that I cannot fathom, for there was never a more evident passion for church-building than at present; but I doubt there is great truth in the old saying, "The nearer the kirk, the farther from grace," which was well exemplified in the case of Provost Pedigree of our town, a decent man in his externals, and he kept a hardware shop; he was indeed a merchant of "a' things," from a needle and a thimble down to a rattle and a spade. Poor man! he ran at last a ram-race, and was taken before the session; but I had always a jealousy of him, for he used to say very comical things to me in the doctor's lifetime; not that I gave him any encouragement farther than in the way of an innocent joke, for he was a jocose and jocular man, but he never got the better of that exploit with the session, and dwindling away, died the year following of a decay, a disease for which my dear deceased husband used to say no satisfac-

tory remedy exists in nature, except gentle laxatives, before it has taken root: but although I have been the wife of a doctor, and spent the best part of my life in the smell of drugs, I cannot say that I approve of them, except in a case of necessity, where, to be sure, they must be taken, if we intend the doctor's skill to take effect upon us; but many a word me and my dear deceased husband had about my taking of his pills, after my long affliction with the hypochondriacal affection, for I could never swallow them, but always gave them a check between the teeth, and their taste was so odious that I could not help spitting them out. It is indeed a great pity, that the Faculty cannot make their nostrums more palatable, and I used to tell the doctor, when he was making up doses for his patients, that I wondered how he could expect sick folk, unable to swallow savoury food, would ever take his nauseous medicines, which he never could abide to hear, for he had great confidence in many of his prescriptions, especially a bolus of flour of brimstone and treacle for the cold, one of the few of his compounds I could ever take with any pleasure.'

"In this way," said Mr M'Waft, "did that endless woman rain her words into my ear, till I began to fear that something like a gout would also take my head; at last I fell on a device, and, lying in bed, began to snore with great vehemence, as if I had been sound asleep, by which, for a time, I got

rid of her; but being afraid to go on deck lest she should attack me again, I continued in bed, and soon after fell asleep in earnest. How long I had slept I know not, but when I awoke, there was she chattering to the steward, whom she instantly left the moment she saw my eye open, and was at me again. Never was there such a plague invented as that woman; she absolutely worked me into a state of despair, and I fled from her presence as from a serpent; but she would pursue me up and down, back and fore, till everybody aboard was like to die with laughing at us, and all the time she was as serious and polite as any gentlowoman could well be.

“When we got to London, I was terrified she would fasten herself on me there, and therefore, the moment we reached the wharf, I leapt on shore, and ran as fast as I could for shelter to a public-house, till the steward had despatched her in a hackney. Then I breathed at liberty—never was I so sensible of the blessing before, and I made all my acquaintance laugh very heartily at the story; but my trouble was not ended. Two nights after, I went to see a tragedy, and was seated in an excellent place, when I heard her tongue going among a number of ladies and gentlemen that were coming in. I was seized with a horror, and would have fled, but a friend that was with me held me fast; in that same moment she recognised me, and before

I could draw my breath, she was at my side, and her tongue rattling in my lug. This was more than I could withstand, so I got up and left the play-house. Shortly after, I was invited to dinner, and among other guests, in came that afflicting woman, for she was a friend of the family. Oh Lord! such an afternoon I suffered—but the worst was yet to happen.

“I went to St James’s to see the drawing-room on the birthday, and among the crowd I fell in with her again, when, to make the matter complete, I found she had been separated from her friends. I am sure they had left her to shift for herself; she took hold of my arm as an old acquaintance, and humanity would not allow me to cast her off; but although I staid till the end of the ceremonies, I saw nothing; I only heard the continual murmur of her words, like the sound of a running river.

“When I got home to my lodging, I was just like a demented man; my head was bizzing like a bee-skep, and I could hear of nothing but the berr of that wearyful woman’s tongue. It was terrible; and I took so ill that night, and felt such a loss of appetite and lack of spirit the next day, that I was advised by a friend to take advice; and accordingly, in the London fashion, I went to a doctor’s door to do so, but just as I put up my hand to the knocker, there within was the wearyful woman in the passage, talking away to the servant-man. The mo-

ment I saw her I was seized with a terror, and ran off like one that has been bitten by a wud dog, at the sight and the sound of running water. It is indeed no to be described what I suffered from that woman; and I met her so often, that I began to think she had been ordained to torment me; and the dread of her in consequence so worked upon me, that I grew frightened to leave my lodgings, and I walked the streets only from necessity, and then I was as a man hunted by an evil spirit.

“ But the worst of all was to come. I went out to dine with a friend that lives at a town they call Richmond, some six or eight miles from London, and there being a pleasant company, and me no in any terror of the wearyful woman, I sat wi’ them as easy as you please, till the stage-coach was ready to take me back to London. When the stage-coach came to the door, it was empty, and I got in; it was a wet night, and the wind blew strong, but, tozy wi’ what I had gotten, I laid mysel up in a corner, and soon fell fast asleep. I know not how long I had slumbered, but I was awakened by the coach stopping, and presently I heard the din of a tongue coming towards the coach. It was the wearyful woman; and before I had time to come to mysel, the door was opened, and she was in, chatting away at my side, the coach driving off.

“ As it was dark, I resolved to say nothing, but to sleep on, and never heed her. But we hadna

travelled half a mile, when a gentleman's carriage going by with lamps, one of them gleamed on my face, and the wearyful woman, with a great shout of gladness, discovered her victim.

"For a time, I verily thought that my soul would have leapt out at the crown of my head like a vapour; and when we got to a turn of the road, where was a public-house, I cried to the coachman for Heaven's sake to let me out, and out I jumped. But O waes me! that deevil thought I was taken ill, and as I was a stranger, the moment I was out and in the house, out came she likewise, and came talking into the kitchen, into which I had ran, perspiring with vexation.

"At the sight, I ran back to the door, determined to prefer the wet and wind on the outside of the coach to the clatter within. But the coach was off, and far beyond call. I could have had the heart, I verily believe, to have quenched the breath of life in that wearyful woman; for when she found the coach was off without us, her alarm was a perfect frenzy, and she fastened on me worse than ever—I thought my heart would have broken.

"By-and-by came another coach, and we got into it. Fortunately twa young London lads, clerks or siclike, were within. They endured her tongue for a time, but at last they whispered each other, and one of them giving me a nodge or sign, taught me to expect they would try to silence her. Accord-

ingly the other broke suddenly out into an immoderate doff-like laugh that was really awful. The mistress paused for a minute, wondering what it could be at; anon, however, her tongue got under wa , and off she went; presently again the younker gave another gaffaw, still more dreadful than the first. His companion, seeing the effect it produced on Madam, said, 'Don't be apprehensive; he has only been for some time in a sort of deranged state; he is quite harmless, I can assure you.' This had the desired effect, and from that moment till I got her safe off in a hackney-coach from where the stage stoppit, there was nae word out of her head; she was as quiet as pussy, and cowered in to me in ter-rification o' the madman breaking out. I thought it a souple trick o' the Londoners. In short," said Mr M'Waft, "though my adventures with the wearyful woman is a story now to laugh at, it was in its time nothing short of a calamity."

