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REGINALD DALTON.



J. B. Claverhouse

REGINALD DALTON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

VALERIUS, AND ADAM BLAIR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH;

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REGINALD DALTON.

BOOK I. CHAP. I.

REGINALD DALTON had always a singular pleasure in recalling those images of perfect repose with which he was surrounded, at the remotest period to which his remembrance could go back—the little sequestered parsonage-house, embosomed among elms and sycamores,—the old-fashioned garden, with its broad turf walks,—the long happy days spent in bright sunshine by the side of the shining lake,—the unwearied kindnesses of the mildest and most affectionate of parents.

There are few of us whose oldest impressions are not, as his were, serene and delightful ; and I, for one, cannot, I must confess, divest myself of

a sort of half pleasing, half melancholy anticipation, that should age ever draw a defacing hand over the strongest lines imprinted by the stirring events of youth and manhood, the harmless treasures of infant memory—the “trivial fond records”—may be spared amidst the havoc.

Indeed, certain physiologists affirm, that the countenance of a man, after he is dead, is frequently found to have recovered much of the original expression it had borne, even although that had undergone signal changes, nay, perhaps almost entirely disappeared from view, during a great part of the newly-terminated life. This, if it really be as they say,—and, if I mistake not, both Lord Bacon and Sir Thomas Browne are among the number,—may, in all probability, be the result of strong natural struggles in the parting spirit to retrace, recover, or assert, what may appear, in such an hour as that, the most valuable, because the most innocently acquired, of all its fading fast-vanishing possessions. And I own, there is, to my imagination, something very agreeable in the notion of Mind and Body thus, on the brink of long separation, making, as it were,

mutual and sympathetic efforts to be once more as like as possible to what they had been in the first and best days of their acquaintance.

Young Reginald was brought up with as much tender care as if he had not been motherless. While a child, he occupied the pillow of his dead parent by his father's side ; and to him might he well have addressed himself in the beautiful words of Andromache to her lord,—

——I see

My father, mother, brother, all in THEE.”

As he grew up, he was with him almost all the hours of the day, either as a pupil, or as a plaything. But, indeed, the last of these words would give a false idea of the nature of their intercourse ; for the truth is, that the solitary man neither had, nor wished to have, any better *companion* than his only child. His intellect stooped, but it was not ashamed—perhaps, it was scarcely conscious—of stooping. When they read together, for the first time, *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Seven Wise Masters*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, or any such manual, the delighted interest the father took in every incident was such, that the boy scarcely suspected him

of having previously perused the book any more than himself.

Even during the few years that have elapsed since then, what an alteration has taken place in the choice of books for children!—Crusoe, indeed, keeps his place, and will probably do so as long as any thing of the *adventurous* remains in the composition of the national character among a people, of whom Baron Jomini is so far right when he says, “*tout homme est marin né* ;” but, with this exception, I think every thing has been altered, and almost all for the worse. The fine oriental legend of the Seven Sages is altogether forgotten, except among studious people and bibliomaniacs ; and even the masterpiece of John Bunyan has been, in a great measure, supplanted by flimsy and silly *tracts*. The young mind is starved upon such fare as the writers of these things can supply. Instead of the old genuine banquet of strong imagery, and picturesque incident, by which the judgment was compelled to feed itself through the medium of excited and enriched imagination, a tame milk-and-water diet is now administered, which takes no firm or fervid

grasp of the imagination at all, and which I should humbly conceive to be about as barren of true wisdom, as it certainly is of true wit. Even the vigorous madness of the old romances of chivalry, which used to be read aloud in the winter evenings, for the common benefit of young and old in a family, was better stuff than what is now in fashion ; for such reading, with all its defects, had a strong tendency to nourish many of the noblest parts of the intellect.

These opening years of life, then, flew over his head in the most unambitious peacefulness. He partook but little in the boisterous amusements common to children, placed among characters, and in situations, of a more busy description ; and it may be fairly supposed, that his early character partook largely both of the excellencies and of the defects which generally distinguish those educated entirely in the seclusion of the paternal fire-side. His modesty was blended inextricably with bashfulness ; his uprightness with irresolution ; his virtue depended on feeling much more than on any thing like a basis of principle ; and indeed, perhaps, almost all the good that was

in him, consisted in nothing but the unconscious depth of his filial affection.

As to *education*, (in the usual sense of the word,) I believe that was conducted, on the whole, just to as much advantage, as it could have been had his father sent him, at the usual time of life, to Westminster or Eton. At first, the desire of pleasing his only instructor, was with him a motive quite as powerful as what is commonly called emulation could have furnished ; and, after a little while, he scarcely needed any motive in addition to the pleasure he himself derived from the acquisition of knowledge. Their sequestered situation, and unbroken course of life, left him scanty means of diversion beyond what he could create for himself ; and, fond as he was of rural sports, he soon discovered, that, of all such means, reading was at once the most effectual, and the most inexhaustible. His father's library was well selected, and contained not only an excellent collection of theology and classics, but a considerable store of the best French and English authors. He was a Martinet about his books, and was not fond of their being carried out of the room in which

they were arranged ; so that the cheerful busy mornings of Reginald's boyhood were spent almost entirely in the same apartment with his father,—and a pleasant apartment it was. The view from its windows commanded a rich landscape of lake, and wooded shores, and distant hills ; but, at night, when the fire shone bright, and the curtains were drawn, there needed no better prospect than the comely rows of folios, with which the room was chiefly surrounded, could afford them. Comfort, and quiet, and sober cheerfulness, presided over their dwelling.

The reader might naturally have expected me to begin my hero's story with some account of the ancestors from whom he was sprung ; but had I done so, I should have been anticipating information of which he himself possessed but little, until the years of his boyhood had drawn near their close. In fact, one of the first discoveries Reginald made for himself was, that Mr Dalton disliked being asked questions about his family ; and yet, to say nothing of his general demeanour, there was something about his manner of avoiding this very subject, which must have satisfied

any one, that this reluctance proceeded from no feelings of conscious plebeianism.

However, from putting together broken hints and observations I suppose, Reginald knew well enough, in process of time, not only that his father was a gentleman born, but that he had relations of considerable consequence living in one of the neighbouring counties. That some coldness subsisted between Mr Dalton and these kindred, was an inference which the lad could scarcely fail to draw, from the mere fact of the families having no intercourse with each other. Taking this distinct circumstance in connexion with others of a nature less tangible, he began to suspect, and at length to believe, that the alienation he witnessed had had its origin in a *fault*. That fault, whatever it might be, he, of course, attributed *not* to his parent.

Some notions of this sort had imperceptibly taken possession of Reginald's mind, but the subject was, as I have hinted, one on which he was early taught not to question Mr Dalton; and there was no one else near him from whom he thought himself likely to derive that information

which his father had never chosen to supply. Perhaps, had he known that there were such persons near him, the lad would have hesitated very much about applying to them. Most assuredly he ought to have so hesitated, for, by making any such application to a stranger, he must have betrayed an unseemly want, either of reliance on his father's judgment, or of confidence in his father's kindness. As it happened, there was no such temptation, either to be indulged, or to be resisted.

Of Reginald's mother, (who, as we have seen, was dead before he had passed his infancy,) Mr Dalton spoke almost as rarely, though not so obscurely, as of his own connexions. He gave his son to understand, that she had been born in a condition of life below his own; but that she had been the gentlest, the best of wives; and Reginald had too much reverence for his father's feelings, to inquire farther. These, however, were, I believe, the only topics, in regard to which the Vicar of Lannwell was accustomed to treat his son with anything like reserve.

CHAPTER II.

IN relation to the former of them, he was indebted to a mere accident for a great increase, both of his knowledge and of his perplexity. I suppose he might be rather more than fifteen years old, when, one day, Mr Dalton having gone abroad on some of his parochial duties, the youth was sitting alone, reading, as usual, in the library. A servant brought in a packet, which had been sent from the nearest market-town, and laid it before him on the table. From the shape of the packet, Reginald perceived that a book was the inclosure ; and, as there was no seal, he, without hesitation, cut the cord which secured it.

He found, as he had expected, a new book ; but it was one of a species by which he was then too young to be much attracted at first sight. It was a History of the County of Lancaster ; a large

folio, full of Latin charters, and other heavy-looking materials. He turned, however, with more pleasure to the engravings at the end of it; and after amusing himself for a while among views of Lancaster Castle, Furness Abbey, the College at Manchester, and the like, at length lighted upon a print, the title of which effectually rivetted his attention—"GRYPHERWAST-HALL, the seat of Richard Dalton, Esq." A shield of arms was represented underneath, and Reginald recognized the motto, the crest, the very griffin of his father's seal. "Hah!" said he to himself, "have I at length discovered it? Here, then, is the seat of my kinsmen, the home of my forefathers! Was it under these very roofs that my ancestors were nursed? Was it indeed under these venerable oaks that they loitered?"

Reginald gazed upon the image of this old hall, until he had made himself intimate with every projecting window and tower-like chimney belonging to it, and then it occurred to him all at once, that there might be some letter-press in the heart of the book, bearing reference to the prints at its conclusion. In what a flutter of zeal, after this

idea had struck him, did the boy turn over the huge leaves!—with what delight did his eye at length catch again, at the head of a chapter, the names of *Gryphercast* and *Dalton*!

To save my reader the trouble of referring to a book, which, if he be not a Lancashire squire or rector, is most probably not in his possession, I shall tell him, in a very few sentences, the amount of what Reginald here found expanded over a goodly number of long pages. He found, then, a prolix deduction of the Dalton pedigree, from which it appeared, that the family had been distinguished enough to furnish a sheriff and knight of the shire, so far back as the days of John of Gaunt; but that their importance had risen very considerably under the Eighth Henry, in consequence of sundry grants, which that monarch had bestowed upon the existing squire, at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. The Daltons lost these lands again, under Mary; but it seemed that, on the accession of her sister, the donation of the bluff monarch had quietly, and as of its own accord, resumed its efficacy. From that period, Reginald Dalton had followed Richard,

and Richard had followed Reginald, in regular succession, from father to son—a long line of respectable knights and esquires, who for the most part contented them with taking care of the family possessions at home, and leaving to cousins and younger brothers, the honour of supporting in arms, the ancient reputation of their name. But the last paragraph was that which the young Reginald read with tenfold interest.

“ The present representative of this family, and proprietor of Grypherwast-Hall, is Richard Dalton, esquire, formerly M. P. for the burgh of ——. This gentleman married Elizabeth, daughter of —— Fairfax, Esq. and widow of the late Charles Catline, Esq. by whom he has issue, one daughter, Barbara. Mr Dalton is now a widower ; and failing his daughter Barbara, the nearest branch of the family is his cousin, the Reverend John Dalton, vicar of Lannwell *parva*, Westmoreland.”

Reginald had read this last paragraph, I take it, a dozen times over—then ruminated on its contents—and then returned to it again with yet undiminished interest ; and the book was, in short,

still lying open before him, when he heard the sound of his father's approach. The Vicar seemed to be trotting at a pretty brisk pace; and, without taking time to reflect, the boy obeyed his first impulse, which was, to tie up the parcel again, so as to conceal that he had looked into the book.

It was not that Reginald felt any consciousness of having done wrong in opening this packet—that he laboured under any guilty shame—that he was anxious to escape from the detection of meanness. Had twenty letters, addressed to his father, been lying before him with their seals broken, he was entirely incapable of looking into one of them. He had had, at the moment when he opened the packet, no more notion, intention, or suspicion of violating confidence, or intruding upon secrecy, than he should have had in taking down any given volume from the shelves of his father's library. His feeling simply was, that he hastily indeed, and almost involuntarily, but still by his own act, put himself in possession of a certain piece of knowledge, which, for whatever reason, his parent had deemed it proper to withhold from him. To erase the impression that had been

made on his mind, on his memory, was impossible ; but to save his father the pain of knowing that any such impression had been made there, appeared to be quite possible ; and so, without taking time to balance remoter consequences or contingencies, Reginald followed, as I have said, the first motion of a mind, the powers of which had hitherto acknowledged the almost undivided sway of paternal influence, and from no motive but one, of filial tenderness for his father's feelings, he endeavoured, as well as he could, to restore to the packet its original appearance.

Having done so, he awaited his entrance quietly, with a book in his hand. Dinner was served up shortly afterwards, and they quitted the library together without Mr Dalton's having taken any notice of the packet.

Soon after the repast was concluded, he rose from the table, and Reginald heard him re-enter the library by himself. Perhaps half an hour might have elapsed, when he rung his bell, and the boy heard him say to the servant who obeyed the summons, " Go to Master Reginald, and tell

him I want to speak with him." There was something in the manner of his saying these words that struck Reginald at the moment as unusual ; but the man delivered his message with a smiling face, and he persuaded himself, ere he rose to attend his father, that this must have been merely the work of his own imagination.

When he entered the library, however, he perceived, at one glance, that there was heaviness on his father's brow. " Reginald," he said in a low tone of voice, " I fear you have been guilty of deceit—you have been trying to deceive your father, my boy—Is it not so ?"

Reginald could not bear the seriousness of his looks, and threw his eyes upon the table before him ; he saw the packet lying open there, and then again meeting Mr Dalton's eye, felt himself to be blushing intensely.

" You need not speak, Reginald," he proceeded, " I see how it is. Look, sir, there was a letter in this packet when you opened it, and you dropt it on the floor as you were fastening it again. It is not your opening the packet that I complain of,

but when you tied these cords again, you were telling *a lie* to your father. Yes, Reginald, you have told a lie this day. I would fain hope it is the first you ever told—I pray God it may be the last ! What was your motive ?”

Poor Reginald stood trembling before him—alas ! for the misery of deceit ! Conscious though he was that he had meant no wrong—conscious though he was that had he loved his father less tenderly, had he revered him less awfully, he should have escaped this rebuke at least—his tongue was tied, and he could not muster courage enough even to attempt vindicating himself by the truth.

Involuntarily he fell upon his knee, but Mr Dalton instantly bade him rise again.

“Nay, nay, Reginald, kneel not to me. You humble yourself *here*, not for the sin, but the detection. Retire to your chamber, my boy, and kneel there to HIM who witnessed your offence at the moment it was committed.” He waved his hand as he said so, and Reginald Dalton for the first time quitted his father’s presence with a bleeding heart.

By this time the evening was somewhat advanced; but there was still enough of daylight remaining to make him feel his bed-chamber an unnatural place for being in. He sat down and wept like a child by the open window, gazing inertly now and then through his tears upon the beautiful scenery, which had heretofore ever appeared in unison with a serene and happy spirit. With how different eyes did he now contemplate every well-known feature of the smiling landscape! How dull, dead, oppressive, was the calm of sunset—how melancholy the slow and inaudible waving of the big green boughs—how intolerable the wide steady splendour of the lake and western sky!

I hope there is no one, who, from the strength and sturdiness of his manhood, can cast back an unmoved eye upon the softness, the delicacy, the open sensitiveness of a young and virgin heart—who can think without regret of those happy days, when the moral heaven was so uniformly clear, that the least passing vapour was sufficient to invest it with the terrors of gloom—of the pure open bosom that could be shaken to the centre by one

grave glance from the eye of affection—of the blessed tears that sprung unbidden, that flowed unscalding, more sweet than bitter—the kindly pang that thrilled and left no scar—the humble gentle sorrow, that was not Penitence—only because it needed not Sin to go before it.

Reginald did not creep into his bed until the long weary twilight had given place to a beautiful star-light night. By that time his spirits had been effectually exhausted, so that slumber soon took possession of him.

But he had not slept long ere he was awakened, suddenly, but gently, by a soft trembling kiss on his forehead; he opened his eyes, and saw Mr Dalton standing near his bed-side in his dressing-gown. The star-light, that shewed the outline of the figure, came from behind, so that the boy could not see his father's face, and he lay quite quiet on his pillow.

In a little while Mr Dalton turned away, but ere he did so, the boy heard distinctly, amidst the midnight silence, a whisper of *God bless my child!*—Reginald felt that his father had not been able

to sleep without blessing him—he felt the reconciling influence fall upon his spirit like a dew from heaven, and he sunk again lightly and softly into his repose.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Reginald entered the breakfast-parlour next morning, he was received by his father just as if nothing particular had occurred the evening before. The Vicar was not merely as kind, but as cheerful as usual ; and the boy, ere the morning was over, had been sitting by his side, not only reading in the Lancastrian folio, but asking him an hundred questions about the old castles and churches engraved for its decoration.

I need scarcely say, however, that Reginald abstained from Grypherwast-hall ; although the reader can be at no loss to believe, that had he followed his own inclinations, he would have been more inquisitive concerning that print than any other in the volume.

But if the boy did not say anything as to that tacitly forbidden matter, we may be sure he did

not think the less of it. In truth, from that day forwards he dreamt of it by night, and wove out of it by day the materials of many an endless dream. Living, as he had done, in a world of inaction, and accustomed to draw his subjects of thought from anything rather than the witnessed workings of actual nature, it was no wonder that his fancy should even at this early period have addicted itself to the latter tempting species of amusement. In point of fact, Reginald was seldom at a loss how to occupy himself, provided he had but a tree to sit down beneath. His eye continued open to the scene before him, but by degrees ceased to convey any impression of external images to the mind within. That flew far away on luxurious wings. The last romance or poem he had read, furnished Imagination with all she required—and now, the habit of reverie having been thus formed, it was an easy matter for the youth to dream new dreams, and revel amidst new romances, of which his idle self was the centre and the hero.

Of what texture these were, the sagacious reader will scarcely require any explanation. Where

but at Grypherwast-hall should be the scene? Who but Miss Dalton should be the heroine? Reginald's fancy, of course, pourtrayed to him the heiress of his ancestral domains, as the most lovely of her sex. Of her age he had derived no hint from the book; but he soon settled that she could not be older than himself. No, she must just be a fair, blooming, innocent creature, in the first blush of maiden beauty, wandering, like a second Una, amidst those reverend groves, and wherever she wandered, like Una herself,

“ Making a brightness in the shady place.”

How simple seemed the issue—how completely according to the established course of things in the world of Romance! The male heir of the house of Dalton, the rightful representative of all that generous lineage, how should he fail to be enamoured of the beautiful virgin inheritrix of his house? And she, the daughter of all the Daltons, could *she* hesitate for a moment between any other suitor and the young kinsman, in whose person the whole of her own lofty ancestry was represented? Prosaic must the soul be that could

contemplate any termination but one—a few difficulties indeed there might, nay, there ought to be—a few months, perhaps even a year or two, of impediment, and probation, and struggling bosoms—for that would be but the natural “course of true love;” but all these things would soon be over; Nature, which had formed them for each other, would triumph—the two yearning young hearts would be united for ever, and the knightly halls of Grypherwast, how they would be in a blaze with festive exultation! How glorious would be the hour when Love had joined what envious Law had striven to separate, and the just Heir of Dalton stood proclaimed and asserted by his power the Lord of Grypherwast!

So did the imagination of Reginald expatiate.
It was so that

“ The happy boy would creep about the fields,
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
Tears down his cheeks, or solitary smiles
Into his face, until the setting sun
Wrote Fool upon his forehead.”——

Happy could the early power, of wrapping one's

spirit in the folds of merely ideal felicity, and of transporting one's self at a wish beyond the influences of reality, be formed and indulged without any worse consequence than the mere waste of time ! But alas ! such sickly and precocious banquetting enervates while it consumes. The energy that should be reserved entire for life and substance, is lavished on nothings, ere its value can be estimated ; that becomes too soon the exercise which kind Nature meant for relaxation ; and he who has given the bright hours of his opening fancy to Reverie, must struggle hard with himself ere he can chain the full vigour of his intellect to the oar of Necessity.

Reginald's great want was a companion of his own time of life ; but unfortunately for him, in that sequestered and thinly-inhabited district, this was a want not likely to be supplied, even had it been felt. The only gentleman's house in their immediate neighbourhood, had stood untenanted for a long series of years, and Mr Dalton, although living on the best possible terms with his parishioners, had never encouraged his son to cultivate

any very intimate connexion among the families of the few small *statesmen* who were resident near the vicarage. Indeed, the young man's education had been such, that it was not at all likely he should have of himself sought much of that sort of society which their domestic circles could afford. In earlier days, his father and his books had been every thing to him ; but the natural restlessness of a young mind soon demands other exertion than can be supplied by reading, and by the conversation of persons more advanced in life. Reginald, as we have seen, became a dreamer. The world of action, the mind of his contemporaries, were shut out from him—and he had recourse to what he could create for himself. In the meantime, however, it is not to be supposed that his studies were neglected ; on the contrary, he continued to apply himself to his books, if not with the full fire of his own first undivided zeal, at least so as to give perfect satisfaction to his father ; and so far as mere scholarship went, perhaps there were not many youths of the same age, whose attainments would have entitled them to look down on

Reginald Dalton at the opening of his eighteenth summer. In every other particular, how different was he from young men of that standing, brought up amidst the hurry and excitement of the living world—in many things, how great was his advantage over them—in not a few, how deplorable his inferiority !

It was in the beginning of that summer that THORWOLD, the neglected manor-house to which I have already alluded, began to assume the long absent appearances of life, bustle, and preparation. Mr Chisney, the proprietor of this place, and of extensive estates in its neighbourhood, had come of age about three years before, but having some possessions in the south of England, had not as yet visited his ancient inheritance. But he had now married ; and the expence all of a sudden bestowed upon Thorwold, seemed to intimate his intention of making the Hall his permanent residence for the future.

The expected advent of the principal family of the place, more especially after the absence of a long minority, was of course an affair of great interest ; and even in Lannwell-parsonage a consi-

derable sensation was produced by its first announcement. Mr Dalton had the church new white-washed; orders were issued for repairing and beautifying (to use the churchwarden's phrase) the Thorwold Gallery, which had for seventeen years been abandoned to the use of farm-servants; and even about the parsonage-house itself there were sundry symptoms of preparation. As for Reginald, the village tailor lavished all his barbarity on a new suit, and the young man looked forward with a strange mixture of curiosity and reluctance to the prospect of mingling at length in that sort of society, to which, notwithstanding his fine pedigree, he had hitherto been a stranger.

It was on a bright Saturday's evening that the little belfry of Lannwell church sent forth its most lively peal in honour of the arrival of the Chisneys. Reginald and his father were sitting together, and the vicar, being in a very communicative humour, told a variety of stories about the young squire's father, and other members of the Thorwold family, whom he had formerly known. Among other things, Reginald found out that the Chisneys and the Daltons had intermarried about a

hundred years before. Such and so profound was that respect for the notions of *cousinship*, into which he had nursed himself for some time back, that he felt quite astonished how his father could have so long concealed a matter of so much importance. In fact, he lost no time in mounting his hobby-horse, and long before he went to bed that night, he had furnished the great romance of Grypherwast with a very pretty episode from Thorwold-hall.

CHAPTER IV.

BOLDLY and gaily, however, as Reginald could dream, he hung his head very sheepishly next day, when he found that the long deserted gallery, over against the vicar's pew, was really filled with a blaze of fine ladies and gentlemen. In the course of the sermon he stole a few glances, and I believe had sense enough to satisfy himself that none of the bright eyes of that high sphere were in any danger of being fixed upon him. But, in truth, Reginald was an odd mixture, and there is no saying what sillinesses might have passed over his fancy.

The young squire and his bride, ere they got into their carriage, received very graciously the congratulations of Mr Dalton; and Reginald heard after they came home, not a little to his

discomposure it may be supposed, that his father had accepted for them both an invitation to dine in the course of the week at Thorwold. Indeed, I take it our young gentleman wasted about as many meditations on that dinner, ere he went to it, as a young lady generally does on the coming ball at which she is to come out.

It must be quite unnecessary to say, that he bestowed on the toilet of that great day a double, ay, a treble portion both of time and attention, and almost as needless to add, that when he had done, his appearance was infinitely more awkward than usual. Had Reginald presented himself at that time in any company, drest just as he was accustomed to be when he was wandering at his ease among the woods, he could scarcely have failed to be regarded with some admiration. He was naturally very handsome, and this, too, in a somewhat uncommon *style* of handsomeness, considering his race and his country ; for though his eyes were of that clear, grave blue, which is seldom seen but in the north, the general cast of his countenance, both as to features and complexion, was rather what a painter would have called Ita-

lian. A profusion of dark chesnut curls lay on his forehead, the dancing blood of seventeen was in his cheek, and his lip, just beginning to be shaded with down, had that firm juvenile richness, which so rarely survives a single season of debauchery, or even of dissipation. His figure was light and nervous, and there was even a certain elegance about its motions, although Reginald had never had one single lesson in fencing, and I believe only about a dozen in dancing, from an itinerant professor of the name of O'Leary. But as I have hinted, the young man was at great pains on this occasion in spoiling his own appearance. Nothing could be more absurd than the manner in which he had combed his fine hair back from the forehead it was meant to shade and to grace ; and as for the new suit of clothes, it has been already insinuated that old Nathaniel Foy was an artist who had never sewed at the knee of any of the Stultzes.

According to the old-fashioned manners of the northern counties, the families who had in former times been intimate with the Chisneys, began, immediately on the arrival of the young couple, to pour in visits of congratulation ; so that Mr Dalton

and his son, the day they went up to Thorwold-hall, were ushered into a drawing-room, crowded as well as gay. Groups of smiling young men and women were clustered about the windows, while high-looking old ladies sat apart on sofas, nodding and whispering; and rosy-gilled esquires, with well powdered curls, and capacious white waistcoats, stood sturdily in the middle of the floor, talking toryism and horse-flesh, and now and then looking at their watches.

Reginald had scarcely begun to recover himself from the flurry into which the first glimpse of this animated scene had thrown him, ere the door of an antichamber was flung open, and the young Squire entered, leading by the hand his pretty and languishing bride. In a moment there was such a bustle of bowing and curtseying, presentation, congratulation, and compliment, that nobody had any leisure to take the least notice either of him or of his confusion. Dinner was announced very soon afterwards, and it is impossible to say how much he was relieved, when he found himself seated at table between a couple of hearty old fellows, who had too much respect for business, to

think of troubling him or anybody else with conversation. When he looked round him, and saw the easy assurance with which beaux comported themselves to belles, how did his heart sink within him beneath the overwhelming consciousness of his own rawness ! He knew he was blushing, and of course blushed on deeper and deeper ; but luckily he durst not refuse the champaigne, which was continually offered him, and so, in the course of a few bumpers, his nerves acquired, in spite of him, some strength, and his cheeks some coolness.

As for “ the happy pair ” themselves, the moon of bliss had not yet filled her horn, so that there was little chance either of their observing the awkwardness of their youthful guest, or of their being displeased with that, (or indeed with any thing else,) had they observed it. Mr Chisney was naturally rather a sombre looking person, (very sallow, and not a little marked with the small-pox ;) but at present the whole of his air and aspect was instinct with a breath of buoyancy and mercurialism—it seemed, indeed, as if he now and then were making an effort to bear himself gravely, and look like himself ; but the next moment his wife’s

eye and his would meet, and the conscious simper resume all its predominancy. The young lady, however, was perhaps even more absurdly happy than her lord. Her eye-lids were cast down from time to time with a very pretty air of shyness; but whenever she lifted them again, the irrepresible sparkle of glee was quite visible. The tones of her voice were fortunately very soft and liquid, so that the frequent giggle in which she indulged was by no means so intolerable as that of a newly married young woman most commonly is. A bluff boisterous old boy of a baronet, who sat at her right hand, made a thousand apologies for being so antediluvian as to propose a bumper to their health the moment the cloth was removed; but even this trying incident produced no worse consequences than a charming blush and a tenfold titter to carry it off. As she sailed out of the dining-room, in the rear of all her female convoy, her small ring-laden fingers received a gentle squeeze *en passant*. When elderly people play such honeymoon pranks, it may be difficult not to laugh; but here a person of any bowels would scarcely have permitted himself even to smile.

Mr Dalton was too much of a gentleman not to have been at his ease, and too good-natured a man not to have been pleased at such a party as this ; but poor Reginald came home from it with many more of painful than of pleasureable recollections. And indeed had this been otherwise, he must have added the original sin of dulness, to the unfortunate accident of *mauvaise honte*.

Neither Mr Chisney nor his lady had, as we have seen, taken almost any notice of the Daltons the first time they visited them ; but ere long, they had rather more leisure upon their hands. The bustle of formal congratulation could not last for many weeks—any more than the intoxication of their own spirits ;—and both of them, before the summer was over, were of opinion it was a very pleasant circumstance that the parsonage of Lannwell was within so very easy a distance of Thorwald-hall. Mr Chisney, who was really a man of very good sense, found that there was nobody near him with whom he could live more agreeably than with the vicar of his own parish ; while the young lady, after her husband had given up spending *all* his mornings in her drawing-room, began some-

times to feel a little weary of herself, her piano-forte, and her flower-drawings, and deigned to discover that Reginald was genteel in spite of bashfulness, and conversable in spite of his reserve.

To polish a fine young man, is a task which, perhaps, no woman at all capable of executing it, ever enters upon with much reluctance. The modesty of Reginald flattered her vanity ; it was delightful to be listened to with so much submission by one who knew so many things that women never know, and for which women have therefore so great a respect—one who displayed, in the possession of what is commonly called knowledge, all the charming humility of ignorance and inexperience. Besides, Reginald Dalton was really a very handsome young fellow, and but for the unhappy cut of his coat, it was easy to see that a very little training might convert him into a beau, of whom no lady, married or unmarried, need be ashamed.

“ Much blood, little breaking,” is a maxim with which every sportsman is familiar, and the same thing holds good in regard to ourselves. In the course of a few weeks, Reginald Dalton could pre-

sent himself at the Hall, free not only from all the painful, but almost from all the awkward, parts of his rusticity. He rode with Mr Chisney, walked with his wife, and he and his father spent two or three evenings in almost every week at Thorwold. Rarely, perhaps, have the exterior manners of any young man undergone more remarkable improvement in so short a space. And, in truth, when Reginald himself looked back, and compared himself at the beginning of that year's autumn with what he had been at the termination of its spring, the difference was so great, that he might be pardoned for contemplating the rapidity of his own progress, with a very considerable share of complacency.

In one point of view, at the least, it was fortunate for Reginald that the young Squire and his lady were left so much alone during the greater part of that summer; for, had their house been from the beginning what it was towards the close of the season, he must have either derived fewer advantages from frequenting it, or purchased them at the expence of undergoing a much severer species of tutorage.

The shooting season had commenced several weeks, ere Mr Frederick Chisney, the brother of the Squire, arrived at Thorwold. He was several years younger than Mr Chisney ; but he was already, in his own opinion, and in that of many others, the finer gentleman of the two. Every body indeed is acquainted with that common saying, which has, time out of mind, furnished the vanity of cadets with some consolation for the comparative lightness of their purses ; and in a limited sense, at the least, there is no question the saying has its origin in observation. Younger brothers, all the world over, have their wits sharpened by the circumstances of their situation ; while the consciousness of perfect security has a natural tendency to encourage indolence of mind, as well as repose of demeanour. But, on the other hand, is there nothing to refine in the sense of importance and power ? Do not these things exert, over happily-born spirits at least, a certain soothing and ennobling influence ? And while the cadet has briskness for the bustle through which it is his business to fight his way, has not your elder brother, generally speaking, something far better

adapted for the calmer sphere in which his birth has placed him? Though he be not, in the ball-room or mess-room sense of the word, the finer gentleman, is he not in reality the more mild in disposition of the two, the more *gentle* in bearing?

But Frederick Chisney was the younger brother all over,—full to the brim of all that vivacity and restlessness of spirit, which your “*terrarum Domini*” are so much the better for wanting—a bold, gay, sprightly, and ardent youth. He had already spent two years at Christ-Church, and having gone thither from Eton, was at twenty as free from exterior awkwardnesses as any man of forty, and, in his own opinion, quite as knowing in men and manners, as he could have been in reality, if double his years had passed over his head. He was a considerable coxcomb to boot—but, to be sure, he had whatever excuse a handsome person may furnish a coxcomb withal. Though tall and athletic in his form, his limbs had not as yet acquired the knit symmetry of manhood, but his countenance wanted nothing of its confidence. His complexion was remarkably fair and brilliant, and you might have sought all England over for

a pair of brighter eyes. To a strong taste for literature, and intellectual accomplishments much more varied and extensive than are generally to be found among young Oxonians, even of the highest promise, Frederick Chisney united a violent passion for every manly sport and exercise, which few could have indulged as he had always done, without retarding the progress of mental improvement. But his keen spirit ever found its relaxation, not in repose, but in change of exertion.

Such was he—such at least he seemed to be—when fortune threw Reginald Dalton in his way. Our youth had already become in some sort the *Ami du Maison* at Thorwold-hall, when Frederick Chisney arrived there.

CHAPTER V.

THIS gay fellow regarded Reginald at first, as might have been expected, very much *du haut en bas*. For although a great many tastes and accomplishments were common to them both, Reginald was obviously and extremely deficient in respect to other matters, on his own proficiency in which Frederick chiefly piqued himself. The Oxonian, therefore, began with quizzing the rustic; but he took all this with an unsuspecting simplicity, which, ere long, not only shamed Frederick out of his malicious amusement, but really excited feelings of kindness in his heart.

But above all, he found Reginald useful. Frederick, although he considered himself at least as much a man as his brother, nevertheless could not help, when they were together, feeling some

little remains of the awe in which he had formerly stood of him, at a time when the difference of but a few years was important. The Squire, on the other hand, did perhaps continue to look upon his brother rather too much as a boy ; and, in short, they were not accustomed to converse together on terms of perfect equality, although there was no visible want of brotherly affection on either side. The marriage of James, moreover, had given no great satisfaction to Frederick. The lady, as he thought, was not quite of that rank in which his brother should have sought an alliance, and he was inclined to regard her with something not unlike aversion, as a pretty Cheltenhamite who had done a very impudent thing in presuming to set her cap at Mr Chisney of Thorwold. The perfect good temper of the girl softened this last feeling very considerably in the course of a little time ; but still the mere domestic trio of Thorwold-hall was by no means to Mr Frederick's mind, and he soon found the pleasantest way in which he could spend his morning, was shooting or fishing with Reginald, who, over and above the merits of a most devout listener, was as well acquainted with every

stream and cover in the neighbourhood, as if he had been bred up on purpose for a poacher. And how indeed should he have been otherwise, having been, as we have seen, a solitary walker all his days, a "follower of his fancies through the fields?"

Friendship is, in truth, not less natural, and scarcely slower of growth, at that time of life, than love itself; and ere Frederick had been a fortnight at the Hall, he and Reginald were friends. How exquisite is the delight of young companionship!—how doubly exquisite was it to one who had so long lived sequestered, and all but alone! Every hour furnished him with new ideas, not transmitted from the world of books, nor sobered by the comments of age, but fresh from the moving world, reflected from a fancy as bright, as vivid, as glowing as his own. It seemed as if, in the course of a single day, at times, his mind had been enriched with the fruit and experience of years. What new unimagined desires were every moment springing up and strengthening within him—how he dreamt of the busy world! How brilliant, how charming, were the visions he framed of its doings—how earnest, how serious,

was the thirst of kindled curiosity—how deep and fervent his longings—how happy the excitement! To be pleased, is the easiest and surest of all ways to please, and no wonder that Frederick was almost as happy as his pupil.

Much as Reginald's mind was occupied with these novelties, it is not however to be supposed that he entirely threw off his attachment to his own old courses of thought. No—those long-cherished dreams still kept their place. The favourite ground-work of fancy was retained, while every new image employed in its decoration served but to bind to it the more, and to lend new vigour to that which otherwise might have been exhausted.

In short, the old *Chatcau-en-Espagne* was not only in excellent preservation, but receiving continually new outworks and new ornaments, when one morning Frederick Chisney came into the vicarage, immediately after breakfast, equipped, as usual, for a day of wandering in the woods. Reginald flung his bag over his shoulder, seized his fowling-piece, and was ready in a trice to set out with him; but just as the two young men were quitting the room—indeed Reginald was al-

ready in the lobby—Chisney halted, and said, “O, Mr Dalton, I beg your pardon, I had very nearly forgotten to deliver my brother’s message. There’s a whole family of cousins of yours coming to dinner to-day, and they hope you and Reginald will come and meet them.”

“Cousins of mine!” said the Vicar, his face flushing up.

“Yes, your cousins—are they not so? The Daltons of Grypherwast-hall. The old gentleman and his daughter are both coming to see ‘the happy couple.’ One of their servants is at the Hall before them.”

Reginald’s heart, you may be sure, was throbbing as if it would burst his ribs, but he could not help keeping his eye fixed upon his father’s countenance; seldom, indeed, had it exhibited such symptoms of emotion—painful emotion. The colour was going and coming, as in the cheek of a poor maiden listening to a love-tale; but how different this scarlet from hers! As for Frederick, he was doing something about the lock of his gun, so he took no notice of all Mr Dalton’s perturbation, but said, after the pause had continued for

half a minute—Reginald would have sworn for half an hour—“ Well, I suppose we shall have the pleasure of seeing you at five o’clock. In the mean time, Reginald and I may pick up a leveret or two—allons, Reginald !” And with that he shut the door, and went whistling down the stair Reginald following him, as if instinctively, but quite in the dark as to his father, and perplexed besides with the thought that no answer had in reality been made to the message from the Hall.

He had reached the threshold, when his father opened his door and called after him, but without shewing himself—“ Reginald, Reginald—do you hear me ? Take care you come home in good time to dress for dinner.”

The words were spoken quickly, but in the Vicar’s usual tone of voice, and they relieved Reginald from one part—and one only—of his troubles.

Our youth was often extremely absent in his manner, and this fault of his had by no means escaped the quick eyes of Frederick Chisney ; but during the whole of this morning it was car-

ried to an excess he had never before witnessed. In vain did he tell the best stories that had ever charmed the ears of a Common Room : Reginald smiled indeed when a sudden pause told him a smile was expected ; he even laughed when an example was set him ; but it was quite evident these were mere tricks of surface-work. His mind was obviously a thousand miles off. Though he loaded and reloaded his gun, fired, hit, bagged, and went through all the business of their sport quite as regularly and successfully as usual, he did this with just as little expence of thought, as if he had been a shooting machine.

Frederick endured it with patience for two or three hours ; but at last he got quite sick of trudging up and down the fields by the side of a person who neither put questions at all, nor answered them as if he understood what had been said. So, taking his own dog with him, he plunged into a deep winding dell, where he thought he might have a fair chance of starting a pheasant, leaving Reginald alone in a wide stubble-field, which was bordered on one of its sides by this ravine. Reginald took no notice of his having

gone off, until some minutes had elapsed, and by that time he had got much beyond his reach amidst the thick coppice-wood, and nothing was to be heard but the sound of the Beck rushing over its rocky bed far below. The first shot Frederick fired was at such a distance, that Reginald perceived there was no great likelihood he should overtake him ; so, having had already at least as much sport as he cared for, he fairly sat down amidst the stubble, and continued there, for I think the best part of an hour, ruminating without interruption—his eyes wandering idly all the while over the woods and parks of Thorwold, stretched out below him—the breathless lake beyond, with its fringed shores—and the maze of mountains that on every part close the prospect, and seem as if they had been formed on purpose to shut in that quiet and beautiful little valley from the world.

In what a sea of dreams was he lost ! what multitudes of old fancies, mingled with new, chased each other over his mind ! Now would he imagine himself kneeling at her feet amidst the voluptuous mystery of twilight—how eloquently whispering,

how softly heard, how ineffably answered! And then would come a gentle, speechless, sorrowful parting—and then the meeting of quick rapture—the joy of hope satisfied. The creature of his imagination was as familiar to him as if she had been a reality—it seemed as if every tone of her voice had a thousand times thrilled on his ear, as if her smile had penetrated to the centre of his heart.

He was still lying wrapt in the folds of this happy bewilderment, when his vacant eye happened to catch a glimpse of a carriage creeping slowly along one of the avenues of the Thorwoldpark. He started to his feet and gazed upon it, straining his eyes as if it had been in his own power to abridge, by strong volition, the effect of the distance. Yes, there were certainly four horses and postilions—there was an outrider a little way before—he could distinguish him here and there between the openings of the trees—there was an *imperial* on the top of the carriage itself—there could not be a doubt they were travellers—yes, this was the very party. A speck of white appeared for a moment at the window—ha, herself! the

very drapery of his destined fair! After a moment the whole was lost to his view amidst the massy foliage of the beeches. Alas, alas, not one glimpse more! His eye was dim and hot, ere he withdrew it from the vain attempt, dropping the weary lids with the longest, deepest sigh, that had ever heaved his bosom.

He was yet standing like a statue rooted to the spot, when Chisney halloed to him, and in a moment he was at his side.

“ Well, Reginald, what cheer, my boy? What have you been doing with yourself all this time? I’m sure you have had no sport, however, for I must have heard you fire if you had.”

“ No, Frederick, I have not had a single shot since we parted.”

“ By Jupiter, I believe you are either a poet, or in love.—As I live you blush, Dalton! Where, in the name of all that is romantic, have you your goddess concealed?—I thought I had seen every pretty face in the parish. Speak out, man, breathe the tender secret—I give ye my honour I shall respect your preserve.”

“ You’re quizzing me, Frederick——”

“ You’re blushing, Reginald——”

“ Blushing? Why you would make any body blush; I’m no more in love than yourself.”

“ Perhaps that’s not saying very much neither—but let it pass. You won’t speak—mum as a dormouse. Well, take your own way. Murder will out—I shall discover it all in due time.”

“ For God’s sake have done, man. I was only lying here looking at the lake.”

“ Only lying here looking at the lake! I’ll tell you what it is, Dalton, your good father will make a booby of you for life, if he don’t send you to Oxford—ay, and that the very next Michaelmas. Why, if you stay here much longer, you’ll stuff your head so full of these meres and mountains, that you’ll never be a man for the world while you exist. I wager you end in a sonnetteering parson, ordained at Carlisle under the proud designation of a *literatus*.”

“ I hope not, Chisney; my father was at the university, you know, himself.”

“ Well, well, the sooner you go to the university, or to some place where there is life and mo-

tion, the better for yourself and him too—that's all I shall say. What college was Mr Dalton at?"

“ At Queen's. I told you that once before, Frederick.”

“ Queen's ! I protest I had forgotten that there was such a barbarous place in the world. You must never go to Queen's, though—that's certain—Queen's, ha, ha ! depend on't, it will never do, sir. If you had only once heard that old cracked trumpet of theirs braying about their dead quadrangles for dinner, you would never dream of such a thing. 'Tis a Gothic place !”

“ I thought the building had been Grecian. 'Tis so in my father's old Almanack.”

“ Poo ! poo ! you're a Goth yourself, man. I was not thinking of their confounded pilasters—But seriously, I hope you will come to Christ Church—that is to say, if they have rooms for you ; but that, I am afraid, is very doubtful.”

Here there was a little pause of a minute or so, during which Mr Frederick kept his eyes on the ground with an air of great wisdom. He then pulled out his watch, and said gaily, “ Come, Reginald, we shall scarce be in time for the Squire's

dinner-bell—so we'll say no more of the Queen's folks' trumpet for the present. I shall certainly make bold to talk to the Vicar about you one of these days, however, and I think I shall be able to make *him* hear a little reason, whatever you may do."

With this the young sportsmen parted, Frederick going down the face of the hill towards Thorwold, at his usual careless swinging pace, while Reginald, with long hasty strides, traversed the lane leading to the vicarage. Every now and then he halted as he went, stood for a moment looking down into the park, and then proceeded again as rapidly as before; so rapidly, indeed, that ere he had accomplished half his walk, he had the misfortune to give his ankle a twist in the crossing of a stile, which unseasonable accident prevented him from arriving at Lannwell near so soon as he had otherwise done. Still, however, he was there a full hour before the time of dinner at Thorwold, so that there was yet "ample room and verge enough," both for dressing at leisure and for walking quietly, or even limping, if that should be necessary, to the Hall.

Great, therefore, was his surprise, when, on entering the parsonage, he was informed by the servants that his father had already set out for Thorwold, leaving word for the young gentleman to follow him thither at his leisure. This circumstance would have been of itself enough to perplex his thoughts, even had these been more orderly than they were. As it was, he was quite unable to form any feasible conjecture as to this apparently (it must be owned) strange proceeding on the part of the Vicar; but there were other matters on which we may easily suppose he could not prevent his meditations from dwelling with even greater interest. His fancy had ‘metal more attractive,’ before it. Altogether, indeed, it was no wonder that his hand shook a little, and that one neckcloth did not suffice for that day’s toilet.

At length, however, Reginald was done with his preparations; and, making every effort to subdue the violence of his conflicting emotions, or at least to banish their external symptoms, he began to walk towards Thorwold, along that spacious, stately, and sombre old avenue, which extends almost all the way between the manor-house and

the village of Lannwell. There was something in the very gloom of the place that was not without its effect in calming the perturbation of his spirits, and he advanced, after a little while, with much composure, and indeed gravity of air. To say truth, in whatever way it was looked upon, he could not be blamed for feeling that this was a day—an occasion—of some importance to him. The degree of its importance, time, and the event alone, could shew. The more he reflected, the more serious did he become ; his efforts to acquire the mastery of himself were strong, and, all things considered, they were far from being unsuccessful.

It is true, that when he found himself clear of the avenue, his gathered recollection was for a moment very much disturbed. Nevertheless, although he did not dare to look up towards the windows, he walked right across the court, and there was no time for any more reflection, for he found himself in an instant at the threshold of the drawing-room.

CHAPTER VI.

THE old butler, who happened to be the only servant at hand, was by this time so much accustomed to see Reginald at the Hall, that, being busy at the moment, as well as rather more gouty than usual, he did not think it necessary for him to take the trouble of attending the young gentleman up stairs, and announcing him in due style:—so he had to make his appearance as he might. He opened the door very modestly, it may be supposed, and had been within the room for two or three seconds, ere any one took notice of him. In fact, there was as yet nobody there but his father, a gentleman standing beside him near the fireplace, and an old stately dame established close by them, in the chief chair of the corner, with her spectacles and newspaper.

It was the last-mentioned person whose eye first lighted on the young man. She kept it fixed on him for a moment, and then, nodding very graciously, said, "Brother, where are your eyes? Here comes a young gentleman, who, I am sure, has no need to send his name before him."

Mr Dalton of Grypherwast turned round immediately. "A Dalton, to be sure, if there's faith in Sir Joshua.—Why, cousin, your son looks as if he had stepped out of one of the picture frames in our old Hall."

So saying, the Squire advanced towards Reginald, took him kindly by the hand, and led him towards his sister, who had already risen from her seat to receive and salute him.

All this was done so suddenly, that Reginald had no time to think of any thing until it was over. The old lady, besides, had called a tenfold blush into his face, by some commendations of his good looks, delivered in that hearty tone which an Englishwoman under five-and-forty would, whatever she thought, rather eat her fingers than make use of upon any similar occasion. But one thing there was, which, after a moment's pause, Reginald

could not help being very much struck with—and this was neither more nor less than that Mr Dalton of Grypherwast was a much older man than he had ever fancied him to be. Having only read and heard of him as his father's "cousin," he had, hastily enough, but perhaps not very unnaturally, conceived that he must be of course about the same age with his father. This had all along been quite a settled matter with him, and no wonder, therefore, that he was not a little surprised with being introduced to this cousin in the shape of a gentleman on the wrong side of threescore-and-ten.

The Squire's appearance, however, though his age was visible enough, shewed no symptoms of any thing like infirmity. He was evidently in the full possession of health and strength. His leg was still a strong leg, although perhaps not quite so neatly turned as it might have been at five-and-thirty, and his eye was not a whit dimmed in the midst of the wrinkles that surrounded it. In truth, the Squire was a singularly hale-looking old gentleman, for his years—grey, but not bent, fat, but not unwieldy. He was, as W. W. hath it,

“ An ancient man of purple cheer,
A rosy man right plump to see ;”—

but there was a fine rustic brown mixed with the red on his cheek, and altogether, although he had very much the air of one that had sat at good men's feasts enow, he was really no more like that worthy member of the Celtic Society, Sir William Curtis, than the haunch of a fine Ulswater buck is like a piece of the Durham ox.

The Squire's sister was as like himself, as it is easy for a sister to be like a brother. They were nearly, as it seemed, of the same age—certainly there could not be more than a very few years between them, and these were, as they ought to be, on the side of the gentleman. Mrs Elizabeth Dalton must have been a very comely, nay, a handsome woman in her youth ; for she had even now the remains both of fine features and of a stately figure ; if she had had any defect, it must have been, in all probability, in her air, which tended somewhat to the masculine. That might have been not quite so well in a young beauty, but now it was of but little importance. She was a generous-looking old lady, with bright dark eyes, and a good healthy colour in her cheek, though nothing that could be called a complexion, or sus-

pected for rouge ; she wore on her head an old-fashioned high cap, with long lappets of the most beautiful Brussels' lace ; her ample person was invested in a gown and petticoat of very rich green silk, the massive folds of which scarcely allowed the tip of the toe to be visible, while from the long sleeves, fastened at the wrists with broad heavy bracelets of gold chased-work, and terminating in point ruffles, there peeped a pair of hands still far too neat for being kept continually in their gloves. Every thing about Mrs Elizabeth spoke of comfort, substance, and good temper ; and in a word, it must have required the tact of a very Beau Nash to detect in her appearance the smallest symptom of spinsterhood.

This cheerful pair of old people were both of them, in their several ways, as kind as possible to Reginald. They disputed together, with great earnestness, whether he was more like one or another of their ancestors—the Squire giving it hollow in favour of his own father as represented in his youth by Reynolds, and the lady being equally clear for Colonel Marmaduke Dalton, a cavalier who fell at the relieving of Newark Castle.

“ Why, brother, do but look at the boy,” said she. “ I protest if you had had eyes in your head, you must have been struck with it at the first glance. Bless me, ’tis the very face itself. Give him a Spanish hat, with a falling red feather, and put the least thing in the world of a mustachio on his lip——”

“ Lord, how you rave, sister ! Why, I’ll take my bodily oath, that he’s no more like the Colonel than you are.”

“ Ha, ha ! you’re out at length then, Dick ; for I remember it as well as if it had been but a yesterday’s matter—it was just about the time you came home from Paris, Sir Harry Roseter was staying a night or two at Grypherwast, and he said over and over again, that I was very like the Colonel’s picture. I remember I took it as a compliment, so no offence to you, cousin Reginald.”

“ Clap a handsome wig and a lace cravat on him,” said the Squire, “ and you’d soon see what you’d see.”

“ To be sure I would,” quoth Mrs Elizabeth ; “ but I’ll bet you a pair of gloves on it, and here

comes a third person to be judge—will you refer it to Barbara ?”

“ Refer a bet to Barbara ! What are you thinking of now ?”

Reginald turned his eyes with eager timidity towards the door. Mrs Chisney was just entering the room, and along with her, to be sure, there was a lady.

But I shall not be so foolish as to make any attempt at describing it. Let it be enough to whisper into the reader’s ear, that the *Chateau en Espagne* was gone, demolished, undone, utterly undone, in less time than I can put these words upon my paper. “ The king rubbed his eyes, but there was not a vestige of all Aladdin’s splendour.”

In place of Reginald’s dear, darling dream—instead of his blooming blushing beauty—his Una—his angel of seventeen, there appeared a pale, sickly lady, whom the most poetic imagination in Christendom could not have conceived to be a bit under forty. In fact, Miss Barbara Dalton, the heiress of Grypherwast, was at this time in her thirty-seventh year ; but indifferent health, and

various other circumstances, had given her all the look of being a full half dozen paces farther down the hill.

There was a very singular plainness about her dress—something almost approaching to an affectation of Quakerism. There was not a single ornament of any kind about her ; she wore very long and full lawn sleeves, a tucker which came close up to her chin, and a mob-cap. She made a very low curtsy to the Vicar, another to his son, and then took a seat by her aunt, keeping her eyes fixed upon the carpet. Mrs Elizabeth took her by the hand as she sat down ; and Reginald, who, utterly confused as all his thoughts were, could not avoid retaining possession of some of his senses, heard the aunt whisper in a very low and affectionate tone, “ Now, my love, do, pray, be yourself—I know you will—my sweet girl—I know you will exert yourself.”

Something or other made him turn his eyes towards his father, and although there was neither a flush on his cheek, nor any thing else very much out of the common way, still, somehow or other, the boy could not help thinking the Vicar was ill

at case. But by this time the party were all assembling, and in the midst of that sort of buzz and bustle, he had enough to do to recover something like a command over himself, without having any leisure for speculating much about others.

The young man felt as if a weight had been taken off his breast, when the bell rung for dinner, and indeed he would fain have seated himself at a distance from the seniors of the company ; but Mrs Elizabeth called to him, and made him come and occupy a chair which she had reserved for him beside her own.

Mrs Betty was always a great talker, and it was lucky for him that such was her disposition ; for, in truth, although her frank gaiety, exquisite good nature, and especial kindness, were far from being without their effect on him, his imagination had received such a shock, the whole stream of his thoughts had been so turned from its channel, that he could not for the soul of him command presence of mind enough to have hid his confusion from any less fluent observer.

After the ladies were gone, the old Squire got

into prodigious spirits, insisted that Reginald should prove himself a Dalton by the fairness of his filling; and in the course of the evening, indulged the company with a favourite stave of his, which he sung in a voice that must have been a fine one in its day, and with an air that hovered quaintly enough between the jovial and the sentimental.

“Upbraid me not, capricious fair,
 With drinking to excess;
 I should not wait to drown despair,
 Were your indifference less—
 Were your indifference less.

“The god of wine, the victory
 To beauty yields with joy;
 For Bacchus only drinks like me,
 When Ariadne’s coy—
 When Ariadne’s coy,” &c. &c.

But even the Squire’s music could not make his mirth more infectious. In vain did Reginald struggle and strive to enjoy the jokes of “gentle dulness.” In fact, there was a gloom which nothing could dissipate; for Fancy had been stript of her blossoms, and, like another Rachel, “Would not be comforted because they were not.”

The evening was far advanced ere they joined the ladies in the drawing-room, and Reginald, nothing loth, heard his father whisper that it was time they should move homewards. Both the Squire and Mrs Betty shook hands with him cordially ere they withdrew; but a faint languid smile, accompanied with rather a chilling inclination of the head, was all that Barbara Dalton bestowed either upon him or his papa.

The Vicar was excessively taciturn during their walk to the Parsonage; and Reginald was not likely to trouble him with many remarks.

Just as they were come in front of the house, (it was fine soft moonlight,) the Vicar stopped, and looked his son full in the face.

“Reginald,” said he, “you must be surprised—you must be very much surprised—I cannot doubt that you are very curious—and hear me, my boy, I am sensible that I ought to satisfy you.”

Reginald was quite unprepared for such an address, so he said nothing, but stood with his eyes and lips open.

“My dear boy,” said the Vicar, after the pause

of a moment, “come up stairs to my room, and I will speak with you.”

He followed his father, and entered the library, where the servant, having perceived their approach, had already lighted the candles and stirred up the fire. But whatever was the reason, Mr Dalton had not been a minute in the room ere he said abruptly, and in a tone of some agitation,—“No, Reginald, it won’t do here—it won’t do just now. Another time will do better—Good-night—good-night.” And so the Vicar retired to his bed-chamber.

CHAPTER VII.

THE old Squire and Mrs Elizabeth were both of them early risers ; at least, in comparison with the general fashion of their degenerate age. She in her woollen gloves and strong shoes, and he in his green frock and short gaiters, were severally astir by eight o'clock ; and they met by accident in the flower-garden, before a single glimpse of day-light had been permitted to enter the chamber of their hosts.

“ Good-morrow to you, sister,” said the Squire ; “ have you seen any thing of Barbara this morning ? ”

“ No ; but I saw her maid,” answered Mrs Betty ; “ and I take it, upon the whole, she has had a better night than we expected. Poor thing ! the meeting must have been a severe shock—I

can perfectly enter into her feelings as to *this* matter."

"Lord bless me, Betty," quoth Mr Dalton, "how sentimental you all are? I think that pretty young fellow might have been enough to remind you how many years are gone."

"And to be sure so he did, brother; but what of that? I'm sure cousin John, man though he be, and married though he has been, was just in as great a flurry; ay, greater if the truth were known; at least, he shewed it more."

"No, no, Betty—there was an awkwardness you know at first—hang him, that was all his own fault for keeping away from us so long—but you must own that before any body else joined us he was quite himself. Poor fellow! I can't help being sorry for him. It must have been something very deep that produced such an effect on him. But I wonder what infatuation it was that made him in such a hurry for a wife—If he had only waited——"

"Only waited! which of you is it that will wait?—You're all alike in these matters, brother—so hot, so sudden, so boisterous—and then the

moment you meet with the least check, off you go in a pet, forsooth. Nothing but sulks, sulks, sulks! O! you may say what you will, but the men have, in their own style, just as much vanity as we have—and of a far more disagreeable sort, too, I think.”

“Do you think it was vanity that made him marry the girl? Every body said she was uncommonly pretty, I allow that.”

“Vanity!—what else could it be?—or pride—you may give it whichever name you like the best. He was one of the lords of the creation, you know, and how should he forgive such an insult from one of us?—Would any body have expected such condescension?—What! be so humble as to ask a second time, with the chance of being refused a second time!”

“Pooh, pooh, Betty—you told me yourself long ago she would have taken him the second time.”

“Yes, and I don’t deny that I said so—But I told you at the same time, if you please to remember, that we are all of us a great deal too good-natured—’tis our weak point—our foible.”

“ Ha ! ha ! Betty ; upon my word, it makes me laugh to hear you speak so—*you*, Betty Dalton, *you* that have refused more coaches-and-six in your time than——”

“ Nay, nay, Dick—none of your joking.”

“ There was Sir Benjamin Blount, Betty—what made you refuse *him* ? Tell the truth now for once.”

“ O, the sad rakish man ! Why do you mention him, brother ?—Poor Sir Benjamin ! I believe there was something good about him, after all.”

“ Good about him ? No, that’s too tender by half, Betty. Blount was always a Whig.”

“ A Whig ! well, and what then ? Lord ! when will you men be done with these foolish politics ? You’re all mad, I think. Do you really suppose that a Whig may not make as good a husband as a Tory, even although he do not drink quite so much ?”

“ Come, come, Betty, none of your personality, if you please ; I’m sure we had not much more than a bottle a-piece. Wait till they give us

breakfast—when will that be, I wonder?—and you'll see if I chew high."

"See if you *chew high*! Lord, what an odious phrase that is!"

"Upon my honour, I have not the least touch of the parrot tongue about me."

"The parrot tongue! I'm sure you might teach a parrot to speak more genteelly."

"Pooh, pooh, Betty, I only meant to say that I was not *cut*."

"I can stand your slang no longer, brother. But, seriously, was it not a shame of you to set about teaching that innocent boy? He looked quite flustered when he came into the drawing-room."

"Did he, faith? Well, and I swear I like him the better for that. I must have John to bring the boy to Grypherwast-hall one of these days. Now that the ice is broken, I'm resolved it shan't be my fault if it ever freeze again. I like John himself; he's not a man of my sort, 'tis true—he is a book man, and a quiet one; but there's something about him that I always did like, and al-

ways shall like—ay, and respect too. But the boy!—the boy is a fine plant.”

“He’s a Dalton all over,” quoth Mrs Elizabeth, with great emphasis; “he’s a noble boy, and I feel as if I could love him like a child of my own.”

They were both silent for a minute or two, and then the Squire resumed, in a more serious tone—“After all, sister,” said he, “it is a great shame that Reginald should have been allowed to grow up to a man almost, without ever even seeing the outside of Grypherwast. Why, it must all be his own one day, Betty.”

“Nay, nay, Dick, don’t say that, neither; there’s many things may happen, you know—there’s Barbara; what’s to hinder her to——”

“To marry, say ye? No, no, Betty, that won’t do now. Poor Barbara! her time is past, and you know as well as I what her mind’s in.”

“Pooh, brother, you’re not going to set it down for a fixed thing that this stuff is to last for ever? She’ll soon get sick of it. I wish you could but try her with one single winter at Bath.”

“ She’s too far gone, Betty ; it has got into her blood, I fear, and nothing will ever take it out again. O dear ! it was a black sight the first time she ever saw one of those fellow’s faces ; and now that Charles has joined them too, I give her quite up—I am nothing against the two of them.”

“ Charles Catline is my——I never liked him——boy and man he was always my aversion.”

“ Come, come, sister, he’s Barbara’s brother—the only brother she has, more’s the pity—but it would be a hard thing to complain of her being attached to him ; he was always kind to Barbara.”

“ Yes,” quoth Mrs Elizabeth, with some emotion ; “ and I’ll tell you what, brother”—here the lady sunk her voice into a whisper—“ I’ll tell you what is my honest belief, Dick, that when you and I are out of the way, Grypherwast-hall will be very nearly as much Charles Catline’s own, as if he had been Barbara’s brother by both sides of the house.”

The Squire bit his lip, coloured a little, and after a moment’s pause, said, very solemnly,—
“ No, no, Elizabeth, you carry matters too far

now. Barbara, come what may, will never forget that her blood is Dalton."

"Blood!" quoth Miss Betty—"I'll be very plain with you, brother; I don't think either blood or name go for much, when once a person gives into these crazy pernicious notions. They'll persuade her among them to do any thing they please, and they'll make her believe all the while that 'tis her duty—that's the worst on't."

"That's the worst on't, indeed," echoed the Squire—"confound their infernal cunning—they've ruined my poor child."

Here followed another pause, during which Mrs Elizabeth kept her eyes very fixedly on her brother. "Richard," at length she said—"Richard, my dear brother, there's a thought that has often come into my head, but even now I can scarce out wi't."

"What is it, Betty?—Speak freely, sister."

"Why, after all, Dick, you're a strong man, very like to see many years yet, if you take decent care of yourself—Would it not be possible for you to pluck up your heart, and——"

“ Seek another wife, sister ; Is that what you mean ? O, no, Elizabeth, if you love me, never hint at any such matter again. My dear Margaret——” Here the good old gentleman’s voice faltered a little, and his sister was extremely sorry that she should have touched upon that cord. How painful its vibrations still were, she, deceived like others by external appearances, had not imagined. She now strove to change the subject as speedily as possible.

“ Reginald,” said she, “ is certainly a very noble-looking lad. I have been thinking a good deal about him, brother ; and I am sure you will quite agree with me, that he has been long enough in this quiet place ;—it is high time certainly that he should see a little of the world. Why don’t you speak to John about sending him to College ? There’s the expense, to be sure.”

“ Pooh ! that’s nothing, a mere trifle would cover that ; and if John would just come over with him, as I was saying, to Grypherwast, Barbara and all of us would be able to get acquainted with him together ; and I don’t suppose, as matters stand now-a-days, John would be at all above

accepting a little help from me, if it be really so that he's too poor to be able to send Reginald to College himself."

"Now, brother," quoth Miss Betty, "nothing can be kinder than all this—'tis just what I should have expected of you—'tis just like yourself. But do take my advice for once—go about it quietly and cautiously. John's a Dalton in his temper, for all his quiet looks—we've had proof enough of that, I think. Do let them come over to Grypherwast, and be with us for a little while before you say any thing about these matters. A rash word, however well designed, might do a world of harm, Dick."

"But, sister, what will Barbara say, think ye? Will she like their coming?"

"No," says Mrs Elizabeth, "I don't think she will—at least not just at the first blush of the business—(you know how she hated the idea of coming to Thorwold even)—but never mind, she'll soon get reconciled."

"Yes, yes," says the Squire, "I'm sure she'll get reconciled—she'll soon, as you say, get quite reconciled, and then all parties will be pleased."

“Hum !” muttered Betty to herself, “I’m not quite sure of that neither.”—But whatever Mrs Betty’s thought was, she did not choose to let her brother hear any thing of it ; so, for the present, we also shall respect the lady’s secret.

CHAPTER VIII.

IT was on that same morning, while a gay and merry party were assembled round the breakfast table at Thorwold-hall, that the Vicar of Lannwell, having gathered from his pillow that resolution which he could not command the evening before, at length told his son the story of which the reader must have collected some notion from the dialogue in the last chapter. I shall not, however, now repeat it as he told it, both because that would occupy more space than I can afford, and because the Vicar (even had he told all he himself knew, which he did not, and indeed could not do,) would still have left untold much that the reader of his son's history may be the better for learning. Leaving it to the reader's own sagacity to discover where I am most likely to be go-

ing beyond the communication of the father to the son, I shall, without farther preamble, give him some of the information at my disposal, in the shape of a brief and connected sketch.

John Dalton's father was, like his son, a clergyman. He had, rather late in life, been presented to a college living in the west of England, on which he immediately settled; and marrying the daughter of one of the neighbouring gentry, he became so much tied to that part of the country, that he had but slender opportunities of keeping up his intimacy with the members of his own family in the north. He died just about the time when his son John was fit for going to the university, leaving him in possession of a small patrimony, the greater part of which was necessarily expended in the course of a few years' residence at Oxford.

John, having taken his degree with some eclat, obtained, through the kindness of a young gentleman educated at the same college with himself, the small benefice of Lannwell, where, as we have seen, he spent the remainder of his life. On arriving in that part of England, he naturally lost

no time in repairing to Grypherwast-hall, where Mr Richard Dalton received him with all the ready hospitality of northern kinsmanship.

John Dalton was at that time a very good-looking young man. Though not possessing brilliant talents, he had, being diligent and temperate, obtained for himself considerable distinction among his contemporaries at the university; and it may fairly be supposed, that when he came down to take possession of his living in Westmoreland, his manners partook of that mixture of conscious dignity and stumbling rawness, which so often marks the demeanour of a young student fresh from the triumphs and the seclusion of a college life.

Under these circumstances, it was perhaps no great wonder that he should have wanted the *tact* to distinguish between the open courtesy of a well-bred cousin, and the attentive shyness of an admiring girl. In short, he fell into the silly blunder of supposing that Barbara Dalton (who *then* really was both young and beautiful) had fallen in love with him at first sight. He pondered over this flattering notion until he had banished every doubt;

and at last, one fine summer's day, ere the first three months of his incumbency were expired, he mounted his horse, rode to Grypherwast-hall, met his fair cousin in the gardens, half boldly, half bashfully told his errand, and was forthwith refused in a style which satisfied even himself, that the idea of such a thing had never entered the young lady's head before.

I am almost ashamed to say how absurdly the Vicar behaved himself after this little affair was over. If he had known half as much of real young ladies, as he did of the Phædras, Sapphos, Didos, *et hoc genus*, he would have been aware that very few of them ever think of such matters, until they have been desired to do so. He would have looked very dolefully for a few months, and taken especial care to let Barbara see how dolefully he looked, and returned again in half a year or so, and tried his luck a second time. His was, I believe, the very first offer his young kinswoman had ever received, and who but a booby of a collegian needs to be told, that the most delightful moment in a young woman's life is that, not in which the first

declaration is made to her, but in which she begins to reflect within herself that it has been made. In the surprise of the instant she has refused the swain ; indeed if one thinks of it for a moment, what can be so unreasonable as to expect that such a modest, blushing creature shall muster brass enough to answer with a “ Yes,” the first time the most serious of all questions is put to her ? A sly experienced hand may no doubt manage matters so that it shall be thus ; he may come so often close to the point without ever touching it ; he may so completely suggest, and yet so carefully abstain from mentioning ; he may plead so effectually, and yet so obscurely, that the poor thing’s heart is his ere he has asked it in set terms ; that when he does ask it, he is conferring rather than demanding a favour ; and that then a voiceless beating of the timid virgin heart is enough to attest on her part the welcome, thrice welcome termination of

Hopes and fears, a mingled throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherish’d long.

But arts like these were of course immeasurably beyond the theoretical, to say nothing of the practical attainments of John Dalton. He had read Ovid, but he knew no more of love than if he had written the notes to the *De Arte Amandi*. He darted headlong at the ring, and having missed it once, never thought of caracolling it gently round and round the circle, and essaying his dart again with a more leisurely aim, and a steadier hand. His first disappointment effectually satisfied him ; and while, perhaps, from the moment of its occurrence, Barbara Dalton neither thought nor strove to think of anything but him, he exerted all the force of his manhood in the struggle, to think no more of her. His unskilful Vanity had received a wound far deeper than she, poor girl, had ever dreamt it was possible for herself to have inflicted ; and Pride was the only physician which he, in his ignorance, had ever thought of calling to his aid.

In short, he became a perfect recluse within the bounds of his little parsonage at Lannwell. There the image of his cousin was associated by

him with no ideas but those of pain—perhaps, for there is no limit to such kinds of folly,—even of anger—of wrath. He did all he could, therefore, to banish the image from his fancy ; and however much I may shock the fair reader by telling it, the result was, that he ere long was successful in doing so to a very tolerable extent. He fished in the Beck, that tumbled into the lake close beside the hedge of his garden ; he took long solitary walks among the woods and hills ; he eat huge rashers of bacon, drank pots of home-brewed beer, and read Greek at night, with his feet up upon the hobs. Except on Sundays, when he went to church very decently, he became exceedingly careless and ultra-rustical in his attire. There were, as we have seen, no gentlefolks resident very near him, and he would not be at the trouble of visiting those at a distance. Above all, he never once approached the gates of Gryphewast-hall ; but, to be sure, the Leven Sands were between him and the seat of his kinsman, so that might be less a matter of wonder.

Barbara Dalton, in the mean time, pined and moped away for many weeks and months, always

expecting another visit from her reverend cousin. She had never mentioned what had happened to her father, so he, even more than herself, was at a loss to account for the young man's obstinate absence. At length, news came to Grypherwast, that the Vicar was married.

“Hah, hah!” said the Squire; “and so this is the upshot of the affair! One might have suspected John was in love from his never coming to see us at the Hall. I hope we shall see more of him, however, when once his honey-moon is over.”

When the Squire was more accurately informed as to the nature of the connection which his young kinsman had formed, he was far from being pleased with it; and, indeed, it was not strange that this should have been the case.

At the distance of about half a mile from the parsonage of Lannwell, there dwelt in those days, in a snug little cottage by the way-side, a respectable old man, by name Thomas Lethwaite, who, although the land he cultivated was his own property, and had descended to him from a long line of forefathers, was still, in appearance, manners,

and habits of life, nothing more than a peasant. This good *statesman* (for so in that district of England your small landed proprietor is styled,) was very much distressed about the solitary and melancholy manner in which his young neighbour seemed to be spending his time. He, therefore, did what he could do to comfort the recluse ; and, in particular, he would never allow him to pass homewards from his even-tide rambles, without inviting him into his cottage ; or, if the weather were fine, to rest and take a cup of mild ale with him beneath the sycamore that shaded his porch.

The statesman was a widower ; but he had two pretty daughters that lived with him—Ellen and Lucy. The elder of them might be at this time about sixteen years of age, but she was already the favourite toast on every skittle-green within five miles of Lamwell ; and, indeed, she was so tall and well-grown, that but for the almost infantine simplicity of her manners, one might have easily believed her to be two or three years older than she really was ; she had the most charming ringlets of light brown hair, and the softest sweetest blue eyes in all the valley.

This lovely creature was considered at first by the melancholy scholar, as if she had been merely a pretty child—a plaything; and as her own papa thought of and treated her in the same fashion, she expected nothing else. By degrees, however, the heart of the young Vicar (whether or not the recent wounds had increased its tenderness and susceptibility,) became sensible to the modest influences of her opening beauty. His evening walks more and more frequently brought him under Lethwaite's old sycamore; nay, he even began to halt there occasionally during the heat of noon-day, when the worthy statesman himself was far off among the hills.

In a word, he stood in need of consolation, and he had found where it might be had. He married Ellen Lethwaite towards the close of the season. The statesman gave a grand fete champetre beneath the sycamore, and while all the company were busy dancing and singing, Mr Dalton led his bride home all alone to his Parsonage, beneath the smiles of the brightest harvest-moon that had ever tipt the groves of Lannwell in silver.

[After all, I take it as many marriages are brought about in this way as in any other; at least, among people who knew as little of the world as Mr John Dalton and his bride might be supposed to do. When a young gentleman in such a situation has once made up his mind to ask a young woman in marriage, she may refuse him if she will; but the chances are very great, notwithstanding, that he marries either herself or somebody else, ere the year is out.]

Mrs John Dalton was all that Ellen Lethwaite had seemed—and promised to be—every thing that was gentle, tender, affectionate, and good. Her husband, who, although a most amiable man by nature, had *originally* by no means the smoothest of all possible tempers, felt his happiness to be improved a thousand fold, under the influence of her soothing companionship. Happy as he was with her, and satisfied as she had taught him to be with his lot, there still, however, adhered to him certain feelings, (I know not well how they could be described,) which prevented him from renewing, in his character of a married man, that intercourse with his relations at Grypherwast-hall, which he had

so absurdly broken off as a bachelor. We cannot but take it for granted, that after a little time he must have become in so far sensible to the odd appearance, which his behaviour in this respect could not fail to have in the eyes both of them and of other people. But neither can one be at any loss to understand, that this very consciousness might of itself throw new and ever-increasing difficulties in his way. There is nothing more awkward than the breaking off of an acquaintance, except the renewing of one that has been broken off; and thus from day to day, and from month to month, the thing was deferred, until, I suppose, he had taught himself to consider it as almost an impossibility that he should ever shew himself again at the Hall. At first, at the least, the worthy Squire would no doubt attribute his persisting in this strange conduct, to his being ashamed of his humbly-born wife, or to some other cause equally remote from the truth. Of course, Barbara Dalton—and, I believe, her aunt Mrs Elizabeth too—even from the beginning—suspected much more shrewdly.

But be all these lesser matters as they might, John Dalton and his beautiful wife lived happily together in their secluded abode for nearly two years ; at the end of which period Reginald (our acquaintance) was born. Unfortunately the boy did not come easily into the world, and Ellen never recovered the shock this gave her delicate constitution. A sad misfortune befel her sister Lucy just about that time, in the course of an excursion she made to the Preston-guild ;—a terrible misfortune, of which, perhaps, more hereafter : And what between bodily weakness and sore mental distresses, so it was, that in the course of a few months Mrs Dalton died, and her wedding-sheet, which, according to the primitive fashion of the district, had been carefully laid by for that purpose, was formed into the shroud which enveloped her remains.*

* I have no doubt that Denmark is the cradle from which the chief part of the population of that district of England derives its origin ; and among many other circumstances strongly corroborative of this belief, I remem-

Thus were the Vicar's best hopes blasted for ever, at the moment when he promised himself a

ber a very plain allusion to this identical fashion, in one of the old Danish ballads. A lady, whose husband has married a second wife, and suffered the children of the house to be ill-used by their step-mother, is represented as rising from her grave, and entering the chamber at midnight, for the purpose of reproaching the forgetful husband and negligent father. And among other things she says to him, (as nearly as I can recollect and render the words,)

“Thou shrink'st, this pallid shroud to meet,
 Damp from the darksome tomb ;
 That shroud was once my wedding-sheet,
 And thou my bold bridegroom.”

There are more old songs of the North, in which the same general idea may be found. By the way, in the solemn observance of THE WHITE FAST, it is, to this day, the custom of the Hebrews to be arrayed in their shrouds. On that occasion, even the High-Priest, at the altar, performs the most lofty service of their ritual in the very vestment which he is one day to wear in his grave. And here, perhaps, may be one more coincidence, in addition to the many that have already been pointed out, between ancient Scandinavia and the unchanging East.

doubling of all his joys. His spirits sunk woefully under the severe infliction ; but

“ Cords around his heart were spun,
That could not, would not be undone.”

He was a father, and we have already seen how he roused his energies for the sake of his child—how he devoted the prime of his manhood to rearing him in infancy and in boyhood—how, a few sore subjects only excepted, he, from the dawn almost of reason, condescended to bestow all the confidence of a coeval upon Reginald.

As for Barbara Dalton—from the day she heard of her cousin’s marriage, her heart grew cold to every thing about her—to man—to life—to the world. Naturally of an ardent temper, the passion which had been too late kindled had soon blazed into a flame—long, long ere that day came, she had mused and nursed herself into the deepest love—it was the first, the last earthly flame destined to disturb her peace.

Hitherto she had hated herself for the rashness and the cruelty (so she looked upon it) of

her behaviour to her cousin—she had thought over all he said at that unhappy interview a thousand and a thousand times, and every meditation filled her with the more painful notion of what she herself had said and done. Passion, the great deceiver, convinced her that her conduct *then* had been not only, what it really was, abrupt, and perhaps ungentle—but what it certainly was not—*false*. In a word, Barbara had long hated herself, when she reflected on the scene; and yet there were other feelings even more painful, which took possession of her, when she found that she was never to have any opportunity of undoing what she had so rashly done! It was now, indeed, that her anguish became intolerable.

The Vicar's wedding not only at once and for ever put a period to all her hopes and dreams; by degrees, and in course of after-thought, it did more:—It convinced her that she had been a fool for suffering those dreams to sway her mind but for a moment. It filled her with a general contempt for MAN—for his levity, inconstancy, and want of all serious passion. There was something or other that would not allow her to look on John Dalton

as worse than other men ; on the contrary, she could not, no, not even now, divest herself of her long cherished belief, that he was superior to others of his sex. Upon that sex at large she poured out the vial which she durst not, desired not, to scatter on his single head. She despised his love—but she satisfied herself that no other could ever bring her love more worthy of her acceptance. Strange, ill-assorted, wandering, perplexing, conflicting thoughts—how deep was the possession which they took of a spirit, strong in nothing but feeling, and *there* not only strong, but unable to strive against its own strength !

Barbara Dalton, at the age of thirty-seven, was still but imperfectly recovered from the effects of this disappointment, which befel her while she was but in the opening bloom of her youth. By degrees, it is true, her mind had been soothed and healed on the surface. She loved her father and her aunt, and she was extremely attached to her brother uterine, (of whom something has been already said,) and his family. Of late, indeed, she had been more than ever under Sir Charles Catline's influence, in consequence of his being almost

the only one of her relations that did not discountenance some notions which she had embraced very passionately in regard to a certain very important subject. Of all which, more in the sequel.

CHAPTER IX.

THE reader would probably be not much edified by any very particular account of the little incidents that occurred during the three days spent at Thorwold-hall, by the family of Grypherwast. There were walks in the woods, rides on the hill, and boating-parties on the lake ; but in the greater part of these Barbara Dalton took no share, and even when she did accompany the rest, silent and reserved, just as she had been the first evening Reginald saw her, she exhibited no symptoms of partaking in the pleasure diffused among those with whom she was surrounded. In vain did the old Squire talk, joke, and laugh ; in vain did Mrs Betty use more quiet endeavours to engage her attention ; in vain did Mr and Mrs Chisney do every thing that kindness and hospi-

tality could suggest—there was still something so painful to her feelings in being placed (as she almost continually was) within the sight of John Dalton, and the sound of his voice, that she was quite unable to resist the constraining and depressing influence. The Vicar, on his part, exerted himself, whatever his private feelings might have been, with increasing success; and as for Reginald, the happy buoyancy of youth asserted its privilege; in spite of all that had happened, before his relations took their departure, he had not only quite recovered the tranquillity of his external demeanour, but, through dint of serious reflection, aided by the high stimulus of juvenile spirits, reconciled his mind, in a great measure, to the actual state of affairs—and almost taught himself to think with less of regret, than of shame, upon the delusions in which his idleness had so long indulged itself.

His intercourse with Frederick Chisney had first animated, if not infused into him, the desire of mingling in the world; and now this desire became more and more strengthened, not only by what he heard every hour in the common course of

conversation, but in consequence of the more serious reflections, which he could not help making for himself, in regard to the business of life, and the state of his own future prospects in the world. His father, too, from the moment the Gryphewast family went away, began, he could not but remark, to talk freely with him on subjects which heretofore had been, perhaps, far too much avoided—the necessity, namely, of his choosing a profession, and ere long devoting the whole of his energies to the active duties of life.

No topics could, in one point of view, be more agreeable than these to Reginald—because the very broaching of them implied that his father was sensible he had spent enough of time already in the seclusion of Lannwell; but the youth was perplexed, when he heard the Vicar speak so strongly about the necessity of his looking forward to a life of steady and laborious exertion; and although he did not venture to say out distinctly what was passing through his mind, Mr Dalton could not recur again and again to that subject, (which he did, and with ever-increasing earnestness too,) without at length forming some

suspicious ; and no sooner were these formed, than he resolved to do what duty and affection alike dictated and prescribed.

It was on a Sunday evening, when they were sitting together in the library, that the Vicar first said the long expected words, “ Reginald, you must spend the winter at Oxford. It is a sore thing for me to lose you, but the time is come. Perhaps we should have been thinking of it sooner.”

Much as Reginald had thought of—much as he had even desired what was now proposed, there was a melancholy tenderness in his father’s tone of voice that went quite to his heart, and he almost wished the words had not been uttered. However, he gathered his thoughts for a moment, and answered, “ My dear father, how is it possible for me to think of being weeks, months, a whole winter, away from you ! and yet what can I say ? I am nearly eighteen years old.”

“ Yes, indeed, my dear boy ; and as I have already often said to you, and, indeed, as I have no doubt you have often enough reflected with yourself, the world is before you, for you to make

your own way in it. It is high time you were preparing to look on yourself as a man."

"Will you go with me to Oxford?" said Reginald.

"I don't know," said the Vicar. "It is so long since I left the place, that I dare say I should be as much a stranger in it as yourself. I have one old friend there, who, I am sure, will do all he can to have you comfortably established. Besides you know, my dear, the journey would be a very considerable expence, and you are aware, that I shall now have less money to spare than I have ever had."

Reginald heard these last words with a new feeling of pain; for, in truth, money was a thing he had scarcely ever thought of. But ere he could say any thing, his father went on, "I am sure of one thing, that my dear boy will be careful of the little I can afford to give him. Oxford was, and always must be, a place of great temptation, in more ways than one, Reginald. I trust you will remember, when you are far away from Lannwell, the lessons of moderation you have learned

here. I hope you will forget nothing that you ought to remember."

"My dear father," said he, "you may depend upon it, I will never spend a single sixpence I can help."

The Vicar smiled a little, and there was silence for a minute or two on both sides. He then resumed in a less serious tone, and said, "I shall go as far as Grypherwast-hall with you, however—'tis all in your way; and you know I promised Mr Dalton, that we should both of us pay him a visit ere long."

Reginald's face involuntarily coloured up when he heard this; he paused, however, for a moment ere he said in answer, "How happy I shall be to see the old Hall, father! and the Squire was so very kind, and so was Mrs Elizabeth."

"Ay, Reginald," said the Vicar, "they are kind, very kind people, and nothing can be more proper than that you should be sensible of their kindness; but forgive me, my dear boy, if I am wronging you,—do you know, I cannot help suspecting, that, in spite of all the hints I have dropt

from time to time, you indulge yourself in some very foolish expectations from that quarter?"

The thing was so true, and the mention of it so unexpected, that Reginald's face at once betrayed him. He blushed deeply, and looked any way but towards his father. He, on his part, rose from his seat, and traversed the room several times with slow, heavy steps, ere he proceeded any farther.

"Reginald," said he, resuming his chair, "since we have come fairly upon this subject, let us make an end of it once and for all. I tell you the truth, so help me God, and nothing but the truth, when I say to you, that I believe the possessions of our ancestors will never be either mine or yours."

"But why, my dear father," said Reginald, taking courage—"why do you speak so positively? The Squire is very old, and Miss Dalton, you know, is not young—for a woman I mean."

"Hear me, boy, and I will tell you exactly how the matter stands, so far as I have been able to understand it myself—and I believe I have had opportunities rather better than yours for doing so. Mr Dalton's estate goes of course to his daugh-

ter. If he would he could not alter that—but he is devotedly attached to his child. She is his only child, and she must be as dear to him, as you, Reginald, are to me—how can one doubt that she is most dear to him?”

“Surely, surely,” said Reginald; “but if she never marries?—”

“There is nothing to hinder her marrying,” said the Vicar, blushing a little, and looking downwards in his turn—“There is nothing in her age to prevent it, and between ourselves, Reginald, she has got into the hands of a set of people, among whom she might be very likely to find a husband, but that there is one among them who would rather she should never have one at all—I mean her brother—I mean Sir Charles Catline.”

“But, dear father, Sir Charles Catline is not a Dalton, though he is her brother.”

“True, my boy; but although he is not a Dalton, he may like very well to be the heir of the Daltons.”

“I can never believe Miss Dalton would have the baseness——”

“Come, come, Reginald, you talk like a boy

indeed now. Sir Charles Catline is her brother ; and knowing all that you do know, do you seriously think it likely she should hesitate between *him* and *me* ?”

“ Hesitate between justice and injustice, you mean to say,” answered Reginald.

“ Call it as you will,” quoth the Vicar, “ such is the case. But you shall go with me to Grypherwast, and see with your own eyes, if you will not put trust in what I say to you—you shall witness the bondage, the vassalage, into which artful, I fear, very artful, very designing people have brought her—above all, you shall see this Catline. For me, I know him of old.”

“ And what sort of a man is he, father ? But why should I ask ? If he would take Grypherwast, were it in his power, he must be a villain indeed.”

The Vicar smiled again. “ My dear boy,” said he, “ you have many things to learn yet. But I will confess one thing to you, and that is, that of all the changes I have ever heard of, Sir Charles Catline’s must be the strangest, if he be at heart what they now say he appears to be.—*Alas, my*

poor Lucy!—These last words were uttered in a broken whisper, and the Vicar paused.—“And yet, Reginald,” he proceeded after a moment, “God forbid that we should judge uncharitably. There is nothing impossible to the Almighty.—But in the meantime I repeat to you once more, that you are to dismiss from your mind these vain, silly dreams. Dismiss them instantly, my boy, and be thankful to God, that if you make a proper use of the faculties he has given you, no part of your worldly happiness need be dependent on the caprice of strangers.—Hear me, Reginald! if you are too wise in your own conceit to follow my advice, if you persist in this folly, this absurdity, this madness, (for I can give it no other name,) you will undo yourself—and me too, my dear boy, for what have I in the world but you?”

Reginald was exceedingly affected with the passionate manner in which his father delivered himself. A tear had gathered in his eye ere he answered, (and he did it in a tone at once trembling and energetic,) “My dearest father, what have I but you—whom else have I to listen to, to obey, to love? I confess to you, that I have been silly

enough to regard all these matters in a different light ; but henceforth I shall have no thoughts of my own. In this, and in all things, be sure that I shall endeavour to do according to your desire. Would to God I could be such as you would have me !”

“ My dearest boy, my only hope,” said the Vicar, “ you *are*, you are already all that I would have you. I have told you my own weaknesses, because I would rather you should know them, and be strong yourself, than be weak in ignorance of them. Go into the world, my Reginald, and happy will my grey hairs be, if you prove in manhood such a creature as I love in you now.”

CHAPTER X.

IN spite of all the excitements of curiosity, all the bustle of undefined expectation, the fortnight during which Reginald looked forward to and prepared for his departure from Lannwell, was a period, on the whole, of painful, far—far more than of pleasureable emotion. His father's whole air and aspect seemed to be suffused, as the day approached nearer and nearer, with the tones of an ever-softening interest, and a more melancholy seriousness of affection. The stillness of the autumnal air, meanwhile, began to be broken by sudden blasts of wind, that whistled and moaned among the branches ; and every morning shewed some favourite tree stript of half the foliage that had mantled it over night in all the fragile gracefulness of October. The turfen walks of the gar-

den lay encumbered with dead and rustling leaves. Nature, indeed, was still beautiful, but it was the beauty of decay, and its influences accorded well with the gloom of pensive tenderness which hung and deepened over the spirits both of the man and of the boy.

At length the day came, and Reginald, although his father was going along with him, did not leave the vicarage without some sorrowful enough farewells. Frederick Chisney, however, joined them with a cheerful face at the gates of Thorwold; and the presence of a third person, even less merry than he was, would have been enough to divert, in some measure, the current of their thoughts. Besides, after they had advanced a few miles on the way, every thing was new to Reginald, and even the dreary novelty of the Leven Sands was able to occupy and interest his mind. The good Vicar and Frederick, both of them, smiled, though not at all in the same sort, at some juvenile raptures he could not help feeling now and then, and dreamt not of suppressing;—for every paltry collier sloop was a ship, and Morecamb Bay was ocean itself to one,

that had never before seen any thing greater than a little inland mere.

They halted to bait their horses at a little village on the main coast of the Palatinate, and then pursued their course leisurely through a rich and level country, until the groves of Grypherwast received them amidst all the breathless splendour of a noble sunset. It would be difficult to express the emotions with which young Reginald regarded, for the first time, the ancient demesne of his race. The scene was one which a stranger, of years and experience very superior to his, might have been pardoned for contemplating with some enthusiasm ; but to him the first glimpse of the venerable front, embosomed amidst its

“ Old contemporary trees,”

was the more than realization of cherished dreams. Involuntarily he drew in his rein ;—and, the whole party as involuntarily following the motion, they approached the gateway together at the slowest pace.

The gateway is almost in the heart of the village, for the Hall of Grypherwast had been rear-

ed long before English gentlemen conceived it to be a point of dignity to have no humble roofs near their own. A beautiful stream runs hard by, and the hamlet is almost within the arms of the princely forest, whose ancient oaks, and beeches, and gigantic pine-trees, darken and ennoble the aspect of the whole surrounding region. The peasantry, who watch the flocks and herds in those deep and grassy glades, the fishermen, who draw their subsistence from the clear waters of the river, and the woodmen, whose axes resound all day long among the inexhaustible thickets, are the sole inhabitants of the simple place. Over their cottages the Hall of Grypherwast has predominated for many long centuries, a true old Northern manor-house, not devoid of a certain magnificence in its general aspect, though making slender pretensions to any thing like elegance in its details. The central tower, square, massy, rude, and almost destitute of windows, recalls the knightly and troubled period of the old Border wars; while the overshadowing roofs, carved balconies, and multifarious chimnies, scattered over the rest of the building, attest the successive influence of many more

or less-tasteful generations. Excepting in the original baronial tower, the upper parts of the house are all formed of oak, but this with such an air of strength and solidity, as might well shame many modern structures raised of better materials. Nothing could be more perfectly in harmony with the whole character of the place, than the autumnal brownness of the stately trees around. The same descending rays were tinging with rich lustre the outlines of their bare trunks, and the projecting edges of the old-fashioned bay-windows which they sheltered ; and some rooks of very old family were cawing over head almost in the midst of the hospitable smoke-wreaths.

Within a couple of yards from the door of the house, an eminently respectable-looking old man, in a powdered wig, and very rich livery of blue and scarlet, was sitting on a garden-chair, with a pipe in his mouth, and a cool tankard within his reach upon the ground.

This personage rose, and, laying down his tube, uncovered himself, and performed as elaborate a bow to the name of Dalton, as Dr Samuel Johnson himself ever did to the dignity of an arch-

bishop. He told them, with an air of concern, that his master was confined to his room by a touch of gout; "but my young mistress," quoth he, "and Mrs Elizabeth, are sitting with him, and if you'll just wait for a moment, I'll let them know who are come."

So saying, the old man tottered on as fast as he could before them, and, after ushering them into a large dark-pannelled parlour, repeated his best obeisance, and left them for a little to themselves. But he might have staid a long while ere Reginald at least had wearied, for the walls of the room were quite covered with old portraits, and the youth was in a moment too busy with these to think of any thing besides. He had not, however, had time to examine more than two or three of the embrowned and whiskered visages, ere the man returned with a face full of smiles, to say that his master was delighted to hear of their arrival, and requested them to come into his dressing-room. "The family have dined an hour ago," added their guide, "but we'll soon get something for you, and you'll dine beside the Squire, if you have no objections."

“ Any where you please,” quoth Frederick Chisney ; “ but do make haste, old boy, for we’re as sharp as hawks.”

“ God bless you, sir,” said Thomas Bishop ; “ I wish you had come a little earlier, for we had one of the grandest haunches to-day that ever mortal eye beheld ; but never fear, gentlemen, we’ll toss up a hash in five minutes time, and a beef steak, maybe—perhaps your honours would like to have a beef steak along with the hash ?”

“ Thou hast said it,” quoth Chisney ; “ and now lead the way, my hearty.”

The Vicar and his son followed, smiling in spite of themselves, and after passing through three or four spacious chambers, in one of which was a bed, and in another a billiard-table, they reached the snug little *habitaculum* where the Squire was established in the “ *otium cum dignitate*” of his customary disorder. As the door was being opened, they could hear him saying, in rather a surly whisper,—“ Away with all your confounded trumpery—shuffle your tracts and hymn-books out of sight, I say :” And, to be sure, there was almost as formidable an array of pamphlets on

the table, as there was of phials on the chimney-piece.

The Squire made an effort, and rose from the abyss of his enormous elbow-chair, to welcome them. Mrs Elizabeth laid down her knitting with a most cordial smile ; and even Barbara, now that she was under her own roof, and had guests to receive, acquitted herself with an air of frankness totally unlike anything that Reginald had seen her exhibit while at Thorwold.

“ My brother has just left us,” said she,—“ ’tis so unfortunate—but he’s to be with us again to-morrow ; and, in the meantime——”

“ They’ll eat their dinner, to be sure,” interrupted the Squire ; “ and if there was but one bottle of wine in my cellar, they should have it. Betty—Betty, my dear, you know best about such things—just desire the Bishop to fetch some of the old green seal.”

Mrs Betty whispered Thomas, who had just re-entered the room, and who signified, by a knowing smile, that his foot needed no guide to the binn in question. In the mean time, a table was covered at the opposite side of the chamber, and

in the course of a very few minutes the three travellers were paying their best respects to the *hachi*.

A very ingenious author has recently written a very delightful Essay on the "Pleasures of Sickness,"—but he has omitted one charming moment,—I mean that when the convalescent man receives in his chamber the first visit of a friend whose face has never approached him during the severity of his illness. The Squire of Grypherwast was now in full enjoyment of this. The associations of the sick-room were just vanishing beneath the influence of new looks and new voices, and ere the strangers had made an end of their repast, he had already got the length of declaring he felt himself so much better, he thought he might venture on a glass of claret.

In vain did Mrs Elizabeth shake her head:—in vain did Miss Barbara lift her hands and her eyes: in vain did even the old Bottleholder whisper caution as he set a glass of the smallest size before him. The Squire's glee was up—the little round table was wheeled towards the fireside,

and the first smack of “ the green seal,” bathed his lips in Elysium.

With what slow deliberate satisfied *gusto* did he imbibe the “ molten ruby !” No gulping, as if it had been water, and merely intended for the destruction of thirst;—no;—drop descended after drop, calmly, leisurely: every individual liquid atom came in contact with the palate over which it glided;—no waste of that precious dew: Had it been nectar and poured by Hebe, it could not have been drained more devoutly.—The ancient butler stood in the door-way with his mild eyes fixed on his master, while the draught descended. The Squire’s eye met his just as it was over.—With a sort of half-apologetic, half-quizzical nod, he filled the glass again to the brim, beckoned to the time-honoured serving-man, and, handing the bumper to him over his left shoulder, whispered, “ Take away this dwarf’s cup, my Lord Bishop; I suppose you thought we were going to be at the dram-bottle.”—He concluded this brief but intelligible address, with humming waggishly enough the old tune of

“ Busy curious, thirsty fly,
Drink with me, and drink as I.”

Thomas reverently bowed,—cast a self-reproaching glance on the diminutive glass, tossed the contents over his tongue with a single jerk, and then, with all the solemn gravity of a Zeno, replaced the rejected vessel by one, whose tall, solid, transparent, flower-woven stalk, towered some six inches above the board.

In short, it was plain the night was to be a jolly one. The ladies retired with sour looks, when the tone in which the second magnum was called for had sufficiently indicated that a third might chance to follow—and the gentlemen saw no more of them until next morning. There was a great deal of talk about Reginald's approaching entrance to the University; and the Squire, who also had worn the square cap in his day, although, perhaps, it had never sat quite so familiarly about his ears as the hunting one, was not loath to have the opportunity of calling up fifty long forgotten stories about proctors *bit*, and *bull-dogs* baffled. Chisney, surveying with his quick and wicked glances the portly and rotund old rural invalid, could not help smiling to hear him representing himself in the

light of a gay young spark, swaggering along Magdalen meadow in a flowing silk gown, and flirting with damsels that had long ago slept under Carfax. Every now and then, however, the good Squire was careful to interweave some parenthesis of prudential warning—"Ah, you laugh, you young dogs," he would say, "you laugh to hear me telling of all these foolish pranks; but let them laugh that win, my lads; what does the old Archdeacon's rhyme say, Mr Chisney? you must have seen it ere now in the window of Merton Church.—Ah! hang it, I'm rusted sorely now-a-days! how does it run, man?"

' —Post nisum, usum—visum, ——'

Nay, confound it, I thought I could have remembered that too.—Hang it, hang it, you dog, you're new off the irons, how goes it?"

Frederick muttered a little to himself, and then spouted without hesitation the old leoline lines,

" Post visum, risum ; post risum, venit in usum ;
 Post usum, tactum ; post tactum venit in actum :
 Post actum factum ; post factum pœnitet actum."

“ Yes, yes,” quoth the Squire ; “ that’s the very thing—how should I have forgot it—

‘ Post pactum, factum, post actum penitet factum ;’

but ’tis all as good and true in English as in Latin, after all. O you young devils, beware of wine and wantonness—beware of wine and wantonness, I say—but John, John, cousin John, your glass is empty, man.”

So saying, another bumper passed round the board, and the Squire leaping in a moment from his moralities, began to chaunt in his most sonorous tone,

“ Old Chiron thus preached to his pupil Achilles,
 ‘ I’ll tell you, young gentleman, what the fates’ will is :
 You, my boy,
 Must go
 (The Gods will have it so)
 To the siege of Troy :
 Thence never to return to Greece again,
 But before those walls to be slain.
 Ne’er let your noble courage be cast down,
 But all the while you lie before the town,
 Drink, and drive care away : drink and be merry :
 For you’ll go ne’er the sooner to the Stygian ferry.’ ”

The Vicar heard him with a benignant smile, saying, he was sure Reginald would follow the good advice the Squire had given him, in spite of the seductive *moral* of his glee.

“ Ay, ay,” quoth the old man, “ I’m sure he will, I’m sure he will. Be a good lad, Reginald, and mind your book, do ye hear; and if you take the honours, do ye hear me, and I live to see the day, why, we’ll kill the prettiest buck, and see if there be no more of the green seal. But you’ll be corrupted by that time—ah, yes, in spite of all your demure looks, you’ll be well broken ere that time—you’ll be fit to lay an old boy like me under the table ere then, you dog.—Do they give you good black strap at Oxford in these days, Mr Frederick?”

Frederick hereupon began to talk of vintages and so forth, with an air of understanding that was far from being over and above pleasing to the Vicar, whose son was just about to commence his academical career under these auspices. The party broke up soon afterwards, chiefly, it may be supposed, in consequence of his reiterated hints and

expostulations ; and Reginald, whose chamber communicated with that of his father, was not suffered to go to bed until he had heard a very serious lecture.

This youth, when his father had left him, found himself the tenant of a very stately and lofty room, all pannelled in black oak, with two or three quaint hunting-pieces, hung here and there in huge carved frames of the same material. The tall crimson bed was in keeping with the style of the apartment, and might probably have stood there ever since it was built. High-backed chairs, with down cushions, that sunk half a yard when one pressed them, were ranged in great order all around, and a curious little circular dressing-closet was supplied, at one of the corners, by a turret. The boy was, on the whole, happy with the occurrences of the day, and he did not find himself alone for the first time under that roof without feelings of pride and gratification ; but at the same time he had left *home*—and he was about to part with his father—and in the quiet of the hour he could not think, without something of timidity and heavi-

ness, of being so near the brink of total novelty. However, care is but an unnatural visitant for a bosom so young—and we may add, so innocent as his; and Reginald ere long fell asleep.

A thousand antique forms flitted before him in his dreams, and when he woke, which he did early, and looked out from his pillow upon the grand old chamber, and the big oak that stretched its arms across the window, he still continued to dream: Alas! he said to himself, how many Daltons have lain here before me! The same blood that now flows in my veins, has it not danced long ago here in light hearts, that are all crumbled into dust? Have not eyes of the same shape and fashion as these of mine gazed on these very objects? Have not ancestors of mine been born in this very bed—have they not died in it too?—No one ever found himself for the first time within the dwelling of a long line of his fore-fathers, without being greeted by some such imaginings;—they came to Reginald's bosom strongly, intensely, sorrowfully—so much so, that I fancy he could almost have found it in him to weep, at the moment when a rosy-

cheeked young lad came in to take his clothes, and bade him good morning with a hearty rustic chuckle,—a scaring-bell to sentiment.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Squire did not of course appear at the breakfast-table ; but Barbara and Betty did its honours in a most hospitable style. The elder lady scolded the Vicar a little for having given his countenance to something not unlike a debauch ; but altogether much good humour prevailed. A walk in the park was proposed, and Mrs Elizabeth soon appeared accoutred for exercise ; but Barbara said she was sorry she could not be of the party, and whispered something into her aunt's ear about *children* and a *school*.

Young Chisney, having discovered that an intimate acquaintance of his was in the same neighbourhood, begged one of the Squire's horses, and set off to pay his visit ; while Mr Dalton and his son began their inspection of the grounds, under the superintendance of their worthy relation.

She took them a long walk ; first through all the gardens, and then by the side of the river, and up the hill too, among fine open old groves, where herds of beautiful deer were brousing. She could not move very quickly, but she was indefatigable, and as she walked between her cousins, leaning on their arms, her conversation flowed on at once so gaily and so sensibly, that neither of them had any inclination to complain of the rate at which they were proceeding. At last she brought them to the edge of a small but deep hollow, very thickly wooded with ancient trees, and, pausing for a moment, said to the Vicar, “ Do you know whither I am carrying ye now, cousin ? You surely do.”

“ Yes,” said Mr Dalton, “ I know it well, ma’am ; but why should you take the trouble of going down there ? I can shew it to Reginald another time.”

“ Nay, nay,” said the old lady, smiling very sweetly, and yet rather solemnly too, “ if that’s all the matter you need not stop me here. There’s seldom a week passes but I pay my visit in this quarter ; and we’ll e’en go down together, if you please, for we three may seek all the world over,

I take it, without finding another spot where we have so much in common."

So speaking, she resumed her hold of the Vicar's arm, and leaning on it with rather a stronger pressure than before, proceeded down the path, which was too narrow for three to walk a-breast on it. Reginald, following the pair, soon found himself almost in darkness, for the trees there were chiefly pines, and their strong and lofty red shafts stood close together, so that there was a complete canopy, black rather than green, overhead. Neither his father nor Mrs Dalton was saying anything, and somehow or other he did not like to ask any questions, but there was a sort of elaborate gloom in the place, so different from the aspect of any other part of the grounds he had been traversing, that he could not help divining something of what the old lady had alluded to.

Deep down in the dell there is a space left open among the trees:—smooth firm old turf, and a little rivulet flowing clear as crystal over a bed of the whitest pebbles. It was here that in ancient times rose the nunnery of St Judith's—the same religious house, to some of the possessions of which

the Dalton family succeeded in the reign of Henry VIII.—a splendid and lofty structure in its day. Of all that once wide and magnificent pile, there remains nothing now but one or two prostrate columns, a fragment of the cloister, and a single very small chapel, quite open on one side to the air, and mantled all over with ivy. This was originally one of a great number of subordinate chapels, branching off from the nave of the conventual church ; but the Daltons, long before they became lords of the ground, had chosen to make it their burying-place ; and hence probably its preservation in the midst of so much destruction or decay.

Mrs Elizabeth opened the wicket, and, without saying anything, led the way into the enclosure. When they were all beneath the roof of the chapel, she sat down on the edge of a little altartomb, while the gentlemen stood uncovered by her side, their eyes wandering over the maze of old effigies and inscriptions, with which the opposite wall was laden. Reginald stirred neither foot nor hand for some minutes, lost in pensive curiosity ; but at last stepped forward to spell out an epitaph which he had not been able to understand.

Even when he had come quite close to it, it was still illegible; all but the words “Reginald Dalton,” and the date **MDCCC**.

“Ay, ay,” said Mrs Elizabeth, “that Reginald, I believe, was but a very young man when he died. His father was slain at Flodden-field, and left him an orphan, and that’s all we know of him. Look at the next stone, cousin, and you will find a plain text, if I be not forgetful.”

It was a simple slab of marble fixed low on the wall, with the initials B. D. at the top of it, and underneath these words in gilt capitals, seemingly but recently carved there :—“OUR FATHERS FIND THEIR GRAVES IN OUR SHORT MEMORIES, AND SADLY TELL US HOW WE SHALL BE BURIED IN OUR SURVIVORS. LET ME BE FOUND IN THE REGISTER OF GOD, NOT IN THE RECORD OF MAN.”

“Poor Barbara,” said Mrs Elizabeth, after our youth had read the words aloud;—“poor Barbara! this now is one of her fancies, and yet who can say much against it?”

“Barbara!” said the Vicar, “what has she done, I pray you?”

“ Only put up her own monument, cousin ;” she replied, “ you see it there before you ; but ’tis not a thing of yesterday, as you may observe. I believe the inscription is almost as old as your Reginald.”

The Vicar’s countenance underwent a change sudden and melancholy, upon his hearing these words, and he walked away by himself to the other extremity of the chapel. Mrs Elizabeth followed him with a look of deep regret, and then, as if checking her thoughts, she turned to Reginald, and said to him in an energetic and lively tone, “ Look round ye, young man, and tell me your mind—Whether, now, would ye lie here, after having been a good and great divine, like the Dean on your left, or after having been a gallant and good soldier, like Sir Marmaduke under your foot ? The one died at eighty-five, and the other at eight-and-twenty ; but what matters that now ?”

“ Wherever I live,” said the youth, “ I hope I shall be buried here.”

“ Ay,” said Elizabeth very quickly, and yet very seriously, “ and I hope you will remember the saying of one of the wisest men that ever lived :

‘ Happy is he who so lives, that when he dies he makes no commotion among the dead.’ Always remember that you are a Dalton, my dear boy, and remember that we shall all have our wakening together here, as well as our sleep.”

The Vicar turned round hastily when he heard this, and said to his son, “ Be thankful, my boy, for Mrs Dalton’s good advice, but do not persuade yourself that you are even to have a grave at Grypherwast——” He stopped suddenly, when the words were out, with the air of one that has said more than he intended to say ; but the old lady rose at once from her seat, and taking Reginald by the hand, said in an audible whisper, “ Nay, nay, young man, they won’t grudge you *that* : but we’ve been long enough here for this time ; don’t let us forget the world while the sun is yet over our heads.”

So saying, Mrs Elizabeth led Reginald out of the chapel, and the Vicar followed them lingeringly through the wood. The path by which they quitted its precincts was a different one from that by which they had approached them ; and much to Reginald’s surprise, they were scarcely beyond

the shadow of the pines, ere the hamlet and the manor-house lay bright in view, not two hundred yards from them in the valley below.

“ You see,” said Mrs Elizabeth, “ one’s last journey here is anything but a long one. I must step into the village, though, before I go home, for Barbara sometimes forgets the hours when she’s busy with her affairs. Will you walk with me, and see her in her school-room ?”

“ Perhaps,” said the Vicar, “ we might be intruding on Miss Dalton.”

“ Nay, nay,” said the old lady, “ you need not stand upon that ceremony. Barbara will be pleased with your coming ; I know she will. The school is the very pride of her heart, poor thing.”

The situation of this school was certainly a very beautiful one. The cottage itself was long and low, neatly white-washed, with creepers about the windows, a wide porch in the centre, and at either end one of those tall round chimneys which give such a picturesque effect to the hamlets of northern Lancashire, and some of the neighbouring counties. Placed within a little garden-green, and shaded from behind by a gigantic elm-tree, it

seemed the very picture of humble repose, and the subdued hum of young voices which reached the ear in approaching, did not disturb that impression. The Vicar paused when they had reached the door, as if to let Mrs Elizabeth go in and tell they were there ; but she, once more nodding encouragement, lifted the latch, and they found themselves in a moment beyond the threshold.— A cheerful low-roofed room was filled with little girls ; some sewing, others reading ;—and Miss Dalton was sitting in the midst at work, on what seemed to be a flannel petticoat, while two gentlemen, and a very young lady in a riding-habit, appeared to be occupied in catechising some of the children.

Miss Dalton did not look in the least ashamed of being caught in her good works, but rose to receive them with a smile of courteous surprise. After bidding them severally welcome, she turned round and said to the elder of the two gentlemen behind her, “ Charles, my dear, what has become of your eyes ? I am sure you have seen my cousin Mr John Dalton before.”

Sir Charles Catline, upon being thus admonish-

ed, stepped a pace or two forward ; but the Vicar of Lannwell remained where he was, and the profound bow he made was so very grave and ceremonious, that the Baronet halted, and replied to it by one equally distant, although performed in a manner somewhat less deliberate. Miss Barbara, without apparently observing this, introduced the other gentleman as Mr Collins, the curate of a neighbouring parish, and the young lady as Miss Catline, and then, resuming her seat and her work, said, "Don't stop, Charles, my dear; let Lucy have out her lesson, you know, and then we'll all go together to the Hall."

"*Lucy!*" said the Vicar, in a whisper, and bit his lip and looked downwards.

Sir Charles glanced keenly at him from under his eyelids, and then, stooping quickly, took up the book which he had dropt on the floor, and began again to put questions to the child ; but he did this in such a stammering and hesitating style, that Miss Dalton said, "Nay, Charles, you're quite put out, man ; Lucy can't understand you, if you deliver yourself thus ; but you can't play the teacher before strangers, I suppose."

He closed the book instantly, as if pleased to have done with the affair, and once more the cold and steady eye of the Vicar met his. He returned the gaze for a moment, and a deep flush passed athwart his countenance while he did so; but that also was over immediately, and he resumed, though not apparently without an effort, the usual serenity of his aspect and demeanour. The Vicar seemed to make an effort too, but his was not quite so successful. Indeed, from the moment he entered the school-room, a cloud was visible on his brow, throughout almost the whole of the day. There was an unusual absence in his manner, which even young Reginald could not help remarking, though he was far enough from guessing the true cause of its appearance.

Reginald had been, as we have seen, somewhat prepared to dislike Sir Charles Catline long ere now; yet when the boy saw him, he was obliged to confess to himself that he was a very good-looking man. He was now some years turned of forty, and his forehead was rather bald, but his complexion was still fresh and rosy, and his checks as smooth as possible. Any unprejudiced stranger

would certainly have pronounced the Baronet to be a person of singularly mild and amiable aspect, and though his dress was rather shabby, and by no means fashionable in the cut, and arranged, moreover, in an extremely demure and precise way, still there was no effectual concealment of an air and *tournure*, which could only have been derived from the *beau-monde*. Mr Collins, who accompanied Sir Charles, was a young man of mild and soft manners also, and he, too, had rather a handsome face; but there was a stiffness about him which betrayed the mere curate, except, perhaps, to the eyes of Barbara Dalton, and her pretty little niece and god-daughter, both of whom, indeed, seemed to treat the young divine with a more than ordinary measure of respect and attention. For, after all, (*soit dit en passant*,) there are certain little clerical privileges and advantages which it is quite possible to enjoy in tolerable perfection, even in countries where cowls and tonsures have had the fortune to be exploded.

There was a considerable party that day at dinner, for, in addition to the persons to whom we have already been introduced, Lady Catline,

and another of her daughters, were there. Reginald found himself placed, as usual, beside Mrs Elizabeth ; and the old lady had chosen her chair at the Squire's end of the table, while Sir Charles and Mr Collins were near Miss Dalton at the head of it.

The Squire himself was rather out of humour ; for though it was the first day he had dined out of his own room for more than a week, he was still far from feeling quite well, and the number of his party gave him some annoyance. Besides, he was, or thought himself, obliged to keep up conversation with Lady Catline, who sat by him ; and, to say truth, although her ladyship was, like himself, fond of talking, the Squire and she were two persons that had by no means the same taste as to topics. She bothered him with prosing about new novels of which he had never heard ; and when he, in his politeness, made any attempt to introduce Roderick Random, or Peregrine Pickle, she professed total ignorance of any such naughty books. She minced some *liberal* sentiments, and he was the very bear of Tories. She even dared to insinuate a sneer or two about High-Church ; and

if she had trampled with the whole weight of her heel upon the Squire's cloth shoe, she could scarcely have offended in a quarter more painfully sensitive. To sum up the whole of her demerits, she was a Blue-stocking—and a Whig,—and nobody could tell who was her grandfather; and she was a blowsy-faced little woman—and she eat lustily of half-a-dozen different dishes—and her hair was reddish—and her hands and ears were big—and the Squire had never liked her. Perhaps Methodism was the only thing he thoroughly despised that could not be laid to her charge; and perhaps, considering the style of his opinions as to the relative duties of the female sex, Sir Charles Catline's wife was rather more disagreeable to him for presuming to keep free of that particular blemish, than she could have been for wearing it between her eyes. The Vicar, who supported this lady on the other side, appeared to be not much more taken with her than his kinsman.

Throughout the whole of the evening, Reginald could not help making observation, that his father and Sir Charles Catline never, by any ac-

cident, exchanged words ; but when the gentlemen rejoined the ladies in the drawing-room, which was a very long and spacious apartment, three distinct parties were formed, and these seemed to have about as little to do with each other, as if they had been ten miles asunder. The Squire sat in his arm-chair by the fire-side, with Reginald, the Vicar, and Mrs Betty, close to him. The Baronet, Miss Dalton, Barbara Catline, and the Curate, kept possession of the table on which tea had been served ; while Frederick Chisney found his amusement between Lady Catline and her second daughter Julia, quizzing the one, flirting a little with the other, and now and then suffering himself to be beat at *trou-madame*. The last was certainly the gayest set of the three ; perhaps the only one amongst all the members of which the announcement of Sir Charles's carriage was an unwelcome occurrence.

The moment they were gone, the Squire ordered supper ; and, when he found that the two young men must really set off on their journey southward in the morning, and the Vicar also for Westmoreland, a huge jorum of mulled port was called

in to alleviate the affliction of the parting. But even after a second edition of the tankard, the kind old gentleman could not go to his bed until he had made them all promise to come and take farewell of him ere they started.

CHAPTER XII.

As the Vicar and Reginald were walking down the long gallery towards their bed-chambers, and talking together as they went, Mrs Elizabeth, who had retired from the party below stairs some considerable time earlier, made her appearance in her night-cap and a wide dimity dressing gown, at the door of an apartment, in which a brilliant fire was blazing. The Vicar was halting his pace, for he was naturally unwilling to contaminate, even by a passing glance, the vestal penetralia of the old spinster; but she stood firm to her post, and beckoning them onwards with her finger, said, with a slight mixture of mystery, and of roguery too, in the tone of her whisper,—“ Your black cloth will take no spot, cousin John, although you should venture yourself for a moment—Come—come hither—I

have something I would fain speak to you about, —but don't keep Reginald from his bed.—Good night, my dear Reginald.”

The Vicar, with a smile and a blush, followed his venerable Armida into her bower ; and the door was instantly closed upon our youth, who, it must be confessed, was not without some feeling of curiosity as to the scope and tendency of this furtive interview. He was fain, however, to creep into his bed, since there was nothing better in his power.

There were two most comfortable easy-chairs in Miss Betty's dressing-room, and as soon as she and her reverend visitor were established in these, at the opposite sides of the fire, the old lady coughed once or twice, and then spoke as follows, though not without something both of hesitation and confusion in her manner :—

“ I am going to take a great freedom, Mr Dalton—but I hope you will just consider me as a sort of old aunt, and let me have my own way.”

The Vicar bowed respectfully, and met the old lady's kind look with an eye from which gratitude all but ran over.

“ Well,” she proceeded—“ this now is just as it should be among friends and kindred—But why should I make any more speeches?—Your living is not a great one, John Dalton, and this pretty boy of yours will cost you money, now he’s agoing to Oxford—Will you treat me like a friend indeed, and not hurt me by refusing to accept of this small mark of my good-will —my affection for you both ?”

With this Miss Betty lifted a letter from the table by her side, broke the seal, and handing it to the Vicar, said—“ I had written a great deal of stuff, you see, but I thought it would be better just to take courage and speak for myself; so put the letter in the fire if you please, John, and the enclosure in your pocket.”

“ ’Tis two hundred pounds, ma’am,” said the Vicar, his face getting quite red—“ I protest, I am quite ashamed of this, Mrs Dalton—I have no need of——”

“ Nay, nay,” interrupted the good spinster—“ there was never a man in the world yet that had as much money as he wanted. ’Tis only an useless old body like me that can lay by money, for

not knowing what to do with it ; but don't twirl the bill about your fingers so, cousin John ; I assure you I wish I had been richer at Lancaster just now, that it might have been worth double the money ; and besides, what are you thinking of ? 'tis only giving Reginald a few books ; I wish I had had wit enough to save you the trouble of choosing them for me."

The Vicar, with true manliness, and true politeness, said no more, but put the bill in his pocket, and prest with all the warmth of confidence the hand which was extended towards him. Two generous spirits could not be long of understanding each other, and if any slight feeling of awkwardness remained, I take it this was fully more on the side of the donor, than on that of the receiver ; however that might be, it was Miss Betty that changed the subject of their conversation.

"Come," she said, "cousin John, come, since we *are* here alone at such an hour as this, why, there's no more harm to be done ; let me hear what you think of our visitors to-day. I don't think you and Sir Charles seemed to take over and above well with each other ; and yet you were old acquaint-

ances, were you not? Sure my memory is altogether failing me, (here the old lady drew her finger once or twice along the deepest furrow in her brow,) —but I think I can't be mistaken, sure you used to meet here at Grypherwast long ago, John?"

"Why, no," said the Vicar, "I really don't think we ever did, ma'am, but we have met ere now. I knew Sir Charles, though very slightly, at Oxford; he entered, I think, just a few terms ere I took my degree, and afterwards we met, (here Mr Dalton's voice sunk a few notes,) we met at my own house and elsewhere, in Westmoreland."

"Ay, ay," quoth Miss Betty, "I thought you had met somewhere; I was sure I had heard of it; but why did you look so coldly on each other, then? But pardon me, I see 'tis a disagreeable subject somehow or other—I beg your pardon, John."

"Oh, no begging of pardons, Mrs Dalton, there's not the least occasion for that: I really do not *know* any thing that should make me speak hardly of Sir Charles Catline. A dark, a miserable, a fearful story indeed there is—if there be indeed a sin beyond forgiveness——but no, I shall

not say so—no, madam,——I say again that I do *not know* any thing of the matter, and even if I did, years, long, long years, have flown over the heads of us all—and who shall limit what is unlimited? he may, even if it were so, I say—he may still be all he seems—God forgive proud human thoughts!”

“Nay, what is this, Cousin John?” said she,—“what is all this you are talking of? you have no reason, have you, to think any thing *very* bad of Sir Charles?”

The Vicar paused for half a minute, and then said, dropping his eyes, and with very tremulous lips—“’Tis indeed a tale of tears, Miss Elizabeth—but why should I vex you with the telling of it?—I repeat once more, that I have no sort of right to say that I know any thing against Sir Charles.”

“Come, come, John, you’ve got a sad story, and you’ll be none the worse for telling it out. I need not say your stories are all safely told *here*.”

“I know that indeed, ma’am,” said he, “I know that well; but I have just one request to make to you, and I must make it ere I say any-

thing of this matter; and that is, that you will promise me *never* to repeat this sad story either to your brother or Miss Dalton. I have a particular reason for making this request."

"God bless me!" said the lady, getting curious, "is that all the matter? You may depend on it, neither they nor any other creature under heaven shall ever hear a single syllable of it from me. I'faith, cousin John, I assure you I have had secrets enow to keep from *them* ere now, though not for my sake, but for their own."

"I know it all well, I do indeed, ma'am," said the Vicar; "but why should I be so foolish? You have said all I wished to hear, and you shall have this story, this sad sorrowful story, as freely as I can give it. But, first of all, tell me one thing, my dear madam, were you at the last Preston-guild?"

"Ay, indeed was I," quoth Mrs Elizabeth; "that's not a yesterday's story, John, and yet I remember the one before that, too, as well as if it had happened three months ago. Ah! John, that first Guild I went to was a gay one, and I had a light heart to enjoy it. My brother was

newly married, and he, and I, and Mrs Dalton, went all together ; we had a coach-and-six, and out-riders, and all sorts of grand things ; and there were balls and beaux in plenty. I have the market-place this moment before my eyes—it was a splendid sight, I assure you, quite crowded with fine ladies and fine gentlemen ; nothing but the nodding of ostrich feathers from one end of it to the other.”

“ But the second one, Mrs Elizabeth, what sort of a thing was it ?—it is that I want to hear of ?”

“ Oh, it was a very pretty Guild, too, I warrant ye, though not, I think, quite like the other ; but to be sure I was twenty years older of course, and I don’t think any of us were quite in the right sort of glee for the enjoyment of it—I think it fell soon after the time of—of——”

“ My marriage,” said the Vicar ; “ yes, it was so indeed, ma’am.”

“ Well, I thought it must have been so. For I remember Barbara—poor thing—but that’s all over now long ago—Barbara would scarcely be persuaded to go with Dick and me. Charles Cat-

line, he was not *Sir Charles* then, for it was before his uncle's death—indeed, the old Admiral himself was at the Guild, I believe—but however, Mr Catline was in the house, as it happened, and though he had not much time to spare, he thought, like the rest of us, the variety of a week at Preston might do Barbara good; and so he would take no refusal, and she was at last obliged to give her consent, and we all went down to the Guild, in company with the Curzon family and the Wards of Langthorpe-hall, I think, and a number of strangers besides. Yes—yes, I remember all that went on quite well now. Mr Catline got some letters the next day after we came to Preston, that made it necessary for him to move southwards sooner than he had intended. I remember he set off very unwillingly, for he was a gay fellow in those days you know; a very gay fellow, and a very comely one too, that I shall say for him, although he was not any great favourite of mine even then, neither—and Barbara was anxious to get home again, and I think we did not stay quite to the end of the gala.”

The Vicar had risen from his chair,—“Is it so

indeed, madam?" he cried, "are you indeed certain Mr Catline left Preston the second day of the Guild?"

"Yes, Lord love ye, what does that signify? But I *am* quite sure of it, for I remember Barbara could never be persuaded to go to any of the balls, except the opening one, and he was with us there; sure I danced a bumpkin with the boy myself after supper, the more fool that I was; but there were older fools there to keep me in countenance.—But what is all this to your story, John?"

"In truth, I believe very little—nothing at all I should say," quoth the Vicar; "but no matter, I thought it might have been otherwise; the more shame to me for being so hasty. But I won't trouble you with any more of it.—My poor wife's maiden name, you know, was Ellen Lethwaite."—Mrs Elizabeth nodded gravely to the Vicar.—"There were two sisters of them, ma'am, and believe me, they were both of them exquisitely beautiful."

"We were always told Mrs Dalton was a very lovely young woman."

"Yes, she was so indeed, ma'am; but even in

my opinion Lucy was quite as handsome as she—she was darker in the complexion, and had larger eyes, and was a more playful creature than my poor Ellen—I never saw such a wild irrepressible flow of spirits about any human being—yet she was a good modest girl for all that.”

“ I’m to understand that she’s gone, Mr Dalton,” said Elizabeth, in a very low tone.

“ Yes, indeed, madam ; she *is* gone—long, long ago ; and that is my dark story.”

“ Poor girl ! what was it that befell her ?—Did she die before your Mrs Dalton ?”

“ Would to God she had !” said the Vicar ; “ My poor Ellen would have been spared many a heavy thought. Nay, I sometimes think—but what avails it to dream thus ?—The Lord willed it so.”

Mrs Elizabeth edged her chair a little nearer to him, and after a moment he proceeded.

“ I don’t know how to give you a notion of what Lucy Lethwaite was, Mrs Elizabeth—she was the very soul of merriment, the best-humoured, laughing girl in the world, for the most part, and yet serious and pensive sometimes too. But

one of our Westmoreland poets has described her better than I can ever do. The moment I saw the verses I got them by heart, for I could not help saying to myself, if Lucy had been in the world, I should have sworn this man had seen her."

Mr Dalton paused, and after whispering to himself for a few moments, repeated slowly, and with a sad emphasis, those delightful lines, which no man need ever make an apology for being able to recite.

“ She was a Phantom of delight,
When first she gleam'd upon my sight :
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament ;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn :
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, and startle, and way-lay.
I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too !
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty ;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food ;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.”

“ Beautiful verses, truly,” quoth Mrs Elizabeth ; “ and a beautiful creature she must have been.”

“ A radiant creature, indeed, Mrs Elizabeth,” quoth the Vicar, “ but her fate was a very dark one.—

“ It was in the autumn season, if you remember, that I was married ; the mother of these two girls had been dead for several years, and their old father, a worthy, honest, good, simple man, (a small statesman, ma'am) lived in his forefathers' little cottage, hard by the side of our mere. He was a Catholic, ma'am ; but, notwithstanding, we had been good friends ever since I went to Lannwell. When I took Ellen away, I had stript their home of half of its merriment ; and you may suppose Lucy was often with her sister and me for days together, at the vicarage, during the winter that followed. The old man sometimes complained a little of being left alone ; but, to say truth, I believe he was on the whole well pleased, thinking that Lucy would be improved by living at the vicarage, and perhaps that she too might get a husband rather above their own rank in life. For

I need not conceal that Mr Thomas (Catholic though he was) was exceedingly gratified with our marriage.”

“ Ay,” interrupted Miss Betty, bridling up a little, “ and well he might be so, truly.”

“ However all that might be, Mrs Elizabeth,” proceeded the Vicar—“ The old man began to fall off a little in his health towards the spring ; he had a severe attack of rheumatic fever, which not only kept Lucy at home, but drew Ellen from me too, that she might assist in nursing him.—When that was over, which it soon was, there was a certain debility left behind, that for some time prevented Lucy from ever thinking of sleeping a night away from home. For indeed, madam, she was a most affectionate creature, and one that would rather have *then* denied herself any gay pleasure, than lost the gratification of doing one act that might contribute in any way to her father’s comfort. By this time my wife was in a condition that made it improper for her to walk abroad much ; and in short, what between her state and that of the old man, the two households came to have comparatively but few means or op-

portunities of intercourse through the earlier part of that summer.

“ I think it might be towards the latter end of July, and neither my wife nor I had seen Lucy for about a week, I believe, when one evening she came over to the vicarage, drest a good deal more gaily than was her custom, and attended by a young gentleman, whom Ellen had never heard of before, and whose appearance in that part of the country was quite unexpected by myself—Mr Catline, I mean.”

“ Charles Catline, cousin?—well, say on.”

“ I believe I said already that I had met Mr Catline at Oxford before that time, but we had never visited each other, nor had anything more than a sort of passing acquaintance. In so remote a part of the country, however, I should certainly have found nothing strange in his calling on me, if he happened to be in my neighbourhood; but his coming in company with Lucy was the thing that surprised me.”

“ Pooh! pooh! Mr John,” interrupted Betty, “ I thought you had just been describing her pretty face.”

A very sorrowful smile passed over the Vicar's lips, and that again was chased by a frown—but he paused for a moment, and resumed:—
“ Mr Catline, it seemed, had been amusing himself with an angling excursion among our hills, and being smitten with the beautiful situation of a little public-house on the side of our mere, he had rested there for several days—and indeed, over and above the charming situation, he might have sought all the country from Patterdale to Wass-water, without finding a better fishing quarter than ours is; I mean all about Lannwell and Thorwold, and so up to Bonfell; for there are twenty different streams within an easy walk of the inn where he stayed. But Mr Catline would fain try his hand at trolling for jack in the lake besides; and the boat that belonged to the people of the public-house was in bad order, and they borrowed Thomas Lethwaite's little wherry for him;—and then he must go to thank Thomas for lending it; and the old man was delighted with having a young and expert sportsman to come and chat with him in his chimney corner—and so, madam, Mr Catline and our Lucy had become

acquainted. In truth, ours is a very simple region, and there was nothing in all this to excite the smallest astonishment.—Mr Catline was a gay, rattling young man, and he talked very pleasantly about the fine country he had been traversing, and he had Oxford stories too in abundance, and both my wife and I were, on the whole, pleased with him ; and as for Lucy, alas ! poor girl, she was far too artless to be able to conceal from either of us how much she was flattered with the notion of having so fine a beau as this to squire her. Alas ! poor Lucy. I suppose she thought since her sister had married so great a man as the Vicar of Lannwell, there was never a gentleman in England that need be too high to make a husband for herself.”

“ The young woman would have her dreams, I warrant ye,” said our old lady, rather sarcastically.

“ Alas, madam,” said the Vicar, “ but you never saw Lucy.—But, however, ma’am, after tea away they walked again together, for the inn was quite near to Lethwaite’s house, and we saw no more of Lucy for several days.—I con-

fess, ma'am," he proceeded, " I was rather struck when I heard, near a week afterwards, that Mr Catline was still in our neighbourhood, for to us he had spoken as if he were just on the wing; and, in short, I had confidence in every thing about Lucy except her prudence, and I walked over myself to the cottage. In fact, ma'am, I *had* heard Mr Catline talked of at Oxford as rather a dissipated character, and I began to feel a vague sort of anxiety."

" Well you might—well you might, sir. But go on."

" When I got to the point where the cottage stood—for it stands no longer—I found the old man in his garden; I asked for Lucy, and he answered me at once, and apparently without the least concern, that she had gone out a little while ago with *my friend* Mr Catline—that he believed they were on the water, but that they would soon be home, no doubt, as the sun had gone down. We turned with that, and looked out upon the lake, and the wherry, to be sure, was in sight. His eyes did not serve him to observe more than that the boat was there; but I, for my part, could

easily perceive, not only that there were just two figures in it, but that these were sitting together in the stern. There was scarce wind enough to carry them on at the rate of half-a-knot, but there they were with the sail flapping before them. It was, indeed, a most beautiful, soft, glorious July evening, ma'am, and the lake was like liquid gold all round them ; and, said I to myself at the moment, I am sure Lucy never will *be* in heaven more certainly than she *thinks* herself there now." Here Miss Betty tapped her snuff-box once or twice, with a slow and pensive finger, and I rather think she had not sighed so deeply for half a score of winters.

"For a considerable time," proceeded the Vicar, "the boat seemed to lie on the water without making scarce any progress towards the shore ; but all of a sudden the sail was pulled down, and I saw the oars in motion. It now came rapidly along, and the old man and I received Lucy and Mr Catline at the little inlet below their garden. He, I thought, was a little confused, and Lucy's eyes, I could not help noticing, were clouded—indeed I am sure she had been crying. How-

ever, Mr Catline got his tackle out of the boat, and took farewell both of her and her father in my presence, intending, as he said, to be off early next day, having already lost more time than he should have done in their pleasant country. I myself walked with him towards the inn where he had his lodging. We parted at the little inn, ma'am—and I never saw Mr Catline again, from that hour until this day."

"But the girl—the poor girl, Mr Dalton.—What became of her? I pray you, let me hear the end of it."

"Why, ma'am, a very few words more will be sufficient. Lucey came over next day to the Vicarage, and she talked freely enough about Mr Catline and his departure; in truth, after what I had witnessed over night, I was rather a little surprised to see in what spirits she was; and so indeed it continued for several days. But after that, Mrs Dalton, Lucey was no longer like herself: She began all of a sudden to mope and pine, and would come over to us with her hair hanging loose about her brows; while as to Mr

Catline, she never said a single word of him. This melancholy hung about the girl for two or three weeks, and then it seemed to pass away from her again just as suddenly as it had come on. Lucy was Lucy herself again; and how delighted were we all to find her so! She joked and laughed as she had used to do—she was once more the liveliest and gayest of all our little circle. The Preston Guild fell that same year, as we have been saying, and Lucy kept continually talking about it, until at length she overpersuaded her father, and he gave his consent to let her go and see the Guild, in company with several of their neighbours—for indeed half the parish, I think, went thither as well as she. But Lucy—he said the words so low that they could with difficulty be understood—“Lucy never returned!”

“Oh, God! Oh, God!” said Mrs Dalton; “What became of the poor mad deluded girl?”

“Nay, nay,” said the Vicar, once more rising from his chair, “why should I speak on, when I can speak nothing from knowledge? The friends that left Lannwell with Lucy came all home, thinking that she was there before them; and when

we found that she had deceived *them* so, what could we think but that she had done so for the sake of gaining time and baffling inquiry? She had left Preston the day before the Guild sports were over. She had told them that she was afraid her father might be taken worse again, and that she had found another acquaintance to see her home in safety. I do confess, madam, my suspicion rested immediately upon Mr Catline, and it was so indeed with the whole of us; for one of our Lannwell lads had recognized him in the street of Preston."

"Stop a moment," said Mrs Elizabeth, "let me consider——No, no, John, you were certainly doing him injustice as to this part of it—for now that I have had time to recollect the particulars, I remember we all saw him get into the mail-coach the second day of the Guild; but, as you say, if I understand you aright, the unfortunate young woman did not go off until five or six days after that time. Depend upon it, my recollection is perfectly exact—I will lay my life on it that he went the second day."

The Vicar stood musing for a few seconds—

“ Indeed, indeed, Mrs Dalton, I must freely say, that I have no sort of proof whatever to lay against what you have said. My poor wife received a letter from Lucy very soon after we had lost her ; it was a very short one indeed, but she conjured us to comfort her father, and called heaven to witness that she was both *happy* and *innocent*. Alas ! we could scarcely believe the whole of that story ! The letter had no date, but the Bristol post-mark was upon it. I had a friend at Bristol, and I instantly applied to him, (for my wife was in such a way that I could not leave home myself, I really could not ;) and he made every sort of inquiry—God knows, gold was not spared, although there was but little of that amongst us ;—but it was all in vain. No sort of trace of her could be found anywhere in that part of the country, and the next letter had the Dublin mark, and the next again the Exeter one, and then there was one from London ; and in short we were altogether at sea, for it was evident these letters were transmitted from the most opposite quarters on purpose to perplex all our inquiries. At last I did a thing which I *thought* my duty, and that is all I shall

now say for myself. I wrote to a friend in Oxford when the Michaelmas term was begun, to ask particularly after Mr Catline, and the answer I got was, that Mr Catline had been for some time in France.—Some weeks elapsed ere my friend again wrote to me, saying that he had come back to Oxford and was living in College as usual. The moment I heard of this, I wrote to Mr Catline himself; and whether or not I had written in improper terms, I can't say, but he returned me for answer my own letter, madam, with merely a note on the outside of it, cautioning me to beware of insulting his honour by any repetition of such impertinent, false, and scandalous imputations—*false* and *scandalous* were the words.—I had not had time to digest this, however, before I received another of quite a different character from him—apologizing for his heat—condoling with our affliction,—offering all manner of assistance. What could one think or do?—Whither could we turn? Lucy had been near a week at Preston, living a racketing life among strangers of all sorts—dancing, as we could hear, and flirting with fifty people—what could we make of it? How her folly had

begun we knew, but how or in what it had ended, we were unable to divine. Wearied and worn out with so many fruitless attempts, we at last gave it up as a hopeless matter. My wife, meantime, was sickening worse and worse in body and in mind—and Reginald was born—and then she drooped more rapidly than ever—until I was left alone in the world with my poor little orphan boy. As for the broken-hearted old man, oh, Mrs Elizabeth, could Lucy have seen his condition!—Nobody to comfort him but myself, and now and then a call from the old Priest from Lottesmore.—But he too died, and was at rest.”

Mrs Elizabeth motioned to the Vicar to resume his chair. He did so in silence, and in paleness.—She kept her eyes for some time fixed upon his dejected countenance,—at last “The thing is just possible,” she began,—“the thing may have been so—for there is no saying how deeply cunning may lay its snares. But ’tis very hard, after all, to be hasty in such matters. Sir Charles was married very soon after the time you have been speaking of, Mr Dalton.”

“Ay,” said the Vicar, endeavouring to rouse

himself, “and so indeed he was, my dear madam. We heard of his coming to his title, and then of his wedding. In truth, ma’am, I had before that time almost worked myself out of the notions I had taken up as to him; and when we saw his wedding in the papers so very soon after the thing happened, why, that no doubt confirmed me in the idea that he was innocent as to Lucy. Other things had since, I must confess, revived some of my old suspicions—and to-day I will own to you, when I saw him for the first time, there was something in his look that I could not fathom. Ah, if indeed it were so, with what—but once more, *no*:—God, madam, God knows all things—we are poor blind creatures, and often enough uncharitable in our blindness.—As for poor Lucy, after the lapse of a few months more, we ceased to hear from her—her last letters were quite wild some of them, others as melancholy things as you can imagine, and the last of all contained a lock of her hair. Ah! me, madam, a sad, a woeful heart must have been hers when she wrote that letter, for the curl and the paper were all stained and glued together with tears.”

“ She died then !” quoth Elizabeth—“ you have no doubt she was ill and died.”

“ Doubt, ma’am ? Indeed we could not help doubting every thing ; but our hope, our only, our miserable hope, is that Lucy died then. To think that she could have lived on without having any thing to say to her friends, would have been worst of all.”

“ Indeed it would,” said Miss Betty, “ you are quite right there. Well, I shall drop a hint or two that will bring some light upon the matter. I warrant you, he will know what I allude to, and if he really be the man, I think I shall be able to read his looks.”

“ I beseech you, ma’am,” said the Vicar, “ I beseech you to do nothing of this kind. Even if he *had* been guilty then, years and years have passed away, and who shall say that he might not have repented, and been forgiven, even of such deadly sin as that ?—But once again I protest to you, that I no longer blame Sir Charles Catline—unless, indeed, (for *that* I ever must do,) for having thrown Lucy’s mind first off its balance, by strolling about the woods with her so, and rowing

her out upon the mere, and flattering her, no doubt ;—for it was flattery that was her ruin. But above all, Mrs Dalton, remember I pray you, that Sir Charles Catline has a wife and a family. What right can any of us have to do any thing that might tend to breed uneasiness and distrust among them ?”

“Uneasiness and distrust among *them*, indeed !” said the old lady, shaking her head with an air of great derision—“ Why, did you not see enough of them to-day, to satisfy you, that they are all at sixes and sevens, and cross purposes already, as much as they ever can be ? He hates his wife, Mr Dalton.”

“ Indeed !—Well, I could perceive from Lady Catline’s conversation, that she has not the same way of thinking as to religious matters. But, for my part, it seemed to me, that Sir Charles treated her with great kindness.”

“ You mean, I suppose, that he always called her, ‘ Julia, my love,’ or, ‘ my dear Julia.’—Ha ! ha ! Mr John, is that all the length you can see through a mill-stone ? Depend on it, sir, there is not a more unhappy woman at home in England

—but, indeed, much of that is her own fault, for she's a silly creature at the best."

"A very talkative lady, indeed," quoth the Vicar; "very fond of hearing her own voice, as it seemed to me."

"Ay, poor body! I suppose 'tis a luxury she is not much indulged in, except when she's abroad. Well, what a change from the first months of their marriage!"

"They were happy and fond then, no question?"

"To be sure, Mr Dalton; who, for that matter, are not happy and fond *then*? But between ourselves, my good friend, I believe Sir Charles has never been the same man to her since her father's bankruptcy. He had married her, perhaps you might hear at the time, under the notion that she was to be a mighty great heiress. Her father was a topping person in his way at Liverpool—a very vulgar low-bred man, every body said, notwithstanding—and he, forsooth, must have a fine villa on Windermere, and he used to come down thither with this daughter of his in the summer time, and keep a very full noisy house in great splen-

dour. But the north-country gentry, you know, are but shy of such people ; at least, it was so *then*, John ;—and except perhaps at an Ambleside ball, or a Bo`ness regatta, once in the season, the Spankies were but rarely to be seen in the same room with the old families of the county. Miss, again, who had been at a Bath boarding-school, was rather inclined to turn up her nose at the showy boobies of merchants her father had about the house, and what between her ambition, and the coldness of her country neighbours, I believe she would have been happier any where else than in their gaudy bauble of a cottage *ornée*, stuck down there beneath the shadow, as it were, of a set of old stately halls, to which Pride gave them no access. Sir Charles, in the mean time, had just succeeded to his uncle the Admiral's title, but though he had expected a great deal, the title was really almost the whole of his succession. For the Admiral, old Sir William, was an open-handed, free-hearted man—and he was almost devoured out of house and home by the host of old half-pay acquaintances, and so forth, that were always nestling about him after he had settled at

Little-Pyeworth. And over and above all this, there was a dirty fellow, of the name of Jennings, that had once been the old gentleman's secretary, when he commanded on the Cork station, and this man had taken up a sort of trade of being executor to people, and he contrived to wind himself sadly about the Admiral; and after the affairs were all looked into, and the executor's legacy paid, there was really, as I was saying, but a poor remainder for Sir Charles. In the mean time he had, it was well known, spent a good deal of money himself, thinking he was sure of a fine fortune from the Admiral; and, in short, he was but a poor young baronet, at least compared to what he had always thought he was to be.

“He had met with these Spankies—in the course of the very fishing excursion, I rather think, you were talking of—and now away he went again to the Lake-country, and the first news we had was that every thing was arranged for a wedding between him and the rich Liverpool man's only daughter. My brother and Barbara went over to Windermere, and were present at the ceremony, and the young people came soon after to Little-

Pyesworth, and began to keep house in the same dashing way the Admiral had done, or perhaps even rather more extravagantly. But what sort of a folly is it to build upon the notion of a mercantile person's wealth ! In the course of time old Spankie went all to shivers ; and since then, to be sure, Sir Charles and Lady Catline have been obliged to make a great change in their way of living.

“ Well, sir, it was not long after the failure, before Sir Charles first began to take up with the same religious notions that poor Barbara had betrayed her great fondness of, long ere then ; and ever since, you know, we have heard of nothing but Missionary Societies, and Bible Societies, and Tract Societies, and travelling ministers, and Sunday Schools, and all the rest of it. But as for Barbara, I sometimes think 'tis, after all, a mercy that she has found something to occupy so much of her time and thoughts—and then, my dear Mr Dalton, there *is* such a deal that is very good and amiable about her ways of going on, though I cannot for one be persuaded that it is at all necessary to carry things quite so far. Poor thing, I am sure I sometimes think she must be in the right, and I in the wrong, when I see her working

her fingers off for poor old people and children, in the hardest season of winter."

"Nay, nay," says the Vicar, "this is assuredly being too tender-conscienced. Why, my dear madam, who can believe that it is either the business or the duty of a lady in Miss Dalton's situation to spend her time in the hemming of flannel petticoats? Far wiser and far kinder, too, to employ the poor that can work, in working for those that cannot. But although it be a mistake, God forbid that we should not reverence the amiable feelings from which it arises."

"God forbid that, indeed," quoth the old lady. "Heavens, what a difference between such a creature as my niece, and that sister-in-law of hers, for example!—a talking, chattering, idle, gaudy fool, that never does a single turn either for her own family, or for her poor neighbours, but sits at home mum, like a dormouse, devouring silly novels and reviews from morning till night, and then comes abroad with a tongue that goes like a mill-clack after a thaw; and she's bringing up that second Miss of hers, her own namesake, to be just such another. But the elder one, as you must have noticed, takes more after the father. She is

a wonderful favourite with our Barbara ; but I am sure I don't believe one half of her serious speeches can be sincere ; for 'tis not natural, Mr Dalton. I have no notion of your devout misses in their teens. Lord bless me ! what can be more absurd ? one's heart is all in such a whirl and bustle at that time of day."

Here the Vicar smiled a little. " Upon my word, Miss Betty," said he, " when a comely young girl takes such a turn, it may be great uncharitableness, but I can scarce ever help thinking that it is only for want of some pretty young fellow to whisper it out of her in the course of a week, and put anything he pleases in its place."

The old lady tapped her snuff-box with a smile, rather tending to the disdainful, and then said, after dividing her pinch into three or four very deliberate instalments, " Upon my word, Mr John, I think even the parsons among you seem to have a very sweet opinion of themselves."

With that she rung for her maid, (who, *pour parenthèse*, was at no great distance all this while) and dismissed the Vicar with another very cordial shake of her hand.

CHAPTER XIII.

REGINALD, Chisney, and the Vicar also, had done ample justice to their cold pasty and muffins next morning, ere they were invited by Mr Bishop, *in propria persona*, to visit the Squire in his bedroom. They found the old gentleman lying in great state, with a night-cap as tall as Lord Peter's triple crown in the old prints to the Tale of a Tub, a pot of chocolate simmering over a spirit-lamp on his night-table, and a good fire of rifted pine-root shedding a warm blaze upon his bed-curtains. The room was a picturesque one ;—its lofty roof, divided into innumerable small compartments, exhibited in each of them some old Lancastrian coat of arms ; its walls were hung with tapestry, representing some of the most grotesque attitudes in the Duke of Newcastle's horsemanship ; one huge dark pannel over the mantle-piece was occupied by a star-shaped ornament, the centre thereof being a yeomanry helmet of lackered lea-

ther, with pewter cheek-pieces—and the *radii* a motley groupe of rapiers, bayonets, daggers, and broad-swords. A tall old French looking-glass set in frame-work of chased silver—a relic of the ambassadorial splendour of some defunct Dalton—was conspicuous in one corner; and from another stared a flashy water-coloured portrait of a favourite pointer-bitch.

“Ha!” said the old man when they entered his dormitory, “and so you are all booted and ready for the road? *You* might have staid a single day more with me, I think, John Dalton, if it were but to console me for losing these sparks so soon. Well, ods my life, ’tis a long look now back to the morning, when *I* came into this very room to take farewell of my own good father on setting off for Alma Mater! And yet as I live, cousin Vicar, it seems as if it were not so long ago neither. God bless my soul, I remember every thing that happened. There—just where Mr Frederick is standing—there was my mother, rest her kind soul, with a very doleful face I promise ye, and a fine new prayer-book, that she had got ready for me, in her hands. And here, ay, here in this very bed, sirs,

lay the good Squire, setting the best front on the thing he could ; but sorely his hand shòok, for all that, when he squeezed mine. Ah, cousin John, little did I think it was the last time I was ever to see him : he was ailing, but he was barely forty. What a melancholy home-coming was mine—all the house in lamentation—my mother a widow, poor soul—and Betty running out to meet me with a heart like to break. Ah, my young friends, it had been a merry household that was broken up that day ! God bless you, my good lads—you'll perhaps never see all you are parting with to-day again—but what avails speaking of such things ? Be good boys,—and fear God and honour the King, my dears,—and keep light hearts as long as you can, and take the world while it is before ye ; for its face, mayhap, won't always be quite so bright as it is now."

" Indeed, indeed, my dear sir," said the Vicar of Lannwell, " I trust our young friends will not forget these things, when they are far away from us. I trust Reginald will come back unspoiled to us, and enjoy a merry meeting with us all, when the long vacation comes round."

“ Yes, yes,” quoth the Squire, raising himself up in his bed—“ let us hope the best, let us hope all that is good and pleasant ; for, do the best we can, a parting is a pain. But, above all, look sharp to yourself, Reginald, boy—have a care that you don’t come back either a Whig or a Methodist.”

“ I’ll be bound he shan’t,” cried Chisney. “ By Jupiter, we’ll make minced meat of the buck, if he ever dares but to be detected within smell of St Edmund’s Hall, or insult CHURCH AND KING with a single hair’s-breadth of day-light.”

“ There spoke a true boy,” quoth the Squire, with a hearty chuckle. “ Everlastingly confound all traitors and rebels, say I ; for what, in Heaven’s name, are our Whigs but rebels ? Aren’t they doing all they can, rot ’em, to let Buonaparte have his own way ? aren’t they piping everywhere against honest old George, and trying, what they can, to rail his old English heart out of his bosom ? and who are they but the devil’s children for doing so ? has not old Sam Butler told us the truth long ago ?

‘ The devil was the first o’ the name,
From whom the race of rebels came ;
He was the first bold undertaker
Of bearing arms against his Maker.’

“ But Billy’s Spirit at least is at the helm, yet, my lads, and Sir Arthur’s the boy—God bless him, he’s the boy that will do for all their bastardly Monsieurs ! Who the deuce cares for what Holland-house and Sheridan, and all their rabble can do ?—We’ll do yet, mind me, my boys, we’ll do yet—O, d—m them all, I hope I shall live to see the end of them yet.”

“ Nay, nay,” said the Vicar, “ perhaps the end of the struggle is not quite so near yet ; but spite of all, why should we be cast down ? We *are* in the right, my dear sir, and the right *will* prevail in the long run.”

“ To be sure it will, and it must,” cried Chisney.

“ Oh ! quid Typhæus et validus Mimas,
Aut quid minaci Porphyriion statu,
Quid Rhætus, *evulsisque truncis*
Enceladus, jaculator audax,
Contra sonantem Palladis ægida
Possent ruentes ?”

“ Virgil for a tester,” cries the Squire, “ Ah ! God bless us, what are all your new poets they make such a din about to old Virgil ?

‘ Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris !’

Match me that if you can—match me that if you

can, out of all your psalm-singing, piperly Cowpers and Hayleys. Ay, ay, stick to your books, Reginald; see what a fine thing it is to be able to quote Virgil off hand like Frederick Chisney there. Ah, bless me, I could have done something in that way once myself—but no matter, past praying for now, my buck. Bring me these books there off the table, I laid out one a-piece for you overnight, and my spectacle-case is beside them.”

Reginald handed a couple of very comely velum-bound volumes to the Squire, who, after putting on his spectacles and looking at the title pages, said, “ Ay, here it is, here’s a Greek one for you, Frederick; ’tis Sophocles, man, a very fine author was Sophocles, but I dare say you have him all at your finger-ends; and here, Reginald, my cock, here’s Virgil himself for you. Take good care of him, now, for it was the great Doctor Dalton’s own copy—the great Jeremy Dalton, Dean of Winchester, you know. You’ll see his arms there on the first leaf, and I’ve put your own name below it, with my best wishes, and may you live to be an honour and a credit to the name you bear, my lad. And now a good journey to you all—and you, Mr

Vicar, remember we're to see you when the Yule-log's lighted."

So saying, the Squire shook them all very tenderly by the hand, and they turned from his bedside ; but just as Reginald, who walked last, was passing the threshold of the room, the old gentleman called him back again in a whisper. " Here," said he, " my dear lad, come here for a moment ; take this too with you, from your kinsman—nay, don't colour up so,—don't stare one in the face, boy—wer'nt they your fore-elders as well as mine that drew the old acres together ? take it, boy, and heartily welcome you are, and may God Almighty bless you. Put it in your pocket, though, for you need not be blabbing."

With that the Squire thrust into Reginald's hesitating hand a little silken purse which he had drawn from underneath his pillow, and with an admonitory and intelligent wink sent him once more out of the room.

Barbara Dalton was not yet stirring, but Mrs Elizabeth was the bearer of her " kind good wishes" to all the party, and of a small packet addressed to Reginald. " I dare say," whispered the

old lady, “ ’tis some very good book, my dear, and ’tis kindly meant, at any rate.” [In point of fact it was Kirke White.] At the same time Miss Betty presented the boy with an old-fashioned little silver toothpick-case, which she begged him to accept of as a mark of “ a very old woman’s regard.” She kissed both him and his father on the cheek, saw them all fairly on horseback, and was still lingering at the Hall-gate when they turned the corner into the village lane.

It may be about a couple of miles from Grypherwast to the great northern road, and the Vicar insisted on going so far out of his way, that he might see them fairly embarked in their diligence. They all rode together at a brisk pace ; but even if they had been going never so slowly, there was such a weight at the Vicar’s heart, and at young Reginald’s too, that I doubt if either of them would have been able to trust himself with many words.

As it happened, the horn was heard near and loud just as they reached the alehouse to which the young men’s luggage had been sent on. It was

the first vehicle of the kind our hero had ever seen, and no doubt it appeared to him a very splendid affair in its way; for it was, in truth, not only one of the largest and heaviest, but one of the gayest and gaudiest also of all possible stage-coaches. It bore the then all-predominant name of the hero of 'Trafalgar, and blazing daubs of Neptunes, Bellonas, and Britannias, illuminated every pannel that could be spared from a flourishing catalogue of inns and proprietors. The conductor was a cheerful-looking old fellow, with a regular beer face, and the bulk of a Hercules. A young woman ran out with a foaming can the moment the coach stopped, and our friend had scarce finished the welcome and expected draught, ere both the portmanteaus and their masters were safely stowed on board.

Perhaps the moment when the Admiral Nelson was once more under weigh, was the saddest that had yet occurred in Reginald Dalton's life. His father's eye and his continued fixed upon each other—but a moment more, and that last painful pleasure too was among the *fuits*.

Chisney, meantime, who had gone outside, was exerting all his eloquence to coax the old man's ribbons out of his fingers, and in five minutes time this high piece of academical ambition was gratified.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

SEE ! UNFADING IN HONOURS, IMMORTAL IN YEARS,
THE GREAT MOTHER OF CHURCHMEN AND TORIES
APPEARS !

New Oxford Sausage.

BOOK II.



CHAPTER I.

MR REGINALD had been for perhaps the best part of an hour indulging in meditations sad enough, and solitary too—for there was only one inside passenger besides himself, and she was a very drowsy woman—when the Admiral pulled up opposite to a small but handsome gateway, where two gentlemen were standing, as if in expectation of the arrival of the vehicle. One of these was Sir Charles Catline, who seemed to look a little surprised on recognizing our two young men, but next moment came up and saluted them both with a degree of bland and courteous suavity, such as his demeanour at Grypherwast-hall on the preceding day had not prepared either of them to expect. To Reginald, in particular, he addressed so many kind inquiries, and expressed

so many kind wishes, and all this in a manner so perfectly free and unembarrassed, that the boy could scarcely believe it was the same person whose cold, shrinking, formal civilities had so lately excited somewhat of his spleen. The Baronet's companion was a strong, robust, thick-set, hard-visaged man, apparently about sixty, dressed in black clothes, huge mud-boots, a hairy cap of formidable roughness, and a cloak of dingy tartan. He shook Sir Charles by the hand, and observing with a sage nod, "that the best o' friends maun pairt," hoisted himself into the Diligence, and took his place opposite to Reginald.

This personage, after a single "gude day, sir," sat quite silent for some time. At length he handed his large silver snuff-box towards the boy, which Reginald declined by a gesture that at once acknowledged the civility, and told his own perfect inexperience of the nicotian luxury. The stranger hereupon indulged his own nostrils with an abundant pinch, and then drumming on the lid with his yet occupied finger and thumb, said in a high strong tone, that would have overcome all the rattling of fifty wheels—"Ye've gotten a wac look

wi' you, I think, my young friend—ye're new frae hame, nae doubt ; ye'll hae just be pairtin wi' your folk, I'se warrant."

" You have guessed quite rightly, sir," said Reginald, smiling the best way he could ; " I have just left home for the first time in my life."

" Ay, I thought it behoved to be so," quoth the Scot, " an' ye'll no be come ony great feck o' gait yet, I'm thinking ?"

" I beg your pardon, sir," said Reginald, " but I really don't perfectly understand you."

" You'll no be far from your home yet, I was saying," (quoth he in a tone yet higher than before ;) " I saw ye were acquainted wi' my friend Sir Charles—yon's a bonny bit place o' his, yon Little-Pyesworth."

" I only saw the upper part of the house, over the hedgerow. It seemed a neat little park, sir."

" Ay, ay, a vera bonny bit place indeed—a pleasant house, sir, a very pleasant house inside, and a fine family—a very engaging family, sir—Everything very comfortable yonder, sir—a very bien bit yon. May I take the freedom to ask if 'tis near this ye bide yourself, sir ?"

“ I live in Westmoreland, sir ; but I have some relations in this neighbourhood.”

“ An you’ve just been taking your leave o’ them a’? and hoo far are ye going? (if I may speer the question.) Are we to have the pleasure of your company as far as Manchester? Or ’tis maybe Liverpool ye’re for; there’s an unco deal of young lads goes to Liverpool now-a-days.”

“ I am going to Oxford,” said Reginald; “ I am just about to be entered at College.”

“ Ay, ay, ’tis Oxford College ye’re for, is it? But od, man, are ye no rather ahint the hand? are ye no rather auld for beginning to be a collegianer?”

“ I believe,” said the youth, smiling modestly—“ I believe ’tis not common to go much sooner to the University—I am barely eighteen, sir.”

“ Eighteen!” said the stranger; “ and ca’ ye that going early to the College? Od, man, I was a Maister o’ Airts myself ere I was that time o’ day.”

“ Were you at Oxford, sir?” said the boy.

“ Oxford indeed!” quoth the stranger; “ na, na, my man, I didna go quite so far frae hame for

my lair. I gaed through my *curriculum* just where I was born and bred—in bonny Sant Andrews.”

“ Ah !” said Reginald, “ I have heard of Saint Andrews. ’Tis one of the Scotch archbishopricks, is it not, sir ?”

“ An archbishoprick, said ye ?” quoth the other. “ Od, but your education has been a little negleckit, I’m thinking, my man. Did ye really think we had bishopricks and archbishopricks in our country ?”

“ I beg your pardon,” said Reginald, colouring rather sheepishly. “ I was aware that Presbyterianism is the established religion in your country ; but I had understood that you had still an Episcopal Church remaining there also.”

“ Ou ay,” quoth the stranger ; “ ou ay, sir, it was that ye was driving at, was it ? My certy, we have an Episcopal Church, no doubt, and a bonny like church it is, I warrant ye, and very good bishops too, sir,—most apostolical chields, reverend and right reverend bishops too, wi’ their tale, man—although I’m thinking ye wadna maybe think vera meikle o’ them, if ye saw them, ony

mair than my Lord Stafford's south-country flunkies, when he first brought them down wi' him till Dunrobin—him that's married on the Countess of Sutherland, ye ken."

" Lord Stafford's *what*, I pray you, sir ?"

" His flunkies, man, his servant-men, his valets-de-chambres, and French cooks, and fat blawn up English butlers, no offence to you, and a' the rest of siclike clanjamphray."

" Well, sir, and what did all these fine gentlemen say to the Scotch bishops ?"

" What did they say to them ? Od, they said but vera little matter, sir. Ye see my lord and my leddy, and a' their train, are coming north in great form—after their wedding, just as ye may suppose ; and they're lying a night at some small town on their journey ; and thae braw English chields, and gay upsetting leddy's maids, that are mair plague and fash about a house than fifty coontesses, they hear some Episcopalists that were down stairs, (for there's a deal of them in that part of the country yet,) talking and talking away amang themselves about the Bishop and the Bishop—and that their Bishop, forsooth, was to

come in the next day for a *confirmation*, I think ye call it ; and so up gangs ane o' them to my lord and my leddy wi' a humble request and petition, that they be allowed to stay a while ahint their time the morn's morning, to see the Bishop mak his entry into the town. My lord, ye ken, would most likely ken little about thae matters then ; but my leddy she was up to the joke in no time ; and to be sure, they got leave to stay and take their glower at the Bishop, puir creatures. Out they a' gang to the end of the town, and there they rank themselves in a grand raw by the roadside. They hing on for an hour or twa, and are wonderfu' surprised, no doubt, to see no crowd gathering, binna a wheen o' the town bairns, that had come out to look at their ainsells ; but at last and at length, up comes a decent, little auld manny, in a black coat and velveteen breeches, riding on a bit broken-kneed hirplin beast of a Heeland powney, wi' a red and white checked napkin tied round his neck, and a bit auld ravel of a spur on ane o' his heels, and the coat-tails o' him pinned up before wi' twa corkin preens, to keep them frae being filed with the auld shelty's white hairs coming

aff; and up steps ane o' our braw liverymen, and ' My good man,' says he, ' can you have the koindness to inform us, if My Lord Bishop's likely to arrive soon; for we've been waiting here ever since breakfast to see his lordship make his entrance.'— ' Fat's that ye're saying, folk?' says the man. ' Troth, if ye've been waiting for the bishop, ye may e'en gang your wa's hame again now; for I'm a' ye'll get for him,' quo' he; and sae on he joggit, to be sure, saddlebags and a', puir body!—And now what think ye o' our Bishops, my man?"

" I perceive that their church is poor," says Reginald; " but I don't see why they should not be worthy men, ay, and right Bishops too, notwithstanding. The earliest among their predecessors were poorer still."

" Ay, in truth were they," cries our kindly Scot; " and if nane o' their successors had ever been richer, it would have been telling a' body but themsels;—but I crave your grace, young gentleman, ye'll maybe be designing for that line yoursel. Are your freends thinking to mak a minister o' you, young man?"

“ Indeed I have not thought much of these things as yet ; but my father is in the church.”

“ Hoo mony chaulders may’t run ?”

“ I beg your pardon, sir, I really don’t——”

“ Hoot, man ! I was only asking what the steepend might come to.”

“ Stipend, sir ! I really don’t understand you. He’s Vicar of Lannwell.”

“ Ay, just so ; and it’s a braw fat kirk I houp for your sake ; for no doubt ye’ll be ettlin to stap in Helper and Successor, when ye’re done wi’ your courses.”

“ My *courses* !—Once more, sir——”

“ Ay, your courses, your classes, your College courses, man ; how mony years will’t tak ye, or ye can be through the Hall ?”

“ The Hall, sir ? I rather think I shall be of * * * College.”

“ I meant the Devecnity-hall, man ; but that’s a lang look yet. Wha’s your Professor o’ Humanity ?”

“ Humanity, sir ! I never heard of such a professorship.”

“ Latin, then, man ; I’m sure Latin and Humanity’s a’ ae thing.”

“Nay, indeed,” said Reginald, laughing; “I fear we’re always to be at cross-purposes, sir—I fear we shall never understand each other.”

“Nae great matter, maybe,” muttered the Scot, wrapping his plaid close about his chin.—“Ye’ll maybe have heard,” he added, after a pause, “of such a book as Ovid’s Epistles.”

“Surely, sir, I have both heard of and read them,” said Reginald.

“And yet, under favour, ye dinna appear to have made meikle hand of the twa bonniest and wisest lines in them a’;” and with that he spouted, with an air of considerable self-satisfaction, in his broad coarse note,

—“*Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse ferus.*”

But the lines were scarcely uttered, ere an unfortunate accident interrupted him. A certain individual, by name, or rather by nickname, “Benjamin the Waggoner,”—(by the way, he has since had the honour to be “married to mortal verse”)—had, most immorally and unpoetically, lingered to drink a pot of purl with a pedlar of the name of Peter Bell, and some other old acquaintances,

whom he had casually met with, at a little hedge alehouse, about a hundred yards off. Benjamin's team, however, not being invited to be of the purl-party, had thought proper to proceed on their journey towards Shap, which they well knew it was their duty to reach before next morning:—Peter Bell's Jackass, trotting very gallantly by the side of the Brown Mare, had somewhat discomposed the line of march; and, in brief, Master Chisney, being a bold rather than a blameless whip, had suffered part of the Admiral's tackling to come in contact with one of those enormous circles, upon which that hugest of all moving things was rolling its slow length along. Jolt went the whole concern with a stagger, such as Benjamin the purl-swigger himself had never exhibited to human eyes—away flew the old coachman, right over the hedge, like a cork out of a champagne bottle—crack went the drowsy lady's head against the smashing pane—in short, it was

“Disaster dire, and total overthrow,”

although, luckily, there was neither life lost nor bone broken.

The fat woman made a most bitter outcry, which, considering the bleeding nose, and the weight of the superincumbent Scotchman together, was not wonderful ; but he, without taking much notice of her lamentations, soon sprawled himself out of the upper window, and was seated in security upon the horizontal pannel of the Admiral Nelson. Reginald, forcing the door open, extricated as he best might the poor widow and himself, but thought of nothing but Chisney, when he saw that unfortunate Jehu stretched apparently lifeless upon the ground. He lifted him up, and dashing a handful of ditch water on his brow, had the satisfaction to see him open his eyes almost immediately. The young man closed them with a quick involuntary shudder, as the image of the giant wheel grinding close past his ear again rose on his fancy ; while the son of Caledonia, adjusting some of his own discomposed habiliments, and at the same time making a narrow scrutiny of the marks on the road, said, in an accent of most Hyperborean tenderness—“ My troth, gin yon chield had shaved twa inches nearer you, your head, my man, would have lookit very like a bluidy pancake.

This will learn ye, again, ye young ramshackle !
How daur ye, sir, how daur ye pit Christian folk
intill sic jeopardy, how daur ye ?”

Chisney’s eye was just beginning to flame upon the North Briton, when Benjamin the waggoner, and a few more of the purl party [—all of them, indeed, except Mr P. Bell, who ran on furiously with his “sapling white as cream”—] came up with reeling steps and steaming faces, to assist in setting the coach to rights. The old coachman, who had been much less hurt than Frederick, was far too sensible of his own situation to make half so speedy a recovery ; but after a sufficient allowance of rubbing, sighing, and cursing, he also joined the company by the side of his prostrate vehicle, and the horses having fortunately made no effort to stir after the crash, the Admiral was ere long hoisted once more on his beam-ends, by the united exertions of the whole assemblage.

Chisney and our other friends being all seated together within the coach, sour and cold looks prevailed for a season, and total silence, save a continued low moaning from the female sufferer,

who kept sea-sawing up and down with her head in a most deplorable fashion. The first who spoke was the Scotchman :—offering a pinch, (his perpetual panacea,) to the groaning old lady, he remarked to her in a sort of consolatory whisper—“ I have no doubt, a very fair action will lie, mem ; particularly if any of the teeth be out, there will be no question of very pretty damages—very pretty damages, indeed—very sweet damages. I dare say the proprietors are very sponisible folk, mem.”

“ What the devil have *you* got to do with the business, sir ?” cried Frederick, sharply.

“ O nothing, nothing at all, young gentleman. If the ledly pleases to take her battered chops and say nothing about it, ’tis her own affair, sir ; there’s no question, ’tis all her own business ; but if it had been *me* that it had happened to, friend, I can tell you there should have been twa words or *wæ* pairted—that’s all, sir. No offence, no offence.”

“ Now, jontlemen, jontlemen,” interjected the wounded woman, taking her bloody handkerchief from her mouth, “ do not make a quarrel about it, for the love of greace—do not make a quarrel in

the coach, swate jontlemen ; for the blading is stopt, and I'm sure the young man did not mane to do us any harm."

" Weel, weel, madam, you're of a very Christian forgiveness truly, that's all I sall say, madam. Tak your ain gait though, by a' means."

This was said with such an intolerable air of contempt, that the old lady's spirit could not digest it.—“ An indade, sir,” said she, taking a hearty snuff of her smelling-bottle, “ I think *you* might just as well say little about the matter, for now that my nose is done blading, barrin the tramp *you* gave me when you climbed out at the window, I should have been nothing the worse for it at all, at all. I believe the mark will stay with me for a month,” she added ; “ and sich an indacent thing it was for a gintleman to look to himself first, when there was a wuman below him—I'm sure I dare say the young man never did sich a thing in his born dees.”

The Scotsman staring her full in the face, with a grin not of malice but of *malicé*, said, in quite a different tone from what he had hitherto spoken in, “ he's a very pretty young man, mem ; is not

he a very nate proper lad? is not he weel set on his shanks, mem? for I dare say ye've an experienced skillful ee as to a' sic matters."

"I squorns your words," was the reply, "I squorns your words, sir, and you're no jontleman, sir, to make sich an insinivation to any lady; and I beg you to take notice, sir, that I *am* a lady, though I rides in a steege-coach—and my name, if you wish for to have it, is O'Moore—and my husband that's dead and gone, bliss him and rist him, was an O'Donnell; and, sure as peas, I'm much to seek if there's e'er a wan o' ye has a prettier name for to go to market with!"

"Ha! an O'Moore," cried Chisney, with an air of enthusiasm, "who can ever hear the name without respect? Who can ever forget the glorious lines—

' O ye heroes so high, and so haughty of yore,
O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Mara, O'Moore!
All houses so noble, so worthy, so old,
Every drop of your blood is worth ounces of gold.' "

"Don't mintion it, don't mintion it, my swate young masther," so said, or rather so sobbed, the daughter of the Milesian, once more cramming

her rosy countenance into the obscurity of the pocket-handkerchief.

“ I am sure, mem,” cried the Scotchman, relaxing the rigidity of his grin into a very courteous simper, “ I am sure, nobody can have a greater respect for you than myself, and why should not I tell you the truth, since it is the truth? Do you know, I must crave your permission to look upon myself as in some sort your kinsman.”

“ There’s ne’er a Scot of ye all is my kinsman,” cried the unbending dame.

“ I don’t know that, mem,” he continued; “ I’m really very far from agreeing with you, as to that point, mem. My own name is Macdonald, mem, and ’tis well knawn that we’re all originally from the same root.”

“ There’s been many a sore graft in the tree then,” whispered Mrs Paddy—but whether the Scot heard her or not, I am uncertain. He handed the snuff-box once more, and he did it with such an air of conciliation, that she could no longer resist him. In short, there was great good humour among the party, long before they stopt to dinner at Proud Preston. Mrs O’Donnell took the head

of the table, Mr Macdonald the foot, and the two boys forgetting, the one his bad driving, and the other his *maladie des adieux*, the whole quartette sympathised in paying devoted attention to a superb round of beef, a turkey, a sucking pig, turnips, carrots, and a portentous apple-dumpling,—all which, according to a custom not yet denounced by the Lancastrian Kitcheners, had been fished out of the same pot.

A good-humoured controversy arose after dinner, who should have the honour of paying for Mrs O'Donnell's share. "Na, na," said the Scotchman; "I'll take nae denials—It's my right to take this matter on me—bluid's thicker than water, ye ken."

"For that very reason," said Chisney slyly, pointing to the handkerchief,—“I insist upon it.”

“Haud your tongues, bairns,” quoth Macdonald. “Od, ye're but twa lads on the way to the College; and my certy, ye maun be rifer a deal o' siller than I was at that time o' day, if ye hae mair bawbees than you'll hae occasion for. Let me stand to the shot, I say. Do you no see that I might be your father, man? What signifies sic

clishmaclavering? Pay your ain half-crowns, callants."

So saying, the generous son of Morven conducted the no longer disdainful Milesian to her seat in the vehicle. "What a beautiful, beautiful town!" cried Reginald, as they were about to get in.

"Beautiful, indeed!" echoed Chisney.

"Gae wa', gae wa'," roared Saunders, "ye've never seen Bonny Dundee, my boys; but the toon's a very descent bit toon, no question, for a' that."

CHAPTER II.

IT was, after all, a stupid notion of Mr Galt's to write a book about a "Steam-Boat."—A Steam-Boat has all the disadvantages of a hoy or a smack—I mean, all the discomforts—and it has a thousand new ones of its own besides. Its inflexible pertinacity—its always sticking to the proper point of the compass—its main chance—is disgusting: the clack of the oily machinery is monotonous as Rogers; if you go away from the mast-chimney you shiver, and, if you stand near it, your clothes are seethed about your body, from the escape-valves. Smoking is forbidden upon deck—a piece of tyranny, as indefensible as would be that of preventing a boy from setting off his squib in the neighbourhood of an ordnance review—and down below, if you are not sick yourself, you are surrounded with frowsy old women; ugly old men, afraid of open windows; squawling, sprawling children; Cockney

tourists with red morocco memorandum-books; noblemen's servants, passing themselves off for gentlemen at large; squeamish girls going to the boarding-school; pleasuring shop-keepers, sentimental conveyancers, and sulky H. P.'s.—Such a mode of existence is destructive of individual comfort, and the mortal enemy of all social intercourse. The dishes are greasy, the spoons are pewter, the table-cloth is dowlass, the beer vapid, the port black poison, and the motion a weariness of the flesh.—What are swiftness and cheapness, to set against such a conglomeration of bores? Had the ancients foreseen Watt and Bolton, old Charon would certainly have had a steam-boat for his “σκαφιδιον.”—No,—I can forgive my friend Galt his “Wheelie”—ay, even his “Cardinal Wolsey,” or his “Earthquake,” more easily than this.

Nothing in human life is more delightful, on the other hand, than a journey in a stage-coach. Comfortable cushions prop your back and your sides; the world is whirled along in your view, like a perpetual panorama; your friend sits opposite to you as comfortable as yourself, and you may have a paper of sandwiches and a bottle of sherry,

usquebaugh, curaçao, any thing you like at your elbow, if you have a mind. A thousand delightful little varieties are continually occurring.—If the chatty old lady leaves you, the blooming damsel takes her place the next stage. There is always some one, either to laugh *with* or *at*; and in spite of all that has been said by Laureate Espriella, and other superfine Dons, you have excellent meals three times a-day, and snowy sheets every night. Unless a man is travelling with a Challenge, or a Licence, or something of that sort in his pocket, I have no notion of his being unhappy in an English mail-coach. We, for one, never hear the horn blowing without envying those that are setting out—above all those that are starting, like our friend Reginald, for the first time.

I have mentioned a panorama already, I meant one of the revolving kind, and I can find no image that will so well illustrate the rapidity and variety of his new impressions during this career. The Irishwoman to whom we have been introduced, was journeying with a small cargo of smuggled India handkerchiefs, (the bloody one a specimen,)

and she stopped at Manchester, after having disposed of her whole stock between her junior companions. But Mr Ralph Macdonald, W.S., was not so soon to be got rid of: Every town they came to they expected to lose sight of him, but no; although he said nothing of his plans overnight, he was always sure to start again in the same vehicle the next morning; and when he supped at Birmingham, he was the first to remark that Oxford would be their next supping place. To say the truth, even Frederick Chisney had contracted something that might almost be called a fondness for the old gentleman ere then; for though all the prejudices of the Scotchman were pitched on keys utterly and horribly at discordance from his own, there was an air of quaint and barbarous and *foreign* novelty, about the style in which he expressed his opinions, quite sufficient to ensure the tolerance of so light-headed and light-hearted an antagonist. Besides, it must not be forgotten that Ralph was somewhat an humourist in his style; and then, though he was a Whig, he was not a very bad specimen, apparently; at all events, no man ever testified more withering indignation

than he did, when, on having casually announced himself to be *a writer in Edinburgh*, he found that his youthful and shuddering associates imagined this to be the same thing with *a writer in the Edinburgh Review*.

But Saunders was only one feature in the picture—and what a strange motley picture it was ! First of all there was the country. Never had Reginald opened his eyes on that richest—and perhaps grandest, too—of all earthly prospects, a mighty English plain, until he saw it in all its perfection from the Hill of Haynam, that spot where Charles Edward, according to the local tradition, stood rooted below a sycamore, and gazing with a fervour of admiration which even rising despair could not check, uttered the pathetic exclamation,—“ Alas ! this is England.” The boundless spread of beauty and of grandeur—for even hedges and hedgerows are woven by distance into the semblance of one vast wood—the apparent ease—the wealth—the splendour—the limitless magnificence—the minute elaborate comfort—the picturesque villages—the busy towns—the embosomed spires—the stately halls—the ancestral groves—every thing, the assemblage of which

stamps “England herself alone”—they all lay before him, and there needed no “Alas,” to preface his confession.—But as to the particulars, are they not written in John Britton, F.A.S. ?—And who is it that has not seen all that Reginald saw, just as well as he? Who is not acquainted with the snug unpretending little inns, with their neatly papered parlours, and prints of Hambletonian and Lord Granby, and handy waiters, and neat-fingered waiting-maids, and smiling landladies, and bowing landlords, and good dinners smoking in sight of the stopping coach? and the large noisy bustling inns, with travellers’ rooms full of saddle-bags and dread-noughts, and tobacco smoke and Welsh rabbits, enormous hams, and jugs of porter, and stained newspapers, and dog-eared Directories, and chattering, joking, waiter-awing bagmen, and civil contemplative Quakers,

“Some sipping punch, some sipping tea,
All silent, and all——”?

and the charming airy country towns “near a shady grove and a murmuring brook,” with cleanly young girls seen over the Venetian blinds, in the act of rubbing comfortable old fellows’ bald

pates—and other comfortable old fellows just mounting their easy pad-nags to ride out a mile—and other cleanly young girls laying the tablecloth for “roast mutton rather than ven’son or teal?”—and the filthy large towns, with manufactories and steam-engines, and crowded sloppy streets, and doctors’ bottles, “green and blue” in the windows?—and the stately little cities, with the stately little parsons walking about them, two or three abreast, in well-polished shoes, and blameless silk aprons some of them, and grand old churches, and spacious well-built *closes*, and trim gardens, and literary spinsters?—We have all of us seen these things—and they are all of them good in their several ways. We have all been at such places as Preston, and Manchester, and Birmingham, and Litchfield. We have all seen *statesman* Brougham’s paddock, and listened to

“Long-Preston Peggy to Proud-Preston went,
For to see the bould rebels it was her intent.”

We have all heard of Whitaker’s History, and the late Dr Ferrier, and the Literary and Philosophical Society of the “Mancunian Mart.” We have all admired Soho, and pin-making, and Chan-

try's bust of James Watt. We have all heard of Anna Seward, and sighed over her lines on the death of Major André ; and sympathized with the indignation of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Esq. at the "damned good-natured friend," who asked across the table for Mrs Edgeworth and the babies, just when he and Anna were opening the trenches of their flirtation. And we have all seen the house where Samuel Johnson's father sold books ; and many of us have (like Reginald,) walked half-a-mile farther, on purpose to see the willow which "Surly Sam" himself planted in Tetsy's daughter's garden. And we have all been at Stratford-upon-Avon, and written our names in black lead upon the wall, and heard that old body that says she is Shakespeare's great-great-great-great-great-grand-niece-in-law, spout the opening scene of her "WATERLOO, a TRAGEDY."

"Dear Captain Brown, the postman has been here,
And you look sad——

Now, marry, say not so ;

But the regiment has at last received its orders,
And I must take my seat for the Isle o' Wight.
Farewell, farewell, dear Kate," &c. &c.

If you have ever happened to travel that road about the end of October, you have probably seen a great deal even of the more transitory and occasional sort of things that fell under the inspection of Reginald and his companions. You have probably observed abundance of rosy-cheeked old Staffordshire parsons, in grey-worsted stockings, seeing their sons into the Oxford-bound coach, just below the rectory ha-ha. You have been annoyed with the troops of empty, talking, consequential, beardless "men," chattering to each other about "First Class" and "Second Class"—Sir Roger Newdigate's prize-poem—the Dean of Christchurch—Coplestone's pamphlets—and the Brazen-nose Eight-oar. You have been amused with the smug tutors, in tight stocking pantaloons and gaiters, endeavouring to shew how completely they can be easy, well-bred, well-informed men of the world, when they have not their masters' gowns upon their backs—hazarding a jocular remark, perhaps, even to an under-graduate the one moment, and biting their lips, and drawing themselves up the moment after. You have been distressed with their involuntary quotations

from Joe Miller and the Quarterly Review ; and if you have taken a second “cheerer” with them after supper, you may have been regaled with some classical song out of *The Sausage*—“the swapping, swapping Mallard”—or,

“Your voices, brave boys, one and all I bespeak ’em,
In due celebration of William of Wickham ;
Let our chorus maintain, whether sober or mellow,
That old Billy Wickham was a very fine fellow,” &c.

You have not, indeed, it is most probable, enjoyed the advantage of hearing and seeing all these fine things in company with a sturdy Presbyterian Whig, grinning one grim and ghastly smile all the time, reviling all things, despising all things, and puffing himself up with all things ; but, nevertheless, you would in all likelihood think a fuller description no better than a bore.

Chisney, as was very much his custom, took an outside place for the journey between Birmingham and Oxford ; and there was nobody within the vehicle, which happened to be the heavy Shrewsbury, but Reginald, Mr Macdonald, and an old Shropshire gentleman, who was carrying his son to College. This gentleman was possessed of very

mild and engaging manners, and perceiving that Reginald was, like his own youth, a *Freshman*, he naturally was disposed to treat him with something like a sort of paternal kindness and attention. The Scotchman, on his part, was in an uncommonly placid frame of mind that day ; and altogether the *partie quarrée* passed their time very agreeably in the coach.

While it stopped to change horses at Woodstock, Chisney, running into The Bear for a glass of something, or perhaps a chat with the barmaid, found a whole knot of his Oxonian acquaintances making merry. These young bucks having come up from their counties a day before the beginning of the term, had been amusing themselves with a ride through the Duke's Park at Blenheim, and a dinner in the adjoining town had, of course, been the consequence. Chisney, after speaking with some of them for a minute, came down and asked Reginald, if he would excuse him for leaving him. " You will be the fresher man to-morrow," quoth he, " for having gone early to bed. Take care of my luggage, and I'll be with you ere you've done breakfast in the morning."

Reginald of course made no opposition to all this. The Shropshire gentleman, (who was, as it had peeped out, an old militaire,) remarked, when he heard the clamour of the young men, that they were making a jolly mess of it for once. Macdonald, with a more than sardonic grin, thrust his head out of the coach, and squinting up to the lighted windows of the inn, exclaimed, "Od, but the young chields are birling their bawbees at a gay rate the night. My certy, some of the puir parents have but little guess how their siller's going." But the conversation ere long took another turn, and indeed Reginald had but little share in it, whatever it was; for the last stage is always an endless one to appearance, and the boy could scarcely remain three minutes on end, without looking out to see whether the "glittering spires and pinnacles," of which he had heard and read so largely, were not yet coming into view.

The moon had just risen in splendour:—but the country is very flat on that side of Oxford, and at the distance of less than a mile, Reginald could still see nothing but trees—or towers, which, under such circumstances, it was impossible to distin-

guish from them. All of a sudden—just when expectation was on the utmost stretch—just when such an accident was more disagreeable than it ever could have been before—a spring gave way, and down came Shrewsbury.

Had the gentlemen been aware how near Oxford was, they would certainly have preferred walking the remainder of the way; but the coachman, anxious of course to prevent his passengers from outstripping him, and thereby giving additional blazon to the misfortune, swore the distance was three times what it really amounted to. A peal of laughter fell on their ears just while they were hesitating—and John carried his point more easily than he might otherwise have succeeded in doing, when he had made known the immediate neighbourhood of a house of entertainment.

His halloo was speedily answered from behind the trees that skirted that side of the highway, and the coach was soon surrounded by some half-dozen men, women, and children. At the head of them figured a stout portly old fellow, with a well-powdered beaver in one hand, and a tallow-candle

blazing in the other, who seemed to order all the rest about with an air of so much authority, that Major Harvey (for that was the Shropshireman's name) set him down, in spite of his handsome black suit, for the Boniface of the place. This notion, however, did not last long ; for another of the party, one of a very different sort of aspect, announced himself *in terminis* as landlord, requesting the gentlemen to enter his house, and rest themselves there until the mishap could be properly looked into. The person who uttered the invitation was a pale, stooping, hatchet-faced body, exceedingly frail and tremulous, and yet somehow or other not old-looking neither ; but a single glassy sparkle of joviality still lingering unextinguished in his eye, might perhaps furnish some explanation of this apparent contradiction.

These and the others, who seemed from their habiliments to be common hinds and labourers, or at the best, small farmers, escorted the Major, his son, and Reginald, into a very small hamlet, (but indeed it scarcely merited the name,) the entrance to which branched off from the highway but a few paces beyond the spot where the accident had oc-

curred. The smith being summoned, declared that in the course of ten minutes he could make the coach fit for finishing its journey ; and until this should be accomplished, our friends were fain to accept the shelter offered by the officious lord of the rural hospitium.

The house into which he ushered them is a little crazy tenement, which, though not seldom frequented by very fine gentlemen, preserves uninjured and undisguised all its original features of rudeness and rusticity. The gay young fellows of the neighbouring university escape occasionally with gladness from the splendid formalities of their halls, to the simple cheer afforded under such humble roofs, to

“ Quaff home-brew'd beer from plain brown bowls,
And snatch the savoury rasher from the coals.”

A cheerful fire, then, was roaring up a black, wide-mouthed chimney, in the midst of a spacious circle occupied by stout oaken benches. Pots and flagons of every shape and hue, and pipes of every length and every shade, were scattered within the full influence of the blazing hearth—while, an op-

posite door being open, the softer light of a fine October moon shewed the bright turf of a skittle-green, and the chequering shadows of the willow bowers with which its verge was surrounded.

Here the Major, (for canny St Andrews had staid without to look after the repairs) took his place without delay close by the fire, in an enormous old chair, each leg of which might be as thick as any modern bed-post. The landlord, without waiting for an order, produced a bottle of excellent cyder, which he drew with some little difficulty, and then placed it on a small table by the left elbow of his senior guest. The portly person, of whom mention has already been made, arranged himself meanwhile very comfortably on the opposite side of the chimney, put fresh tobacco into his pipe, and began to puff in that slow deliberate style, which is so characteristic of your old and knowing smoker. The Major, whose segar was already between his lips, did not fail to recognize in the stranger a genuine brother of the tube, and immediately began to address him in that tone of suavity, which is prompted by, and which so well becomes, the most benign and philosophical of all debauches.

“ May I be bold enough,” said he, “ to ask if I have the honour to be in the company of an Oxonian ?—I need scarcely ask the question.”

The person to whom these words were addressed, rolled out a cloud of smoke which it must have taken at least a minute to accumulate within his mouth. Quietly and composedly did he send forth the fragrant vapour, and not until its last white trail had escaped into the upper air did he vouchsafe his answer, which was as follows :—

“ I crave your pardon, sir, but I thought at first you were an old son of Alma Mater yourself, sir ; but it can't be so, sir—forgive my freedom, sir, for there's never a man, sir, has smoked a pipe within a mile of Carfax these forty years, sir, that does'nt know Jem Brank, sir. Did your honour ever hear of old Jem Brank ?”

The Major, without taking the segar from between his lips, signified by a shake negative his total ignorance of Mr Brank.

Jem, in the meantime, had sucked in another vast treasure of smoke, which, unlike himself, he got rid of by means of three or four hasty jerks, and then resumed—

“ Your honour, then, was a Cantab ? ”

“ Not at all,” quoth the Major, smiling ; “ you college folks think all the world must have been at college. I never was either in Oxford or Cambridge in my life.”

Mr Brank blew three or four clouds more, looked first at his own leg, then at the Major’s, and said, “ Crave your pardon, sir, but I thought your honour seemed to tread a little tenderly.”

The Major smiled more pleasantly than before, and knocking off the long grey tail of his segar against the edge of the elbow chair, said, “ Yes, my good friend ; and yet, however odd it may seem to you, I never had a single touch of gout since I was born.”

“ O dear ! ” quoth Jem, “ I fear me your honour has had some bad accident, sir—Was it a hedge and a double-ditch, sir ?—I think, for one, that no gentleman should suffer such a thing on his estate, sir.”

The Major laid his left hand gently upon his knee, pronounced the words, “ Only Bunker’s-hill, Mr Brank,” and resumed his segar. He added, however, after a slight pause—“ I am so far

on my way to Oxford, to enter my son at * * * college; and here is another young gentleman, who does not know what college he is to be of."

Mr Brank rose from his chair as if instinctively, on hearing this last sentence, and making a low bow to the Major, said, "Crave your honour's pardon for my freedom, sir, but I am the barber of * * * *, (my mother was the laundress, sir, and my grandfather was head butler;) and I hope my young master will be Jem Brank's customer, sir. Excuse my freedom, your honour, but our trade's not what it used to be—and besides, it's a shame to hear of it, sir—they've divided the office, sir."

"They've divided a sinecure, my friend," said the Major, laughing, "that is, if all your customers be like this. My boy has not a beard yet!"

"A beard! Lord bless your honour, I was not expecting a beard; but my master can't go to hall without his hair being turned."

"Well, well, Mr Brank, if his hair must be turned, I hope you'll take care not to turn his head along with it."

"Many thanks to your honour's kindness—I

have the honour to drink your honour and my young master's health," said Jem, lifting his tankard to his lips. He set it down, after taking what seemed to be no trivial pull, and then re-seated himself, having edged off his chair, however, to a more respectful distance from the chimney.

"Dr Kennett is your head," quoth the Major, "but I am not acquainted with the names of any of the fellows. Who are the leading resident members of your college, Mr Brank?"

"O, there's Mr Ainsworth, an please your honour, he's the chief manager now-a-days that the Provost is rather failing, and he tutors most of the young gentlemen; and there's Mr Leedes, a very fine man, he tutors a few too—I always dress Mr Leedes—he's said to be a main strong'un in the mathematical department, sir; and there's a young man, lately elected, Mr Valpy; and there's the senior fellow, sir, Mr Burton, (here Jem's voice fell two or three notes,) who, if they say true, is the most learned man in all our college, but he lives retired, sir—takes no part in any thing that goes on amongst us, sir, and has not, I believe,

had a single pupil these twelvemonths past. I only wait upon him on the Sundays."

"And why does Mr Burton live so retiredly, if I may ask?"

"Lord love your honour, there's ne'er a one can answer that question that I knows of—a very strange gentleman is Mr Burton."

"Well, but what is the common talk about him? A man can never act strangely, without being strangely talked about."

"Why," quoth Jem, (once more putting his pipe to his mouth, and at the same-time drawing his chair somewhat nearer to the Major's,)—"why, really, to tell the truth, your honour, we knows nothing of it for certain; but the general saying is, as how Mr Burton was crossed in love, for he was once, well do I remember that, the very gayest gentleman in all St John's, and he went abroad for a year or better, and he came back and stood for a fellowship in * * * ; and he got it; for, as I was saying, there's none like him for learning, but from that day to this, he has been an altered man, sir. He's no more like the same Mr Burton that he was a matter of twenty years

ago, no more than I'm like the Dean of Christ-church."

"I never saw the Dean of Christ-church," said the Major; "but if you had been dressed in a cassock, Mr Brank, I should certainly have take you for a Prebendary, or a Doctor of Divinity at the least."

"O Lord, sir," whispered Jem, "if I may be so bold, sir, I hope your honour won't teach my young master to talk so lightly about such great folks. O Lord, sir, there's a proper old saying we have, 'hands off the bull-dogs, tongues off the caput.'"

Just as Brank was finishing the above cautionary sentence, the coachman came into the house, announcing the completion of the blacksmith's labours. The officious barber was most active in arranging the Major's travelling cloak. The Major, in return, gave him half-a-crown to drink "Mr Harvey's health:"—and the old Shrewsbury, in the course of another minute, was rolling once more smoothly and safely towards Oxford.

Although Reginald did not take any part in the foregoing colloquy, yet he was a good deal interest-

ed in the latter part of it ; and indeed how could it be otherwise, since the only letter in his pocket-book was addressed to the gentleman whose singular habits of life had been the subject of discourse ? This was no other than the old and only friend whom his father had supposed himself to possess in Oxford—this was the very Mr Burton to whose care and superintendance he had furnished his son with the warmest of introductions and recommendations. However, he had scarcely mentioned this to Major Harvey, when at last the long-looked-for Dome of Ratcliffe appeared in view, and Reginald had eyes for nothing but the opening splendours of Rhedycina.

CHAPTER III.

“ Tax not the prince or peer with vain expense,
With ill-match'd aims the architect—who plann'd
(Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed scholars only) some immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence.”

So says (*O! si sic omnia!*) a great living poet; and, in truth, a very prosaic animal must he be, who for the first time traverses that noble and ancient City of the Muses, without acknowledging the influences of the GENIUS LOCI; and never was man or youth less ambitious of resisting such influences than Reginald Dalton. Born and reared in a wild sequestered province, he had never seen any great town of any sort, until he began the journey now just about to be concluded. Almost at the same hour of the preceding evening, he had entered Birmingham; and what a contrast was here! No dark narrow brick lanes, crowded

with waggons—no flaring shop-windows, passed and repassed by jostling multitudes—no discordant cries, no sights of tumult, no ring of anvils—every thing wearing the impress of a grave, peaceful stateliness—hoary towers, antique battlements, airy porticos, majestic colonnades, following each other in endless succession on either side—lofty poplars and elms ever and anon lifting their heads against the sky, as if from the heart of those magnificent seclusions—wide, spacious, solemn streets—every where a monastic stillness and a Gothic grandeur.—Excepting now and then some solitary gowned man pacing slowly in the moonlight, there was not a soul in the High-street; nor, excepting here and there a lamp twinkling in “some high lonely tower,” where some one might, or might not, be “unsphering the spirit of Plato,” was there any thing to shew that the venerable buildings which lined it were actually inhabited.

Reginald, in the hurry at Woodstock, had forgot to say anything to Chisney about what inn he should put up at in Oxford, so he entered, along with Mr Macdonald and the Harveys, the one

where the coach stopped. It is one of the oldest in the town,—the same indeed, if tradition may be trusted, where erst the Swan of Avon used sometimes to roost, when Sir William D'Avenant's mother's husband was the innkeeper. Major Harvey complained of his leg a little, for it was a sharp frost, and he, with his son, retired almost immediately from the public room. And Reginald, although his spirits were far too much excited for him to be thinking of weariness, was desirous to be early in his bed, that he might be able to rise early and walk about the city before breakfast; so he also, having swallowed a cup of coffee, was about to go up stairs, but Macdonald arrested his steps.—“Hoots, hoots,” quoth he; “this is no neighbour-like behaviour at all, man. Dog on it, we've been three days companions, and now ye're at the end of your journey, and I'm off for Lunnun in the morning, and we'll maybe ne'er meet other again, man. Just sit your ways down, Mr Dalton, for we maun have ae mair crack thegither ere we part.” Reginald could not, of course, resist this invitation, and he instantly resumed his chair over against his Scottish friend. “By and bye,” said Macdonald, “I'm expectin' a very auld

acquaintance o' mine that's in this town, to come and talk over a little business wi' me, but a very little time will be enough for all we've gotten to say as to that matter; and if he's no a changed man since I saw him last, he'll mak no mouths at a drap of something warm, this frosty night. Od, we'll have something comfortable for supper, and keep it up cheerily for ance, man." Reginald touched the bell, and the bill of fare being produced,—“Od, save us,” quoth the Scot, “it's as weel I had mind of that, though. 'Tis Friday night, and we maun have a bit fried fish for Mr Keith. Gae away, mylad,”—addressing the waiter—“and ask if there's ne'er such a thing as a had-dock or a whiting about the house, for we've gotten a Roman to supper wi' us.”

“I'm quite sure,” replied the waiter, “that there is not a single bit of fish, else it would have been in the fare.”

“Ay,” quoth Macdonald, “that's vera unlucky, man; but stop, here's snipes, I see, and they'll do weel enugh at a pinch, for langnebbit water-fowl's nae flesh meat, I trow; and a marrow pudding's i' the bill, too. Od, ye may e'en send

it ben for the remove; but be sure ye swear it's only eggs and butter, if there's ony questions speered. Gae your ways now, and see that 'tis a' right set about. Gae away, you lazy chield—tramp, I say. Od, ye stap about as grave like as if ye were some Principal yoursel, I think."

"A jolly-looking old fellow, Mr Macdonald."

"Na, saw ye ever such a kyte, Mr Dalton? Gude save us a'!—a waiter wi' a belly!—He's no fed on deaf nuts yon chiel, i'faith."

Mr Macdonald now called for pen and ink, and having written and dispatched a very brief note, he again turned to Reginald. "You must know, my young friend," he said, "that 'tis not ony common sneak of a priest body I'm sending for. Mr Keith's a gentleman born—no a man in braid Scotland come of a better family than he is.—Faith, if he hadna been a Roman priest, he would have been a very good laird this day."

"Don't suppose I have any prejudice against a Roman Catholic clergyman, merely because he is one," said Reginald. "My own mother, sir, was of that persuasion."

"Na, I ken naething about that, Mr Dalton; but, my troth, though Archy Keith might have

done a very gowk-like thing when he joined their cloth, it cannot be disputed that he has done a very genteel part by sticking to it—more genteel than sensible, to my thinking, but however.—Od, man, if he had only flung by his gown, he might have been Keith of Keithquhangs at this blessed hour ; but he had ta'en the vows, ye see, and he wouldna hear a word about it, but just let his brither be the laird, and could be got to accept of nothing but a sma' bit matter of an annuity to himself.”

“ Very like a gentleman and a man of honour, indeed,” said Reginald. “ And now he is the Catholic priest here, I suppose.”

“ Ay, he's just come ower the sea to be at the head of a small Roman Catholic congregation here ; but I assure ye 'tis a sair downcome for Mr Keith. He had a very fine living in Germany, but now Buonaparte has dung him out, as he has mony a ane that's cheaper o't, in his time. But Archy Keith was aye a contented creature. I would not wonder if ye were to see him with just as blithe a face as if naething had happened till him.”

“ I shall be very happy, indeed, sir, to see so truly respectable a gentleman as your friend.”

They might have been talking together in this sort of strain for rather more than half-an-hour, ere the waiter ushered in a little old man wrapt in a dark cloak, with a great deal of fur about it, who paused for a moment in the door-way, and then trotting up to Macdonald, shook him by both hands, and, raising himself on tiptoe, kissed first the one cheek and then the other. It was at first, "My dear Mr Macdonald," and "My dear Mr Keith;" but they were at "Hech, me!" and "Oh, Ralph, man!" ere they quitted hold of each other's hands.

After the first heat of their salutation was over, Mr Macdonald introduced Reginald Dalton to his friend, and the old gentleman bowed himself half-a-dozen times, with an elaborate courtesy that rather disconcerted our home bred youth. The two Scots then retired to the other end of the room, and laying their heads together over a side-table, conversed for some time in whispers. Reginald was too well-bred to look in that direction, but he saw, in the course of one or two involuntary glances, that some papers were exchanged between them; and he rather thought

several bank-notes were, *inter alia*, handed to the priest by the Presbyterian.

However, it was not long ere they both came back to the fire-side. Mr Keith, throwing off his formidable cloak, exhibited a suit of black, and a pair of tall dragoon boots, both of these too clumsily fashioned to be suspected for English manufacture. He wore a brown periwig, curled all over in straight lines, which also had an outlandish aspect; and he drew from the side-pocket of his mantle, ere he laid it away from him, a long and massy tobacco-pipe, the silk-wrapt stalk and silver chain-work of which were exposed to view, while its fine Meerschaum head remained closely swathed in a bag of crimson-leather. But although the good man had begun to produce the picker, the flint, and all his subsidiary smoking-tackle, he laid them aside with an air of great resignation, when the waiter came into the room with his tray, "dispensing odorous sweets;"—and both the snipes and the marrow pudding met with a most orthodox degree of attention at his hands. The cloth being removed, and the decanters substituted, Mr Keith composed a jolly

mixture of toddy, which he called *ein treffliches ponch*, fired his picturesque tube, and talked gaily about Old Scotland, and dear Germany, his second "fatherland," between the rolling puffs.

"My certy, Archy Keith," quoth Macdonald, "but you must have had a proper run for it. By Jove, it was a lucky chance that brought the flying Brunswickers in your way, my boy."

"Flying Brunswickers!" quoth he, discharging a treble vapour; "I promise you they had but little the look of flying, notwithstanding. Our French lads crackit crously enow, I warrant ye, and they had all their guns upon the brigg too, and every thing looked like a brave siege, at the least penny. But, 'faith, sir, the first Brunswick Schako shook their mettle for them, and all our swashing custom-house billies took to their heels; and the soldiers, there was a matter of six hundred, laid down their guns in the market, though there were but some hundred and fifty, and a couple of six-pounders, to guard both them and the town when it was done."

"What town was this, man?" quoth Macdonald.

“ Bremen, to be sure. Did not I tell you it was from thence we made our escape ?”

“ Indeed, but you did no such things, Mr Keith ; I thought you said it was Leipsick you took to after your misfortunes.”

“ Misfortune ! pooh, pooh ! We’sc not call it by a hard name that has brought us home once more ; for after a’, Ralph Macdonald, home’s home, and I reckon myself at home when I’m in Britain—indecid I do.”

“ To be sure you do,” cried Macdonald ; “ d—— it, man, can a man be the less a Briton, because he happens to have been born of onc religion or another ?”

“ I don’t speak,” cried Mr Keith, “ of being *born* this or that, Mr Macdonald ; but can a man be the less a Briton, sir, because he be in heart and in sincerity of the religion of the Alfreds, the Brucces, the Wallaces, the Mores ?—or if you speak of poets, sir, what, after all, have ye to set against the Popes, the Drydens, ay, and the Shakespeares ?”

“ I beg your pardon,” said Reginald, “ but

indeed, sir, I never before heard that Shakespeare was a Catholic."

"Perhaps not," said the priest, gradually rising out of his usual quiet tone; "but do only think of it, sir. Shakespeare lived under Elizabeth and James I.; he lived when the prejudices against the Catholics were at their first and most furious heat; he lived when the stage was a court amusement, in a higher and truer sense than it has ever since been; he lived when literature was, comparatively speaking, a guileless, artless thing, when men spoke in their works what they thought and felt in their own heads and hearts, sir; above all, he was SHAKESPEARE, and yet where, in all his writings, do ye find a single sarcasm against the old Faith? Had Shakespeare lived *now*, and been a Tory or a Whig, do ye suppose he could have helped abusing, in some way or other, them that belonged to the party opposite to his? No, no, sir, you find no cunning crafty confessors, no infidel monks, no lascivious nuns, in his writings; on the contrary, you find him daring to exhibit these characters under the best possible point of view—uniformly so—and this in the very face of

the feelings and prejudices—the most violent feelings, and the most violent prejudices—of the audiences on whose breath his existence depended—and do you, after all this, doubt that Shakespeare was a Catholic at heart? or, believing that he was such, do you, does any man, dare to say, that ours is an un-English Faith?”

Mr Macdonald coughed and nodded to Reginald once or twice during this dissertation, as if to caution him against saying anything that might tend to prolong the discussion—and indeed the youth himself was sufficiently unwilling to do so, seeing, as he did, how the old gentleman's face had flushed, and all the light gaiety of his previous manner been lost, in consequence of the broaching of these too interesting topics. But the moment Mr Keith paused in his strain, his countryman broke in with “Ye've letten a' the tobacco drap out of your pipe, man; fill your tumbler again; wha cares a fiddler's d—— what profession a playacting chield like Shakespeare made? Fill up your glass again, I say, and let's hear how you and the young leddy won away frae the French in the hinderend.”

With a placid smile the old man did as he was bid as to the tumbler ; and, relighting his pipe at the same time, came back to his campaign quite in his customary soft and agreeable tone of voice. “ If it had been only myself,” said he, “ ye ken weel, Ralph Macdonald, I had seen the like before, and could have borne’t all without mickle gruing.”

“ Ah ! plague on you, I’sc warrant ye thought the forty-five was come back again ; but your shanks were suppler then, I’m thinking, my friend.”

“ Troth, Ralph, but they served me in decent stead, nevertheless, man. At first, to be sure, we had only one horse between us, and my poor lassie, nothing could persuade her but she must walk, and I ride. I took her up behint me, to be sure, but then the beast flung and capered like mad ; and though I got her to mount now and then afterwards, it was never ten minutes till down she lap again, and would have me up right or wrong. To say the truth, I had had a very bad fever and cold, and was but weakly at the time.”

“ What a sair turn for the puir lassie !” said

Macdonald:—at the same time he whispered to Reginald, “ ’Tis Mr Keith’s niece he’s speaking o’—She’s come over wi’ him from Germany in the midst of all these troubles, ye see.”

“ Troubles ! houts, houts ! we aye keepit up our hearts weel enough, an’ be not when we came to the waterside, the Linda they call it, and found there was never a boat to be had for love or monee, every stick burnt and riven by that tinkler chield Rewbell—and nothing for it but the swimming. God safe us ! I thought at the first glimpse o’t, that all was over wi’ poor Ellen and me ; for what kind of a hand could an old man like me, or a bit delicate thing like Ellen, make of swimming such a broad water in the midst of a hundred and fifty tramping soldiers, wi’ wives and bairns, and bag and baggage, and Rewbell at our very heels ? However, God be thanked, the commander persuaded his men to leave every thing behind them ; and a canny chiel of a hussar clinkit up Ellen behint him before we could say Jack Robinson, and I spurred my beast, and in we plunged. Sore work it was, sirs, but we got well through at the upshot, with no greater damage than a good

ducking ; for as to me, the water rose far o'er the saddle ; and Ellen, when she came ashore, was as druckit as a water-wagtail. We had no time to think o' these matters, though. On we behoved to tramp, and we got all to the Duke's quarters about two in the morning. But, 'faith, it would have done your heart good, to see how she endured it all ; never blenching a cheek, nor making a single complaint ; but running hither and thither to get what she could for me, that could do little or nothing for myself, the cold water had made me so rheumatical about the legs."

" A fine-spirited lass indeed," quoth Macdonald.

" A noble young lady truly," cried Reginald Dalton.

" Ye may say all that," quoth the old gentleman quietly, yet fervently—" But, God bless us ! we had worse before us, though we thought all our troubles had been over, in a manner, when we were beside the Duke."

" He had hot wark to win away, the papers said," quoth Macdonald.

" Hot work, and cold work too," said the Priest ;

“ and I promise ye we had our share of both ; but all’s well that ends well ; here we are, safe and sound, in merry England !”

“ *Merry* England, forsooth !” said Macdonald ; “ a pretty sort of merriment, my certy !—But get on, man, let’s hear the upshot.”

“ Why, you see, we were laid, little Ellen and I, in a queer out-of-the-way nook, far ben in one of their great Bauer’s houses, where there’s cattle, and poultry, and men, women, and bairns, all stowed away at night, beneath the same roof ; a place as big as one of your *kirks* in Scotland, or an honest man’s barn in merry England, or dull England, if you will have it so. There we lay, wrapt up, as best we might be, with an old cloak or two hung up between us and the crowding and racket that was in the place ; for I believe there were a couple o’ score of soldiers all snoring upon the floor, as well as we : and, to be sure, we had both had weariness enow ; and we slept as soundly, sirs, as if we had been in our beds.”

“ Faith,” quoth Macdonald, “ ye were aye a braw sleeper ; I’se say that for you, Maister Keith.”

“ To be sure I was ; and I hope I shall be so for some time yet ; and then there will be no fear about sleepenow, my friend ; but, as ill luck would have it, the alarm was given—very quietly you may suppose—about half past four o’clock, and the soldiers trooped away as lightly as they could, and little Ellen and I were clean forgotten ; and, after all, what can one say, they were in such a hurry and bustle. They had been every soul of them out of the Dorf for half an hour, or near hand it, ere the old Bauer’s wife, redding up her odds and ends a little, found us sleeping in our bit corner. The good body raised us with a thumping shake, I warrant ye ; and up we got, and soon found what had happened. However, the old Frau was a mettlesome body, and she swore we might overtake them yet, ere the sea came in. For you must know, the Duke had heard of the English ships being off the headland about five miles below, and the great matter was to get there by crossing the bay—which is a great waste of sands when the tide’s out, and the sea itself, when ’tis in. When we got down to the shore, there was a mist upon the sands, but we could see the hind-

most of the Brunswickers. I take it they might be the best part of a mile before us. What was to be done? If we staid where we were, we must of course fall into Rewbell's mouth, and what could we expect but to be sent away into some French prison, for there were plenty o' people that could have recognized us at Bremen; and there could have been no denying that we had tried to get off amongst with the Brunswickers. If we ventured on, it was a bold venture, but Ellen was the first to say that we had much better try it; and, faith, my heart was up too; and when the kind-hearted old Frau offered to give us her knecht and a couple of horses to go over to the headland with us, there was no more word of disputing—we buckled up our alls; that was soon done, I trow;—and so we took the sand gaily, Ellen cantering her beast at my side, as lightly as if she had been riding at a *broose*."

"I take it, sir," interrupted Reginald, "that these sands are much like some I came over the other day, on my way from Furness to Lancaster."

"Like enough," quoth he; "like enough, it

may be so ; and, I promise ye, I shall be in no hurry to ride that journey, if they have the same look with them, my young gentleman.”

“ Get on, get on, man,” roared Macdonald.

“ Well, sir, we did get on,” he proceeded ; “ and we got on bravely and gaily too, for a time, till all at once, sirs, the Bauer-knecht, that rode before us, halted. The mist, you will observe, had been clearing away pretty quickly on the right hand, but it was dark enough towards the front, and getting darker and darker ; but we thought nought on’t till the boy pulled up. ‘ Meinherr, Meinherr !’ cried the fellow, ‘ I am afraid I hear the water.’ He stopt for a moment, and then said, ‘ Stay you for a moment where you are, and I’ll soon see whether we are right.’ With that, off he went, as if the devil was at his tail ; and we, what could we do—we stood like two stocks—and poor little Ellen, she looked into my face so woefully, that I wished to God we were both safe in the blackest hole of Bieche. In short, I suppose he had not galloped half a bow-shot, ere we quite lost sight of the fellow, but for several minutes more we could hear his horse’s hoofs on the wet

sand. We lost that too—and then, sirs, there came another sound, but what it was we could not at first bring ourselves to understand. Ellen stared me in the face again, with a blank look, you may swear ; and, ‘ Good God ! ’ said she at last, ‘ I am certain it’s the sea, uncle ? ’—‘ No, no ! ’ said I, ‘ Listen, listen ! I’m sure you are deceived.’ She looked and listened, and so did I, sirs, keenly enough ; and, in a moment, there came a strong breath of wind, and away went the mist driving, and we heard the regular heaving and rushing of the waters. ‘ Ride, ride, my dear uncle,’ cried Ellen, ‘ or we are lost ; ’ and off we both went, galloping as hard as we could away from the waves. My horse was rather the stronger one of the pair, but at length he began to pant below me, and just then the mist dropt down again thicker and thicker right and left, and I pulled up in a new terror, lest we should be separated ; but Ellen was alongside in a moment, and, faith, however it was, she had more calmness with her than I could muster. She put out her hand, poor girl, and grasped mine, and there we remained for, I dare say, two or three minutes, our horses, both

of them, quite blown, and we knowing no more than the man in the moon where we were, either by the village or our headland.”

The old gentleman paused for a moment, and then went on in a much lower tone—“ I feel it all as if it were *now*, sirs ; I was like a man bewildered in a dream. I have some dim sort of remembrance of my beast pawing and plashing with his fore feet, and looking down and seeing some great slimy eels—never were such loathsome wretches—twisting and twirling on the sand, which, by the way, was more water than sand ere that time. I also recollect a screaming in the air, and then a flapping of wings close to my ear almost, and then a great cloud of the sea-mews driving over us away into the heart of the mist. Neither of us said any thing, but we just began to ride on again, though, God knows, we knew nothing of whither we were going ; but we still kept hand in hand. We rode a good space, till that way also we found ourselves getting upon the sea ; and so round and round, till we were at last convinced the water had completely hemmed us all about. There were the waves trampling, trampling towards us,

whichever way we turned our horses' heads, and the mist was all this while thickening more and more ; and if a great cloud of it was dashed away now and then with the wind, why, sirs, the prospect was but the more rueful, for the sea was round us every way. Wide and far we could see nothing but the black water, and the waves leaping up here and there upon the sand-banks.

“ Well, sir, the poor dumb horses, they backed of themselves as the waters came gushing towards us. Looking round, snorting, snuffing, and pricking their ears, the poor things seemed to be as sensible as ourselves to the sort of condition we were all in ; and while Ellen's hand wrung mine more and more closely, they also, one would have thought, were always shrinking nearer and nearer to each other, just as they had had the same kind of feelings. Ellen, I cannot tell you what her behaviour was. I don't believe there's a bold man in Europe would have behaved so well, sirs. Her cheek was white enough, and her lips were as white as if they had never had a drop of blood in them ; but her eye, God bless me ! after the first two or three minutes were over, it was as clear as

the bonniest blue sky ye ever looked upon. I, for my part, I cannot help saying it, was, after a little while, more grieved, far more, about her than myself. I am an old man, sirs, and what did it signify ? but to see her at blythe seventeen—But, however, why should I make many words about all that ? I screamed, and screamed, and better screamed, but she only squeezed my hand, and shook her head, as if it was all of no avail. I had shouted till I was as hoarse as a raven, and was just going to give up all farther thoughts of making any exertion ; for, in truth, I began to feel benumbed and listless all over, my friends—when we heard a gun fired. We heard it quite distinctly, though the mist was so thick that we could see nothing. I cried then ; you may suppose how I cried ; and Ellen too, though she had never opened her lips before, cried as lustily as she could. Again the gun was fired, and again we answered at the top of our voices ; and then, God bless me !—was there ever such a moment ? We heard the dashing of the oars, and a strong breeze lifted the mist like a curtain from before us, and there was a boat—a jolly ten-oar boat, sheer-

ing right through the waters towards us, perhaps about a couple of hundred yards off. A sailor on the bow hailed and cheered us ; but you may imagine how far gone we were when I tell you that I scarcely took notice it was in ENGLISH the man cried to us.

“ In five minutes we were safe on board. They were kind, as kind as could be—good jolly English boys, every soul of them. Our boor lad was sitting in the midst of them with a brandy bottle at his head ; and, poor soul, he had need enough of comfort, to be sure, for to Heligoland he must go—and three horses lost, of course—besides the anxiety of his friends.

“ It was a good while ere I got my thoughts anyways collected about me. Ellen, poor thing, sat close nestled beside me, shaking all over like a leaf. But yet it was she that first spoke to me, and, upon my soul, I think her face was more woe-ful than it had ever been when we were in our utmost peril ; it was a sore sight truly, that had made it so, and the poor lassie’s heart was visibly at the bursting. There were our two horses—the poor dumb beasts—what think ye of it?—there they were, both of them, swimming just by the

stern of the boat. And our honest Bauer, God bless me ! the tears were running over his face while he looked at them ; and by and by one of the poor creatures made an exertion and came off the side of the boat where the lad sat, quite close to ourselves, with an imploring look and a whining cry that cut me to the very heart. Ellen sat and sobbed by me, but every now and then she bolted up, and it was all I could do to hold her in her place. At last the poor beast made two or three most violent plunges, and reared himself half-way out of the water, coming so near the boat, that one of the men's oars struck him on the head ; and with that he groaned most pitifully, snorted, neighed and plunged again for a moment, and then there was one loud, shrill cry, I never heard such a terrible sound since I was born, and away he drifted a-stern of us.—We saw him after a very little while had passed, going quite passively the way the current was running, the other had done so just before ; but I've been telling you a very long story, and perhaps you'll think about very little matters too. As for ourselves, we soon reached one of the transports that Sir George Steuart had sent to

fetch off the brave Brunswickers ; and though the rascally Danes kept firing at us in a most cowardly manner, whenever we were obliged to come near their side on the tack, they were such miserable hands at their guns, that not one shot ever came within fifty yards of one vessel that was there. It would have been an easy matter to have burnt Bremerlee about their ears, but the Duke was anxious to have his poor fellows in their quarters—God knows, they had had a sore campaign one way and another—and so we only gave them a few shots, just to see them skipping about upon the sand, and so passed them all, and got safe out of the Weser. We reached Heligoland next day, and then, you know, we were at home among plenty of English, and Ellen nursed my rheumatics ; and as soon as I was able to move, we came over in one of the King's packets, and here we are, alive and kicking—I will say it once more—in *merry England*.”

“ Well, well, man,” said Macdonald, “ ye've had a perilous journey, and you may e'en take things your own way, if it must be so ; but what, I pray you, has made you change your tune so ?

Sure you used to be a railer, and a bitter one too, or I'm much mistaken."

"Ay, Ralph," quoth the old gentleman; "and I might rail still, sir, if I were in a railing humour. But I've lived to see changes that may well shut my mouth:—I mind the day, sir,"—he proceeded, lifting his voice—"I well mind the day, sir, when a Catholic gentleman could neither inherit the estate of his ancestors without some beggarly quirk to evade the laws, nor buy lands, nor leave them to his bairns—I weel mind the day, sir, when the Honourable James Talbot was tried in an English court, tried like a felon, for being in Catholic orders—I mind good worthy Mr Malony being tried in the same way, and sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, because he pleaded *guilty*, forsooth. These days are all gone past, Mr Macdonald; King George, though I bore arms myself, when I was a beardless lad, against his grandfather, is a good man, and a good king, sir, and the prejudices of people must just get time to wear out. I shall not live to see the day—that I can scarcely expect—but come it will, and you, Mr Dalton, I hope, will live to see it, when it will

be no blot on any man's escutcheon to be a Petre, a Jerningham, a Throgmorton, or a Clifford."

"You need not be in such a heat, man," quoth Macdonald; "I'm sure I'm none o' the enemies of your claims, as ye call them. For my part, I think the Church of Rome and the Church of England are sib to the back-bone—four pennies the one, and a groat the other."

"Ay, ay, have I gotten ye there at last, ye foul Whig loon?" cried Keith, throwing himself back in his chair with a scornful smile; "Have I brought ye to the sticking-place at length, my friend? It is such friendship as yours, sir, that disgraces us now, and does more harm to the cause than all the open enemies we ever mustered. You hate EPISCOPACY, sir; you hate THE CHURCH; you are a vile WHIG, it was born in you, and bred in you, and it will rot in your bones, man. It's just you, and the like o' you, being with us, that makes those that should be with us stand against us; and if there's too many of ourselves that are taken in wi' your vile snares, so much the worse. Shame! Shame! and a black shame on all such tod's tricks, I say. NON TALI AUXILIO, NON DEFENSORIBUS ISTIS!"

“Hear till him, hear till him, Mr Dalton !
Wha saw ever sic a bleeze ?”

But the jarring string had been touched, and the old man had risen and flung his mighty cloak about his shoulders ere Macdonald could find means to pacify him. He walked to the door in high dudgeon, but turned again just after he had laid his fingers on the lock, and resuming all the suavity of his usual smile, which was in truth a most mild and gracious one, said, “We must not part in ill blood, though, for all this, Ralph Macdonald. Here’s my hand—God bless you—gie my love to all friends in the Land o’ Cakes—that will be no great trouble to you now-a-days, man.”

They shook hands, whispered together for a little while at the door of the room, and then, after wishing Reginald good-night, in a tone of great courtesy, and adding, that, as he was about to be a resident in Oxford, he hoped to have the pleasure of meeting with him again, the good priest withdrew.

Macdonald, drawing his chair close to the fireplace, entertained Reginald with a few moments’ conversation about the old father and his adven-

turous expedition ; and then these two coach acquaintances exchanged a tolerably affectionate farewell. Mr Macdonald was to set off at seven next morning *per* Bobart, so that they had but little prospect of seeing each other again.

CHAPTER IV.

THE bed-room, to which Betty Chambermaid conducted our young gentleman, was in a part of the house very remote from their supper-parlour. It is one of a great number situated along the line of an open wooden gallery, and its windows look out upon a lane branching from the street that gives entrance to the inn. Reginald, seeing that there was still fine moonlight, went to the window to peep out for a moment, ere he should undress himself. He threw up the sash, and was leaning over the balcony, contemplating a noble Gothic archway on the other side of the lane, when several persons turned the corner from the street, some retreating, apparently, and others following; for, though none of them were moving at speed, there was opposition and anger in the tones of the voices.

“ Say the word, then, speak it out,” cried one voice. “ Say TOWN, d—— ye, or I’ll floor your carcase.”

“ *Gown* or *Town* ?” roared another ; “ speak, or by jingo——”

“ Stand back, stand back, I say ; halt, you knaves,” shouted a third—“ I am a clergyman.”

Reginald thought it was certainly very like Mr Keith’s voice ; but they were all on the dark side of the lane, and he listened for another moment.

“ I am a clergyman, I am a priest, sirs,” was reiterated.

“ A clergyman ! Then the devil’s in’t if you’re not a gownsman—down with him, down with him, I say.”

“ Come, come, don’t meddle with him ; he’s an old fellow, Hitchins.”

“ Old ! d—— him, haven’t they battered old Dry’s windows about his ears ? down with him !”

“ Staund back, I say ; help, help !—God sauf us ! watch, watch ! Stap out, ony one o’ you, if you’re MEN.”

Reginald could no longer be mistaken : He

seized the poker, got out upon the balcony, and dropt on the pavement in a twinkling.

“Gown or Town? Gown or Town?”

“Cowards! rascals! back, you scoundrels!—Mr Keith, Mr Keith, here stand beside me, sir.”

A violent tussle ensued: One fellow aimed a blow at the priest's head, which he parried *secundum artem*, and returned with energy. Of two that attacked Reginald, one got a push in the midriff that made him sick as a dog; the other, after inflicting a sharp cut with his stick, was repaid by a crashing blow that might have shivered the scapula of a Molineaux. The priest and another fellow, getting into close embrace, rolled down together, *town* uppermost, in the kennel. Black eyes and bloody noses were a drug. Reginald broke a bludgeon; but the poker flew from his grasp in doing so. Fists sounded like hammers for a few seconds; and then TOWN, first retreating for a few paces in silence, turned absolute tail, and ran into the street screaming and bellowing, “TOWN! TOWN! TOWN!”

REGINALD.

I am afraid you're hurt, sir. Take my arm, Mr Keith.

KEITH.

There—that's a braw lad. Foul fa' the tinkler loons ! Four on an auld man !

REGINALD.

Here's your pipe, sir ; I'm afraid 'tis quite broken.

KEITH.

Never heed the stalk. Ah me, my bonny meershaum ! it's a' smashed—Just feel the bag, man.

REGINALD.

Wrap your cloak about you, sir, and let's walk as fast as we can, for they may come back.

KEITH.

My certy, there was ane o' them got his fairin—he'll no fash us. Come awa, come awa—but what am I saying ? ye have lost your hat.

REGINALD.

I never had it—never mind. Is your house far off ?

KEITH.

Nae lang gate—but mercy on me, I'm no gaun to take you wi' me at this time o' night, calland.

REGINALD.

No time for speeches, Mr Keith ; come along, shew me the way, sir.

Enter PROCTOR.

PROCTOR.

Here they are—here's some more of them—grapple them, my lads. Are these your companions, you scoundrel ?

PRISONER (*blubbing.*)

Oh let me go, sir—let me go for this once !—doey, doey now.

KEITH.

That's just one of the chaps that set on us. Keep your grip, lad, that's the very chield that flung me—I ken him by the red waistcoat.

PROCTOR.

Who are you ? Are you Gownsmen ? Young man, how dare ye be without your academics ?

REGINALD.

I'm not a member of the University, sir, though I mean to be so to-morrow morning. They were

mauling this old gentleman in the street, and I came out to assist him.

BULL-DOG (*whispering* PROCTOR.)

'Tis the new-comer Papish priest, your honour.

PROCTOR (*hastily*.)

Come, come, get away home, both of you ; and you, young man, what's your name—Dalton, do ye say ? Be sure you call on me at ten o'clock. Come along, Roberts—look sharp, Munday.

So saying, the Proctor, a most portly figure in cap and gown, with long and wide black velvet-sleeves, together with his attendants, who were stout fellows, with loose blue gowns and batons, went off as hastily as they had come—their prisoner being quickened in his paces by an occasional kick, blow, or tug. The old Priest and Reginald, as soon as they were gone, proceeded arm in arm to the end of the Bridge—not the slightest appearance of disturbance met them—every thing was as quiet as if no *row* since time began had ever waked the echoes of the Charwell. The Priest stopped at the door of a small house in St Clement's, and Reginald immediately touched the

knocker for him. "Go your ways home to your bed, my kind young friend," quoth the Priest. "God bless you for all your kindness—Gae away hame now, and sleep sound, for you've done a good deed, my man—and I'll take it very kind indeed, if ye'll come and see me in the morning, if ye have leisure."

A soft female voice said from within, "Who's there?"

"It's me, my darling," answered the old man, and the door was opened. A young girl, with a candle in her hand, appeared in the entrance, and uttered something anxiously and quickly in a language which Reginald did not understand. "Mein susses kind," he answered—"my bonny lassie, it's a mere scart, just a fleabite—I'm all safe and sound, thanks to this young gentleman.—Mr Dalton, allow me to have the honour of presenting you to my niece, Miss Hesketh. Miss Hesketh, Mr Dalton. But we shall all be better acquainted hereafter, I trust."

The old man shook Reginald most affectionately by the hand, and repeating his request that he should go instantly home, he entered the house—

the door was closed—and Reginald stood alone upon the way. The thing had past in a single instant, yet when the vision withdrew, the boy felt as if that angel-face could never quit his imagination. So fair, so pensive—yet so sweet and light a smile—such an air of hovering, timid grace—such a clear, soft eye—such raven silken tresses beneath that flowing veil—never had his eye beheld such a creature—it was as if he had had one momentary glimpse into some purer, happier, lovelier world than this.

He stood for some moments rivetted to the spot where this beautiful vision had gleamed upon him. He looked up and saw, as he thought, something white at one of the windows—but that too was gone; and, after a little while, he began to walk back slowly into the city. He could not, however, but pause again for a moment when he reached the bridge;—the tall fair tower of Magdalene appeared so exquisitely beautiful above its circling groves—and there was something so soothing to his imagination, (pensive as it was at the moment,) in the dark flow of the Charwell gurgling below him within its fringe of willows. He stood leaning

over the parapet, enjoying the solemn loveliness of the scene, when of a sudden, the universal stillness was disturbed once more by a clamour of rushing feet and impetuous voices.

Anxious to get back to the inn without being involved in any new riot, he resumed and quickened his pace. By crossing to the dark side of the way, he hoped to escape observation, and gain his quarters in safety ; but the sounds became louder and louder as he advanced, and he had not moved many paces beyond the arch of old Anthony-a-Wood, ere he saw that a groupe of young men were standing at no great distance right before him on the street. One or two of them had caps on their heads, and they appeared for the moment to be all laying their heads together as in consultation, so that he said to himself they must be gownsmen, and so on he went towards them, without fear of being molested.

He was hailed by the old cry, "Town or Gown?" when he came near them ; but before he could make any answer, Frederick Chisney reeled from the midst of the groupe, and exclaimed, seizing him by the collar, "Oh you dog, where have you

been hiding yourself? I called at both the Star and the King's Arms for you—Here, my hearties, here's my gay young fresh man—here's my Westmoreland Johnny Raw"—he went on, hickuping between every word—"here's my friend, Reginald Dalton, boys, we'll initiate him in style."

Reginald was instantly surrounded by a set of young fellows, all evidently very much flustered with wine, who saluted him with such violent shaking of hands, as is only to be expected from the "Baccho pleni," or acquaintances of ten years' standing.

"Stand fast, there!" cried Chisney, who seemed, though excessively drunk, to be in some sort the leader of the party. "Stand fast, my hearties, and we'll soon get caps and gowns for us all—this is certainly old Teddy's; but, by Jupiter, I can't read sign-posts by moonlight, — I never could. Look up, Dalton, your eye is unsophisticated—can you spell what's over the door, there?"

"There is nothing but THEED," he answered.

"Ah! by Jupiter, I knew I could not be far wrong. Well, now, what's to be done? shall we rouse old Snip?"

“ Ring the bell,” cried one.

“ Do, do, Dalton, pull his wire for him, you are nearest it,” cried another of the strangers.

“ But why ?” said Reginald, “ what are you about ? what are you wanting ?”

“ Hold your tongue,” stuttered Chisney, “ you’ll soon see what we’re after—but d—me, the goose is not gone to roost yet—singing, by Jericho.”

And to be sure, there was heard at the same moment a cracked and squeaking voice from the interior ; they all listened out one stanza in patience—

“ John Wilkes he was for Middlesex,
And they chose him the Knight of the Shire ;
And he made a fool of Alderman Bull,
And called Parson Horne a liar.”

“ Hear how the old sinner squawls,” quoth Chisney ; “ confound him, we’ll soon stop his scrannel pipe.”

But on went the noble strain :—

“ King Nebuchadanosor
Lived in a costly palace,
He wore a crown of gold, and drank
His swipes in a golden chalice.

“ He was the cock of great kings,
 And Babel tower he builded,
 His mutton it was served in a silver dish,
 And his gingerbread was gilded.”

And then two or three more “ most vile voices”
 joined in the glorious chorus—

*“ But John Wilkes he was for Middlesex,
 And they chose him the Knight of the Shire ;
 It was he made a fool of Alderman Bull,
 And call’d Parson Horne a liar.”*

“ No more of this stinking breath,” roared Chisney, “ Ring, Reginald.” But before Dalton could utter any remonstrance, Chisney himself was at his side, and the bell-wire had snapped in his hand with an alarum that would have roused the seven sleepers. A momentary pause ensued, and a bustling and whispering were heard within ; a furious rattle with a cane-head seconded the bell—a window was thrown open above the door-way—and a highly-powdered head-piece, a solemn cadaverous face, and a pair of spectacles, made their appearance.

“ In the name of ——, for the love of ——, who are you ? Gentlemen, what do you want ? Is this a time ? What behaviour is — ? Lord

have mercy upon our souls! they're at Town and Gown!"

CHISNEY.

No palavers, Master Theed, we want half-a-dozen academicals.

SECOND GOWNSMAN.

Caps and gowns, you old snip. Open your door, or you're a gone fraction."

THEED.

O gentlemen! O gentlemen! what a night is this? Doey, now, doey, now, go home to College, like good civil gentlemen.

THIRD GOWNSMAN.

By the eternal fury, if you don't open——

FOURTH GOWNSMAN (*lifting up a paving stone.*)

Here goes, old Gander——

THEED.

Alderman Plumridge—Alderman, I say, do you hear this? Takey care, gemmen, there's an alderman of Oxford in the house—takey good care what you do, gemmen.

FOURTH GOWNSMAN (*breaking a window.*)

You shall have next chance yourself, Theed.

ALDERMAN PLUMRIDGE.

Gentlemen, do ye know me, gentlemen? Do ye know who I am, gentlemen? In the name of the Mayor and the King of England, I charge you all—keep——

CHISNEY.

Keep *you* your peace, you infernal old cheese-monger!—Open the door this instant, I say, Theed.

SECOND GOWNSMAN.

Shall I sport his oak, Chisney?

THEED.

O Mr Chisney, is that you, Mr Chisney? That I should be so treated by an old customer! O Mr Chisney, Mr Chisney!

CHISNEY.

I'll tell you what it is, Theed, if you don't open your door, and give us three or four caps and gowns—no matter what sort they are, any thing that's in the shop—by Jupiter, you shall never put in a single stitch for Christ-Church.

THEED.

O Mr Chisney, Mr Chisney, you were always a civil gentleman; but who have ye got with ye?

I don't know the gentlemen. I'm sure I would do any thing for the University.

MRS THEED (*opening another window, and in her night-cap.*)

O gentlemen, have ye seen our Teddy? O, for the love of goodness, have any of ye seen my Teddy Theed? Oh, what a woeful night is this! —(*Blubbers.*)

CHISNEY.

He's safe enough, mother—he's in the Castle this half hour, safe and sound—nothing but a black peeper from the Popish Priest.

MRS THEED.

From the Popish Priest? O judgment judge him! The Papish, the Papish to lick my Teddy!

THEED.

Nothing but a black peeper! O goodness be praised!—But, O gentlemen, O Mr Chisney, what a state am I in? what am I to do? what can I do? O Alderman! O Mrs Theed! Oh Jem Brank! Speak to them, Jem—speak to the gemmen.

JEM BRANK (*appearing with his pipe in his mouth.*)

Gentlemen, I'm old Jem Brank, the barber of

* * *—D—n me, I'm the boy that will stick by the tuft.—Are you resolved to have the gowns, gentlemen? Must I open the door for you, my masters?

THEED.

O gentlemen—O Mr Chisney! (*Aside.*) Oh, you d—— villain, Jem Brank! Was it for this I invited you ——? Will you come in by yourself, Mr Chisney, and be responsible, and choose what you will have?

CHISNEY.

To be sure, I will. There's a good fellow, Jem Brank—here's a crown for you.—

And with that in rushed the whole party, overturning Brank, Plumridge, Mrs Theed, and three half-naked apprentices.

THEED.

O Mr Chisney! O the Alderman! O Mr Plumridge! Oh Jack Horner! Oh Bill Tape! Oh my apprentices, my apprentices! Stop my apprentices! Oh what noise is this I hear!

CHISNEY.

The caps this instant, you old devil, or you're a dead man. Don't you hear the row coming?

THEED (*opening a door.*)

Stand back, Mrs Theed—Goey in, gentlemen—doey your pleasure—I'll neither make nor meddle, I call you to witness, Mr Plumridge.

CHISNEY.

Here, boys, here's your sort. Here's a cap for you, Hawkins—here's one for you, Dick Nowell. D—n me here's one with a gold tuft—take it, Sir James—you're the next step to honourable, however—and here's two gowns. By Jupiter, Dalton, you shall wear the doctor's one.

SIR JAMES.

Go it, my hearties ; lift all the ellwands.

MR BRANK.

Mayn't I take this cap under the table, my masters ? I'm all for the Gown—they're a-coming—they're coming.

CHISNEY.

On with it, old boy. And here, here's a gown for you too. Now fall in, all's tight. [*Exeunt.*

In short, by this time the High-street of Oxford exhibited a scene as different from its customary solemnity and silence, as it is possible to

imagine. Conceive several hundreds of young men in caps, or gowns, or both, but all of them, without exception, wearing some part of their academical insignia, retreating before a band rather more numerous, made up of apprentices, journeymen, labourers, bargemen—a motley mixture of every thing that, in the phrase of that classical region, passés under the generic name of *Raff*. Several casual disturbances had occurred in different quarters of the town, a thing quite familiar to the last and all preceding ages, and by no means uncommon even in those recent days, whatever may be the case *now*. Of the host of youthful academics, just arrived for the beginning of the term, a considerable number had, as usual, been quartered for this night in the different inns of the city. Some of these, all full of wine and mischief, had first rushed out and swelled a mere passing scuffle into something like a substantial *row*. Herds of the town-boys, on the other hand, had been rapidly assembled by the magic influence of their accustomed war-cry. The row once formed into regular shape in The Corn-market, the clamour had penetrated walls, and overleapt battlements; from

College to College the madness had spread and flown. Porters had been knocked down in one quarter, iron-bound gates forced in another, and the rope-ladder, and the sheet-ladder, and the headlong leap, had all been put into requisition, with as much eager, frantic, desperate zeal, as if every old monastic tower had been the scene of an unquenchable fire, every dim cloistered quadrangle of a yawning earthquake. In former days, as I have asserted, such things were of familiar occurrence. There is an old rhyme which says,

“Chronica si penses, cum pugnent Oxonienses,
Post aliquot menses, volat ira per Anglinenses.”

Had such disturbances been interpreted as *pugnæ*, England could never have enjoyed five years of peace since she was the kingdom of kingdoms. But it was not so; they were regarded as but the casual effervescences of juvenile spirit, and no serious consequences ever attached or attributed to their occurrence.*

* Though Hartford College has been erased from the list, I should hope the window, from which Charles Fox made that illustrious leap upon one of these occasions, has been spared by the piety of the present Chancellor.

But to our story. Chisney and his companions, the wine of the Black Bear of Woodstock still fuming in their brains, were soon in the midst of the retreating togati; and our friend Reginald, drest in the splendid attire of a Doctor of Physic, could scarcely, under all the circumstances, be blamed for following their guidance. Jem Brank stuck close to the party, wielding in his fist the fine gold-headed cane of Mr Alderman Plumridge. At the same instant, a dozen or two of stout young fellows rushed out from Queen's and University, and the front began to stand firm once more; while the animating shouts of these new allies were heard with fear and dismay by their assailants, who never doubted that the whole of New College had turned out, and who had on many former occasions been taught abundantly, that the élèves of William of Wickham can handle the single stick with as much grace as ever their great founder did the wreathed crosier.

It was now that a terrible conflict ensued—a conflict, the fury of which might have inspired lightness, vigour, and elasticity, even into the paragraphs of a Bentham, or the hexameters of a

Southey—had either or both of these eminent persons been there to witness—better still had they been there to partake in, the genial phrenzy. It was now that “The Science,” (to use the language of Thalaba,) “made itself to be *felt*.” It was now that, (in the words of Wordsworth,) “the power of cudgels was a visible thing.” It was now that many a gown covered, as erst that of the Lady Christabelle,

“ half a bosom and a side !
A sight to dream of, not to see.”

It was now that there was no need for that pathetic apostrophe of another living Sonneteer—

“ Away all specious pliancy of mind
In men of low degree !”

For it was now that the strong Bargeman of Isis, and the strong Batchelor of Brazen-nose, rushed together “like two clouds with thunder laden,” and that the old reproach of “*Baculo potius*,” &c., was for ever done away with. It was now that the Proctor, even the portly Proctor, shewed

that he had sat at the feet of other Jacksons besides Cyril ;—

“ For he that came to preach, remained to play.”

In a word, there was an elegant tussle which lasted for five minutes, opposite to the side-porch of All-Souls. There the townsmen gave way ; but being pursued with horrible oaths and blows as far as Carfax, they rallied again under the shadow of that sacred edifice, and received there a welcome reinforcement from the purlieus of the Staffordshire Canal, and the ingenuous youth of Penny-farthing Street. Once more the tide of war was turned ; the gowned phalanx gave back—surly and slow, indeed, but still they did give back. On rolled the adverse and swelling tide with their “ few plain instincts and their few plain rules.” At every College gate sounded, as the retreating band passed its venerable precincts, the loud, the shrilly summons of—“ Gown ! Gown !”—while down each murky plebeian alley, the snoring mechanic doffed his night-cap to the alarum of—“ ‘Town ! ‘Town !” Long and loud the tumult con-

tinued in its fearful rage, and much excellent work was accomplished. Long and lasting shall be the tokens of its wrath—long shall be the faces of Pegge, Wall, Kidd, (and light shall be their hearts,) as they walk their rounds to-morrow morning—long shall be the stately stride of Ireland, and long the clysterpipe of West—long and deep shall be the probing of thy skilful lancet, O Tuckwell; and long shall all your bills be, and long, very long, shall it be ere some of them are paid. Yet, such the gracious accident, homicide was not.

A third furious battle took place on that fair and spacious area which intervenes between Magdalene's reverend front and the Botanic Garden. But the constables of the city, and the bull-dogs of the University, here at last uniting their forces, plunged their sturdy wedge into the thickest mass of the confusion. Many, on both sides, were right glad of a decent excuse, and dispersion followed. But up towards Holywell, and down towards Love Lane, and away over the waters of Charwell toward St Clement's parish, the war still

lingered in fragments, and was renewed at intervals.

Reginald, although a nimble and active young fellow, broad in the chest, narrow in the pelvis, thick in the neck, and lightsome in the region of the bread-basket, a good leaper, and a runner among ten thousand, was not, as has been formerly mentioned, a fencer ; neither was he a wrestler, nor a boxer, nor an expert hand at the baton. These were accomplishments, of which, his education having, according to Mr Macdonald's taunt, been "negleckit," he had yet received scarcely the slightest tincture. The consequence was, that upon the whole, though his exertions were neither few nor far between, he was, if mauling were sin, fully more sinned against than sinning. The last thing he could charge his memory withal, when he afterwards endeavoured to arrange its "disjecta fragmenta," was the vision of a brawny arm uplifted over against him, and the moon shedding her light very distinctly upon the red spoke of a coach-wheel, with which that arm appeared to be intimately connected.

CHAPTER V.

REGINALD had been awake, in a certain sense of the word, for some minutes, ere he could command anything like a recollection of what had passed. His head was hot, and there was a feeling both of numbness and of pain about his limbs, insomuch, that he could scarcely at first turn from one side to the other. A confused remembrance of noise, shouting, clamour, blows, flight, pursuit, rose within him. He made an effort, pulled aside his bed-curtains, and immediately perceived that he had not been taking his ease in his inn.

In fact, it was broad daylight, and when the curtain was withdrawn, he could see the open fields almost without lifting himself above the pillow on which his head had rested ; the features of the landscape were quite new to his eye, and he remembered, after a moment's consideration, that

the window of his bed-chamber at the inn had looked out upon a tall pile of Gothic building.

But besides all this, the room in which he found himself had no sort of appearance of belonging to a house of public entertainment. It was small, but neatly furnished; there were books lying about, and other symptoms of habitation. Above all, right opposite to him, there stood a sofa, with disordered bed-clothes heaped above the cushions, just as if some one had risen from a couch of temporary preparation.

He had gradually raised himself upon his bed while taking these observations, and a moment after, he heard footsteps as if ascending a wooden staircase. The door was gently opened, and Mr Keith stole softly into the room, treading on his stocking-soles. The old gentleman's abundant periwig had been replaced by a small scull-cap of black velvet, and his black coat by a short surtout of purple serge, and Reginald could scarcely have recognized him at first glance but for the sound of his voice. "Hah! my bonnie lad," he said, advancing on tip-toe to the bed-side, "so you're alive at last again? My word, ye've ta'en a braw

sleep on't, however.—Give me your hand, man—ha ! we'll do very well, a little heat, but nothing to speak of—no bones broken, no fears, no fears—let me look at your head, man ?”

So speaking, Mr Keith untied a handkerchief, lifted Reginald's night-cap off his brow, and applying a delicate finger all round the edges of a black patch of considerable magnitude, said,—“ Yes, yes, the swelling's nothing, nothing at all ; ye'll be ne'er a hair the worse for all that's happened. O dear ! Mr Dalton, I cannot say how glad I am to find things this way. What a sore heart it would have been if ye had gotten some serious injury, and a' for your kindness to a poor old man that ye never saw in your life before. Od, sir, I cannot say what I think about it. God be praised, God be praised, 'tis all well now.”

“ My dear sir,” said Reginald, “ I beg you will not distress me ; but my recollection is very much confused. Where am I ?—am I in your house, Mr Keith ?”

“ 'Deed are you, my young friend ; and I'm sure I may well bless Providence for the accident that enabled us to take you in. There was a terrible

hillibaloo on the road, and Ellen Hesketh came to my door and wakened me—I had just fallen over—and said there was a crowd of lads fighting, and a dead man lying beside our door. I rose up as fast as I could, man, but they were all away ere I could get out, and nothing left behind but an old hat or two, and the dead man, who, I am most heartily happy to say, has had a joyful resurrection.”

“ Myself ?” said Reginald.

“ Ay, just yourself ; we got warm vinegar and rubbed your brows, and as soon as we saw that there was nothing but the cut on your head—i’faith little Ellen was not three years in the Anton’s Kloster for nothing, man—we got ye all dressed and bandaged in no time, and into the bed wi’ you. Hoot, it will not be visible in two days time, man ; there’s a wonderful *vis renovatrix* about folk at your time of day—a glorious *vis renovatrix*. Rise up, man, and put on your clothes, we’ve kept the breakfast things on the table for you.”

“ What o’clock may it be ?” said Reginald.

“ That’s true,” quoth the priest, “ I had for-

gotten my watch ;” and with this he walked across the chamber towards the sofa, and took possession of a huge old-fashioned affair of gold chased work, which had been lying beneath the pillow.

“ My dear sir,” said Reginald, raising himself higher in his bed, “ I fear—Is it so ? I greatly fear you have slept there. God bless me, I have robbed you of your bed.”

“ Hoots, hoots, what’s a’ this about ? Never heed, my braw man.”

“ I am distressed, ashamed——”

“ Hold your tongue, hold your tongue, callant ; I’m an old campaigner.”

“ Indeed, indeed, my dear Mr Keith——”

“ Indeed, indeed, my dear Mr Dalton, ’tis past eleven o’clock, and your trunk’s at the door, and ye had mickle better rise up.”

So saying, the old gentleman dragged in Reginald’s portmanteau, and shaking his finger so as to cut short all further speechification, retreated out of the chamber. Our youth got out of bed with a little difficulty, but without delay ; and when he looked at the melancholy condition of the

coat in which he had travelled, he had good reason to thank his kind host for the precaution of sending to the inn for a new supply of raiment.

Reginald, on surveying his own image in the mirror, was a good deal startled with the whiteness of his countenance; but both this and the stiffness of his joints were very much gone ere he had finished his toilet, and at length he descended the staircase, looking perhaps rather more interesting than he might have done, had there been neither paleness nor patch. The old priest issued forth when he heard him coming down, and ushered him into the parlour where Miss Hesketh had coffee and toast ready for his reception. It may be taken for granted that he was in a condition for doing great justice to his breakfast, yet we should be giving a very false account of things, if we omitted to insinuate that the fair creature who sat by his side, and filled and refilled his cup for him, had a far greater share of his attention.

She spoke to him easily, kindly, gaily—praised him for his interference in Mr Keith's favour—half-roguishly questioned him about the after events of the evening—gave him playful little

hints about the propriety of keeping out of such scrapes for the future ; and all this she did in pure English, but with an accent about which there was something not less distinctly foreign than there was in the whole of her own appearance, dress, and demeanour. A beautiful girl, indeed, she was—a smile of gentle fearless innocence sat enthroned in her soft dark eyes ; and if now and then a shade of pensiveness hovered over their drooping lids, it was chased in a moment by the returning radiance of that young and virgin glee. Her rich raven tresses were gathered beneath a silken net upon the back part of her head, leaving the fair open front entirely unshaded ; and this, together with the style of her dress, which was plainer, fuller, and infinitely more *modest* than was at that time fashionable among English ladies, and the little golden cross, hung from a rosary of black beads about her neck, gave to the *toute ensemble* a certain grave and nun-like character—not perhaps the less piquant on account of the contrast which that presented to the cheerful and airy grace of her manners. There was such a total artlessness about every thing Miss Hes-

keth said and did, that Reginald, although but little accustomed to the society of young unmarried ladies, and full enough of those indescribable feelings which generally render unsophisticated young people shy and reserved in their first intercourse with others of a different sex, could not withstand the charming fascination, but spoke and smiled in his turn as if they had been old acquaintance.

How much of this ease on both sides might be the effect of the gay and kind old gentleman's presence, I cannot pretend to say. In all such cases, the influence of a *tertium quid* is, without question, powerful; and the fact is certain, that when, on a knock of rather alarming loudness coming to the door of the house, Mr Keith went out of the apartment in which they were sitting, the young couple, left to themselves, became suddenly as reserved as they had the minute before been the reverse. They were both sitting in silence—trifling, the one with his tea-spoon, and the other with her rosary, when, after the interval of a minute or two, Mr Keith re-entered the parlour in company with Frederick Chisney. “No apologies,”

he was saying—"no apologies, I pray, sir—you'll find Mr Dalton as well as a man can be that has had a tift overnight, and a sound sleep to come after it."

There were no traces about Chisney's exterior, of the affray in which he had borne so principal a part. Fresh in colour, gay in aspect, and dressed in the full academics of a Gentleman Commoner—one of the most graceful, certainly, of all European costumes—perhaps his fine person had never been exhibited to greater advantage than it was now. The moment he was introduced to Miss Hesketh, he began to lavish upon her all the nothings and everythings of easy, assured, accustomed gallantry; and, it must be confessed, that poor Reginald was not without some little feelings of rather a painful sort, when he observed with what perfect and fearless facility his handsome friend made prize of the young lady's attentions. After a little while, however, Mr Chisney, whether or not he had read something like a rebuke in the old priest's eye, stopt short suddenly in this "*beau chemin*," where, in spite of the adage, he was but too apt "*trop courir*." He rose from his seat,

and, observing that Reginald would have but little enough time to be entered before dinner, made his most respectful bow to Mr Keith and his fair niece.

The old man drew our youth back again for a moment, after Chisney had walked out of the room, and said in a whisper, once more cordially shaking him by the hand,—“ Now, take ye care o’ yourself, my dear Mr Dalton—take ye good care o’ yourself, my dear young man. You’re far from your friends, and you’ve got wild hempies enow to draw ye aside, if ye’ll but yield to them—take an old man’s advice, and look carefully to what ye do at the outset ; and, hear ye, Mr Dalton, I’ll take it very kind if you’ll sometimes spare a little o’ your time to come and see us here in our quiet dwelling. We live a very sober life, but we’ll aye have a mutton-chop for you, man, and a very hearty, hearty welcome.”

Reginald caught one of Miss Hesketh’s smiles—a grave, but still a very gentle one—ere he made a fitting answer to the old priest’s kind invitation. He then said that he would send for his portman-teau in the course of the morning, and joined

Chisney, who stood whistling beyond the threshold.

He took hold of Reginald's arm, and they had walked a few paces down Heddington Hill, ere any thing was said. It was Chisney who began. "By my faith," he said, with a malicious smile—"by my faith, Dalton, the old boy has a fair taste. She's a pretty creature, on my soul. Ah! hang them, leave them alone for choosing——"

"'Tis Mr Keith's niece," quoth Reginald, rather hastily. "I don't know what ye mean, Chisney, Miss Hesketh is——"

"His *niece*—ay, that's the play, is it? I thought, perhaps, *cousin* might have been the word."

"I really can't comprehend you. I never was more kindly treated in my life—he's a most respectable old gentleman, apparently; and Miss Hesketh, I am sure, you must allow——"

"Is a most charming creature. Certainly, Dalton, I said nothing against her eyes—they're as pretty a little wicked pair of eyes as ever I saw the devil nestled in."

“ I don't understand you. She seems to me to be a most amiable and interesting young lady.”

“ Ha ! ha !—most amiable and interesting, indeed ! Do you know how long it may be since she paid her last visit to the uncle in the country ?”

“ The uncle in the country ? I protest, I can't make any thing of what you say.”

“ Why, Gad-a-mercy, Reginald Dalton, are you really such a Johnny-*Raw* as this comes to ? Were you taken in, you foolish fellow ? Did you bite, *bonâ fide* ? Did you not smoke the monkey ?”

“ I know nothing of what you say. I saw nothing but a good kind old man, and a beautiful girl, who treats him as if she were his daughter. I really can't endure——”

“ Well, take your own way. *La petite Française*——”

“ She's no Frenchwoman, Chisney ; she's an Englishwoman, a Scotchwoman, I mean. At least her uncle is Scotch ; but they've been living a long time in Germany.”

“ In Germany ! better and better still. Sen-

timent to the collar-bone, you may swear. I suppose ye thought of Mynheer Werter and Mrs Charlotte, when she was spreading your toast for you."

"I don't know anything about Werter and Mrs Charlotte."

"No, no, I acquit you—nor about Mademoiselle Julie and Monsieur St Preux neither, I dare say. The Vicar kept no such filthy seductive books at Lannwell. You're pure, I see, quite pure—immaculate—intact. Well, I'll say nothing more about the matter." He added with another provoking smile, "*Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.*"

Reginald had seldom felt more inclined to be angry. Perhaps he had been a little sore with what passed ere they left Mr Keith's—but this sneering strain had much aggravated the feeling. He kept silence, however, for he saw that he had not the means of producing any change on Chisney's modes of thinking—but after a little while he said, abruptly, "I do not think I shall be of Christ-church, Chisney."

"I don't think it, neither," answered Frederick, drily; "for I made inquiry, and there's never a

room for any body until after Easter. But where will you go ?

“ I shall, in the first place, go to * * * College, if you will shew me where it stands, and consult my father’s friend, Mr Barton—I’ve got letters for him in my pocket.”

“ Well, please yourself, my hearty ; * * * is, after all, a fairish enough place—there’s some very good fellows of my acquaintance in * * *—several old Etonians—Dick Stukeley, and some others—very pleasant company indeed—You may pass your time very merrily at * * *.”

“ My purpose is to be a student, Chisney ; I mean to have nothing whatever to do with your dissipation.”

Chisney turned round, and staring him in the face, burst into a fit of incontrollable laughter. “ Nothing to do with *my* dissipation ? You mean to be a student, forsooth ! Why, am I no student, Mr Reginald ? Do you really suppose I have not as much Heathen Greek in my cap, as e’er a plodding jack-ass that chews Hederick within the ring of Tom ? Do you really imagine a man reads the worse for a spree overnight ? Hang it,

hang it, man ! I protest I'm ashamed of you—you'll take at least a term's combing, Reginald."

" I shall adhere to my resolution, Frederick."

" Well, well, please yourself in the meantime, however—I know you better than you do yourself, my hearty—by and by you'll come it gaily—no fear of you—But what's the use of prosing ? We're at the gateway—this is old * * *. Do you jump away, deliver your letter—you'll find him a rum one, I believe—I'll take a walk in the garden till you have done with him—but don't keep me kicking my heels longer than is necessary, for I have got to see you rigged at Theed's yet before dinner, you know."

These words were spoken beneath the shadow of a very old and venerable building—by no means one of the first-rate Colleges in Oxford, but one which has had the honour to maintain for many centuries a character of eminent respectability. Reginald, when he had passed the portal, and surveyed the modest and unpretending, but very beautiful architecture within—the quiet cloister, the graceful tower, the ivy-mantled windows—thought within himself that *here* he fain would be

at home. The old porter, who obeyed Chisney's thundering summons at the lodge, testified a good deal of surprise, when Reginald, with the letter in his hand, asked to be shewn to Mr Barton's apartments—but, after pausing for a moment, he said, "Certainly, sir, I shall deliver the letter, and perhaps Mr Barton may see you."

With this he preceded the young men along the cloister; and when he stopt at Mr Barton's stair-case, Chisney passed on towards the gardens.

CHAPTER VI.

MR DANIEL BARTON, of * * * College, was a man, the like of whom it would be in vain to seek for in England beyond the walls of Oxford or Cambridge. Though a keen and indefatigable student in his very early years, he had, during the latter part of his residence at the University as an Under-graduate, partaken more in the pleasures than in the labours of the place. His behaviour in this respect had considerably irritated his father, who had formed extravagant expectations from the precocious diligence of his boyhood. He left England for a season, and by forming an imprudent matrimonial connexion in a foreign country, aggravated so deeply his father's displeasure, that on the death of the old gentleman, which occurred very soon afterwards, he found himself cut off from the succession to a respectable family estate, and left in the world with no better

provision than a very trifling annuity. His pretty little Swiss did not live long enough to be much of a burden to his slender resources. She died abroad, and he, immediately on his return to England, came back to Oxford a melancholy and disappointed man.

He was fortunate enough to obtain a fellowship in * * * College very soon after this, and took possession of the chambers in which Reginald Dalton was now about to be introduced to him. Here his irritated temper did not prevent him from seeking and finding occupation and consolation in his books. The few old friends he then possessed in the University, being, ere long, taken away from his neighbourhood, and scattered over the world in various professions, his habits of reading became more and more his resource;—and at length they constituted his only one. The head of his own College was a man he did not like, and gradually the society of the common room, formed of course of this man's favourites, came to be quite irksome to him. In short, he had now for many years lived the life of a hermit—temperate to abstinence, studious to slavery, in utter soli-

tude, without a friend or a companion. Years and years had glided over a head scarcely conscious of their lapse. Day after day the same little walk had been taken exactly at the same hour; the same silent servant had carried in his commons; the arrival of a new box of *old* books had been his only novelty; his only visits had been paid to the Bodleian and the Clarendon.

His income, however, was so very limited, that necessity—particularly at the outset—would have made him willing enough to take a share in superintending the education of the young gentlemen at his College; but the Provost and he had never, as we have seen, been friends, and amidst abundance of more active competitors, it was nothing wonderful that he had remained, for far the greater part of his time, destitute of pupils. Now and then some accident threw a young man in his way—some old family or county connexion, or the like. When he had such a duty imposed on him, he had ever discharged it honestly and zealously; but very young men like to be *together* even in their hours of labour, and, great as, in process of time, Mr Barton's literary reputation

had grown to be, seldom was any one ambitious of profiting by his solitary instructions. His last pupil had left College more than a year ago, and the arrival of another was not only a thing altogether unexpected, but—occupied as he was in preparing an extensive and very laborious work for the press, and every day more and more wedded to his toil—it was a thing of which, if he thought of it at all, he certainly had never brought himself to be desirous.

Although the prime of his manhood was scarcely gone by, the habits of this learned Recluse had already stamped his person with something near a-kin to the semblance of age. His cheek was pale—his eye gleamed, for it was still bright, beneath grey and contracted brows; his front was seamed with wrinkles, and a meagre extenuated hand turned the huge folio page, or guided the indefatigable pen. Such was the appearance of one who had long forgotten the living, and conversed only with the dead, whose lamp had been to him more than the sun, whose world had been his chamber.

The studies to which he had chiefly devoted

his time were mathematical ; yet he had, long ere now, made himself a classical scholar of very high rank. Of modern literature he was almost entirely ignorant. It would have been difficult to find one English volume among every fifty in his possession, and certainly there was not one there that had been published for the last twenty years. Of all the lighter and more transitory productions which were at the moment interesting common readers, he knew no more than if they had been written in an antediluvian tongue. If anybody had asked him what was the last book of celebrity that had issued from the English press, he would probably have named Burke's *Reflections*, or Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* ; and it is not improbable that he would have named them with a sneer, and pointed in triumph to his *Demosthenes* or his *Athenæus*. Such a character may be taken for a mere piece of fancy-work ; yet how many are there among the inmates of those venerable cloisters, that, without having either deserted their *Common Rooms*, or earned premature greyness among the folios of ancient times, are con-

tented to know just as little about all such matters as satisfied Mr Barton !

Of recent events, he knew almost as little as of recent books. Excepting from the fasts and thanksgivings of the church—or perhaps from some old newspaper brought to him accidentally along with his supply of snuff or stationery—he heard rarely either of our triumphs or of our defeats. The old College servant who attended him daily in his chamber, had, long ere now, acquired the habit of performing his easy functions without disturbing him by many words ; and even the talkative vein of Jem Brank, who dressed Mr Barton's hair every Sunday morning, had learned, by degrees, the uncongenial lesson of restraint. In truth, the extraordinary seclusion in which he lived, the general opinion as to the greatness of his acquirements, the vague belief that some unfortunate event had saddened his mind and changed his pursuits, and the knowledge that there was some misunderstanding, or at least a very considerable coldness, between him and the more active members of the society to which he belonged

—these circumstances, taken altogether, had invested the ordinary idea of Mr Barton's character with a certain gloom of mystery—and the merriest menials of the place, even where the buttery hatch was double-barred, and the ale double stout, lowered their voices into whispers, if his name was mentioned.

Many long winters had elapsed since Mr Barton had even heard the name of his old acquaintance the Vicar of Lannwell, yet, when he had read Mr Dalton's letter, and received intimation that the young gentleman who had brought it was waiting at the door of his apartment, that affection with which all good men delight to remember the associates of their young and happy years, was at once revived in his heart. There was something both of tender and of sad in the smile with which he rose to welcome Reginald, but the pressure of his hand was warm and fervid. In surveying the blooming boy, he could not help recalling the merry days when he and the boy's father had worn cheeks as smooth, and curls as glossy. He turned round, half unconsciously, to a little mirror which hung over his chimney-piece,

and after regarding his own image there for a moment or two in silence, "Ah! young gentleman," he said, "it is now a long look to the time when your worthy father and I made acquaintance;—we have been cast on different courses of life, but I assure you it is very pleasant to me to hear of his welfare, and to see his son. Your father is well, and happy; I trust it is so, indeed." He added, almost in a whisper, "When we knew each other, I was the gayer of the two—perhaps it is otherwise now."

But, almost before Reginald had answered his inquiries about the good Vicar, Mr Barton had again seated himself on his accustomed chair, and his hand had instinctively resumed the pen. Though every now and then gazing for a moment on the young man's face, he did this with a look of vacant abstraction, and seemed, indeed, to be quite unable to keep his mind from the work in which he was engaged. A considerable number of minutes, therefore, elapsed before Reginald could command so much of his attention as to be able to make him understand that he had come thither with the intention of becoming a member

of * * *, and commencing his academical studies under his own direction.

This, however, once more roused him. After reflecting for a few moments, he rose from his chair, and said, in a very kind manner, “ Indeed, Mr Dalton, I know not very well what to say to this ; I am exceedingly happy to see the son of my old friend, and any assistance I can give should surely be given to him with gladness. But I have fallen out of the way of these things, Mr Dalton ; I have forgotten, and I have been forgotten ; there are other and more active people here, and I must just whisper into your ear, that I don’t think our Provost will be disposed to receive you the more graciously because *I* introduce you.”

“ You are my father’s friend,” answered Reginald ; “ it is under your care he will think I am the safest—and indeed, indeed, sir, I beg you to take me, for I have seen enough already to be convinced that I shall be surrounded with temptation, and I would fain, very fain, have my father’s friend to be my guardian.”

“ Ay, indeed,” said Barton ; “ you speak very seriously, my young friend. It is not so that

young gentlemen for the most part look on things when they come hither for the first time. I pray you, tell me has anything happened to you?— Can I do anything for you?”

“Nay, indeed, sir,” said Reginald; “I want nothing but that you should take me for your pupil. I have a gay young friend here, who, if you do not, may, I fear, place me where I should be less safe, and where I shall, therefore, be less happy. Indeed, sir, I desire to be diligent, and to please my father. I would very fain have your guidance.”

“Then you shall have it,” answered Barton, seriously; “you shall have what I can give you. Look round here; you shall command my library, and you shall spend a couple of hours every day with me; but more, I fear, I cannot promise you. You must exert yourself, my young friend, and you must trust to *yourself*.”

“I hope to be a hard reader, sir,” said the youth, “and I mean to live as retiredly as is possible.”

“Nay, nay,” quoth Mr Barton, “I must not hear you speak quite so, neither. You are young, the world is before you; you are to be a man and

a citizen, and you must not think to spend your days here as if you were destined to become an old monkish fixture like myself." Reginald was rather at a loss for any answer to this, but while he was hesitating, the Recluse proceeded.—“ This is my *home*,” he said ; “ I shall live and die among these old towers, Mr Dalton. I have bid adieu to the world long ago, and I know little of what is passing in it. But you, sir, are like to have duties and occupations of another sort ; for these you can only fit yourself by learning the world’s learning, and living amidst the world. No, no, my young friend, read, study, make yourself a scholar, and *there* command my poor help such as it is—but mix freely with your contemporaries, indeed you must do so—live with them, and learn of them—you will, I doubt not, find amiable, honourable friends, friends that will be like brothers to you now—ay, and remember you long after this with the kindness of brothers. He that has made no friends in his youth, will scarcely find them in his manhood, and perhaps he may miss them sorely in his age.”

There was something of solemnity in his way of saying these things—so much so, that young Reginald listened without thinking of making any answer. The pensive scholar cast a look round his chamber, as if to say, Behold *my* friends! and, resuming his seat, said, “Excuse me for a very few moments, and I shall go with you to the Provost.”

He began writing eagerly, and continued to do so for perhaps a quarter of an hour, without taking any further notice of Reginald's presence. The boy, meanwhile, full of serious thoughts and high resolutions, perused the chamber of the learned hermit round and round, as if he had expected the inspiration of lore to be breathed from its walls. The room was part of a very ancient building, and every thing about it was stamped with antiquity. The high roof of dark unvarnished oak—the one tall, narrow window, sunk deep in the massy wall—the venerable volumes with which the sides of the apartment were everywhere clothed—the bare wainscot-floor, accurately polished, but destitute of carpetting, excepting

one small fragment under the table—the want of furniture—for there were just two chairs, and a heap of folios had been dislodged, ere he himself could occupy one of them—the chillness of the place too, for, although the day was frosty, there was no fire in the grate—all these, together with the worn, emaciated, and pallid countenance of the solitary tenant, and the fire of learned zeal which glowed so bright in his fixed and stedfast, but nevertheless melancholy eye, impressed Reginald with a mingled feeling of surprise, of admiration, of reverence, and of pity.

Mr Barton rose when he had come to the end of his paragraph, locked his desk, and retired to his bed-chamber, to which he had access by a small stair-case, constructed in the turret that flanked his apartments. He returned in a few minutes, after having laid aside the dressing-gown in which he was accustomed to study, and assumed the only other garb in which he had appeared for a long course of years—his academical cap and gown. “ We will now go at once to the Provost,” he said, “ for it is improper that you

should be another day in Oxford without becoming a member of the University.”

The apartments of the Head of the Society presented a very different sort of appearance from those of the recluse and laborious Senior Fellow of * * *. Reginald was conducted, in short, into a very handsome house, furnished in every part in a style of profuse modern luxury, such as perhaps did not quite accord either with the character of the edifice to which it belonged, or with the form and structure of the different apartments themselves. After waiting for a considerable time in a large and lofty room, where chintz curtains and ottomans, elegant paper hangings, and splendid pier-glasses, contrasted strangely enough with a great Gothic window, of the richest monastic painted glass, a roof of solid stone, carved all over with flowers, mitres, shields of arms, and heads of martyrs, and a fire-place, whose form and dimensions spoke it at least three centuries old—they were at last admitted into the presence of the Provost. He received them in his library—what a different kind of library from that which Reginald had

just left ! New and finely bound books, arranged in magnificent cases of glass and mahogany—the Courier, a number of the Quarterly, and a novel of Miss Edgeworth, reposing on a rose-wood table covered with a small Persian carpet—some of Bunbury's caricatures, coloured and in gilt frames—a massive silver standish, without a drop of ink upon its brilliant surface—deep soft chairs in red morocco—a parrot-cage by the window—and a plump pet poodle upon the hearth-rug—these were among the by no means “*curta supellex*,” of this more mundane “thinking shop.”—A gay-looking junior fellow and chaplain was caressing the poodle, and the Head himself, a rubicund old gentleman in grand canonicals and a grizzle-wig, was seated in a dignified posture in a superb *fau-teuil*, while a padded foot-stool sustained in advance his gouty left leg.

Reginald, who had just been told by Mr Barton himself, that he and the Provost were upon very indifferent terms, had naturally expected to see them meet with cold looks ; but he was quite mistaken. This haughty old Ecclesiastic was far too much the man of the world to carry his

heart upon his sleeve, and he welcomed the pale recluse with smiles of the softest, and speeches of the politest order. “ My dear Mr Barton,” said he, “ I am *so* happy to see you again ; I began to think you had really quite buried yourself alive ; and I am so doubly happy to see you with a pupil in your hand. I beg you to be seated, Barton, and you, my young gentleman—didn’t you say the name was Dalton, Barton ?—do you, too, find a chair for yourself, Mr Dalton.—Well, Barton, and how does the *magnum opus* get on ? Ah ! you shake your head, but I hear fine things of it notwithstanding. Well, you are determined that old * * * shall hold up her head one day, however.—But to business, to business.—Ainsworth, don’t hurt old Bab’s ear, my dear fellow—Just reach me the Buttery-book, Ainsworth, that we may see what rooms are vacant.”

Mr Ainsworth’s fond attachment for the poodle did not prevent him from instantly complying with the request of the Superior. The Mighty Book was unclasped and expanded before the Provost, and he, after mounting his spectacles, and running over a few columns, said, “ Ha ! ’tis

very fortunate this indeed. I find there's a very nice little set of rooms at your service, Mr Dalton—small but comfortable—rent a trifle—furniture neat—*thirds* moderate—yes, yes, just what one could have wished—they belonged to a very pretty young man who was drowned in the Charwell last summer. I hope you are no swimmer, Mr Dalton—be sure you don't get into the Charwell in cold weather—nothing stands against cramp, sir—we must not have you go the same way with poor little Polewhele.—Ainsworth, you'll see the Manciple, and desire Polewhele's rooms to be got ready immediately for Mr Dalton.—Here, Mr Dalton, I need not ask if you're sixteen years of age—Reach me the Testament and Parecbole off the chimney-piece, Ainsworth.—Come now, Mr Dalton, kiss the book, and Ainsworth will swear you in for me.”

The passive youth, of course, took all the oaths they proposed to him. He renounced in due form the Devil, the Pope, the Pretender, and the authority of the Mayor of Oxford. He swore that he would never believe any thing but what is written in the xxxix Articles of the Church of Eng-

land—he swore that he would never miss the prayers, the lectures, or the dinners of his College—he swore that he would wear clothes “coloris nigri aut subfusci,” and cut according to the University pattern, (which, by the way, has undergone no alteration since the time of Charles II.)—he swore that he would never “nourish whiskers or curls,” nor indulge in “absurdo illo et fastuoso publicé in ocreis ambulandi more,” which means, being interpreted, “that absurd and arrogant fashion of walking publicly in boots or gaiters”—he swore that he would never drive a tandem, nor neglect to cap a master of arts, nor acknowledge the University of Ipswich*—in short, Jeremy Bentham’s “Church-of-Englandism” had not yet seen the light, and so Reginald, whatever scruples he might have entertained, had the thing occurred at a subsequent and more enlightened period, never dreamt of hesitating to do that which his fathers had done before him, and which it is by no means improbable, his children and his

* There *was* an attempt to establish such a university about four hundred years ago.

children's children, if he ever have any, may do after him.

All the oaths being sworn, and all the fees being paid, Mr Barton, Mr Ainsworth, and Reginald, quitted the Provost's lodge together. Mr Barton, drawing the youth aside for a moment, whispered that he could be of no farther service for the present, and that he should expect a visit from him the next day after breakfast. With this the recluse returned to his cell; and Mr Ainsworth, summoning manciples, porters, bed-makers, and a whole crowd of subordinate functionaries about him, quickly completed all the arrangements that were necessary for the installing of Reginald in his apartments. The youth, after seeing his rooms, and sending for his baggage, made the best of his way into the College gardens, where Chisney was still expecting him, in the midst of a merry group, whose game at bowls his advent had interrupted.

Mr Frederick, after introducing our youth to some of his future messmates, proposed walking down the High-street, and favouring him with his advice at the tailor's and elsewhere.

Reginald was rather astonished, after all that had happened the night before, by the utter *non-chalance* with which Chisney entered the precincts of Mr Theed, and still more by the bland and courteous reception which the tailor gave him. To say truth, the many breaches which the night's work had occasioned in the continuity of silks and broad-cloths had quite consoled Teddy Major for those which had taken place upon the skin of Teddy Minor. He bowed the gentlemen into his shop, where that promising young man, now the most humble and obsequious of all disconsolate dandies, was cutting out new gowns and caps, to replace those which had been torn and shattered by the violence of his brother *Oppidani*. A green shade protected the damaged eye, and but for that unfortunate memorial of the affray, there was certainly nothing about Mr Theed, junior, which could have led any one to imagine that he could ever have lifted an irreverent hand against the smallest shred of the sable vestment of Rhedycina. The abject submission of his present demeanour was, however, an apology of which Mr Chisney deigned not to take any notice, until the over-

flowing chat of the officious mother forced it upon his attention.

“ Now goodness have gracious mercy upon me !” she said, curtsying into the shop, with a well-furnished salver in her hand—“ Now how should I be mistaken—I was sure it was Mr Chisney I heard. Now do, your honours, do take a glass of my own bottle, that I may be certain sure bygones are bygones. O Mr Chisney, what a night did I pass ! never a wink had I, Mr Chisney. Mr Theed, says I, are you asleep, says I ? are you asleep, Mr Theed, upon all this, and perhaps never put in a stitch for Christ-church again as long as your name’s Teddy Theed ?—Now doey, my dear good Mr Chisney, doey now take a drop of my orange-water—and you, Teddy Theed, Teddy Theed, I say, is your eye so black that you can’t see the gentlemen ? Why aren’t you down on your knees, you good-for-nothing —— ? —cutting, cutting ! marking, marking !—O Teddy Theed, it may well be seen that you’ll bring our grey hairs in sorrow to our grave ! You’ll be discommons’d, sirrah !—do you hear me, you’ll be discommons’d ere you die, I say, and then what

will become of us?—a name, Mr Chisney, that has been known in Oxford for these fifty, ay, for these hundred of years. Down, down on your knees, I say, Teddy Theed.”

“ Lord bless you, ma’am,” cries Chisney, “ what the devil is all this rumpus about now? Teddy has got a black eye from the Papist Priest, and I’m sure that’s sufficient punishment for him.”

“ Punishment! Mr Chisney!—you were always a civil, well-spoken, sweet-tempered gentleman—that’s your name, Mr Chisney—from Magdalene Bridge to the Castle there’s ne’er a dog will bark at that, Mr Chisney—but Teddy Theed’s got no punishment from them that should have given him his punishment. O Mr Chisney, ’tis not what you or any respectable gentleman of the University pleases to do, that I would ever have said a word about—but when I thinks of the Papist, Mr Chisney—when I thinks of that, as I was saying—O sir, my blood boils!—(here she tasted her own cordial)—when I thinks of a vile old Roman Antichrist Papish—when I thinks of *him* going for to dare to lift his hand to our Teddy Theed!—Oh! Mr Chisney!”

Young Teddy, espying his opportunity, cou-

trived, while his mother's glass was at her head, to sneak into another and obscurer part of the house. Old Teddy had also been on the watch, and he at the same moment broke in with such a voluminous speech about coats, waistcoats, breeches, &c. which he said it would be absolutely necessary for Mr Dalton to have, that the good dame found herself quite cut out. She had *tact* enough, however, to perceive that the young gentlemen were more taken up with old Teddy's pattern-book than with young Teddy's pardonable and pardoned transgressions. Setting down the salver, therefore, upon the board, but carefully retaining possession of the bottle, she, in her turn, shuffled out of view, curtseying and simpering to vacancy, however, until she had got fairly beyond the threshold of the only apartment in those premises, where her rule was ever disputed.

All proper or improper arrangements having been completed here and at some other shops, Chisney reconducted our hero to the gates of his College; and there he would have left him for the day, but his acquaintance, Dick Stukeley, one

of the many most unstoical loungers at the porch, prevailed on the Christ-church-man to promise that he would for once share the humble fare of * * * Hall, and spend the evening in his rooms, in company with the Westmoreland Freshman.

CHAPTER VII.

“ FROM the days of Athenæus to those of Dr Johnson,” says the philosophic D’Israeli, “ the pleasures of literature have ever been heightened by those of the table ;” and indeed, long before I read the sentence, it had often struck me, that such a man as D’Israeli himself might compose a very edifying octavo “ On Books and Cooks, or the Connexion between the Love of Learning and the Love of Eating.” A great Encyclopædia “ Sale-Dinner” in The Row, by Cruikshanks, would certainly form the most appropriate of frontispieces.

Our ingenious and estimable “ *detector curiositatum*” might begin with the ancients. The Mæonian has, from time immemorial, been christened “ *Vinosus Homerus* ;” but the delight with which he seizes upon every opportunity of singing solid dinners and savoury suppers, might have safely warranted an epithet of more extensive

meaning. Pindar's charioteering heroes always go home to a smoking-table, when the race is over; Euripides half tempts one to sympathize even with the barbarous raptures of the cannibal Polyphemus; the great Kitchener himself might borrow a thousand phrases depictive of the most fervid, and at the same time refined, gluttonous enjoyment from Aristophanes; Lucian cannot *allude* to such subjects—he pauses in his most aerial flight, and *expatiates*;—Nay, even Plato himself commences many of his most sublime Dialogues with elaborate and *con amore* descriptions of the delicious shell-fish, which were consumed ere the conversation had leisure to flow.—It is the same with all the Romans worth mentioning. That man is little to be envied, who can read Horace with a dry mouth; Cæsar, as Cicero commendingly observes, “*Post cœnam evomere solebat, ideoque largius edebat.*” Juvenal never denounces a luxury, until he has made one wish to have dined with the sumptuous subject of his satire; and as for Petronius, the most learned Petronius, does not that one simple, nervous, exquisite, and conclusive expression, “*Gula ingeniosa mihi et docta,*”

shew how well he merited to be revered as the “*Arbiter Elegantiarum*,” by the eating as well as the reading public of his elegant time?

The Spaniards have got the character of being the most abstemious of European peoples; but their books are enough to prove that this is quite a mistake. All their Vocabulary is saturated with an intense exalted spirit of gormandizing, and every one must feel, upon the very threshold, how much more is expressed in their stately, solemn, and musical *golotoneria*, than in the coarse and cacophonous term which our own language has borrowed from it. In *Lazarillo de Tormes*, there is a whole page upon one slice of bacon. The rigid and austere style of the author of *Guzman d'Alfarache* is at once swelled and softened, when a luscious melon, or a cold partridge-pasty, is the theme. Cervantes, had he not been a keen lover of good things, could never have thrown so pathetic an interest over the abstracted dainties of the Governor of Barataria; doubtless his own soul breathes in the eloquent eulogies of the rich Camacho's wedding-feast, and still more so in Sancho's solitary adorations of the never-to-be-forgotten leveret-pic.—There are no entertainments

on record more delicious than the little Florentine suppers sketched by Boecaccio and his followers. Berni is more than himself, when he paints the luxury of eating a nice dish *alone* and *in bed*; and whenever there is a tid-bit in Ariosto, it seems to refresh himself as much as his heroes.—What ideas of passionate ecstatic devouring does not the very name of Rabelais, recall! Moliere—that name, too, is enough. A weekly dinner at M. Conrart's was the origin of the Academie Française! Le Sage (see Dr King's Anecdotes) was the most delicate of epicures. The whole of the French literature of the last age is woven through and through with *petits soupers*, as well as *petites maisons*. Fontenelle, when his friend, who liked butter to his asparagus, fell down in an apoplexy just as dinner was announced, ran, “the first thing,” to the head of the stair-case, and screamed, “*toute a l'huile!*—*toute a l'huile!*” The suppers of Julie and St Preux are as *voluptuous* as any other incidents in their history; and yet imagination yields the *pas* to fond memory, where Rousseau confesses those with which the Warens nurtured himself,—

“ When first he sigh’d in woman’s ear,
The soul-felt flame,
And blush’d at every sip to hear
The one loved name.”

It is no matter of what sort the eatable that is dwelt upon may be. The principle is safe when Goethe’s Charlotte spreads the bread and butter—when Schiller’s Wolff raves about the fried tripe of the Banditti—when the enormous boar smokes with half his bristles about him on the table of Biorn The One-eyed in Sintram—but indeed, as for these Germans, it would be quite absurd to go into any particulars about them. Their whole ideas are penetrated and suffused with the fumes of fat things; and their language has as many affectionately accurate, and precise epithets to denote the charms of individual greasy dishes, as ever were invented by the poets of any other nation under the inspiration of Almighty Love himself. Nor, to say the truth, are we ourselves much better than our Teutonic kindred. From Chaucer to Burns gulosity floats buoyant on the British Castalie. We are more especially rich in songs about good eating. There is more true serious nature in “Great chieftain of the pudding race,” than in fifty “Alexander’s *feasts*,” where

not one single dish is immortalized. Butler died for want of the thing he liked best in the world—a dinner. Pope's great favourite was a veal cutlet, with lemon sauce, stewed in a silver pan. Swift endured all the Achesons on account of my lady's having a good cook ;—even the homely legs of mutton and turnips at poor Sheridan's, are described by him in a tone of unusual tenderness. Thomson borrowed more from Berni than “ the Castle of Indolence,” for he was fond of eating in bed, and always did so when visited by the Muse. Lady Mary Wortley Montague says, that Fielding's spirits could at any time be raised from the lowest depths of melancholy by the sight of a venison-pasty ; and accordingly all his heroes are gourmands ;—the cold round of Upton beef takes precedence of Mrs Waters with Tom Jones ; and Parson Adams is as fond of stuffing as Parson Trulliber. I should suspect that the author of Guy Mannering, the Antiquary, and Nigel, is fond of grouse soup, friars' chicken, and cockeye-leekie—and to jump at a conclusion, where nature and art have made none, John Wilkes—the “ dog,” the “ rascal,” the “ scoundrel” John Wilkes—won Samuel Johnson's heart, by helping him to

the brown part of Mr Strahan's roasted veal. In fact, there is something in the substantial nature of eating that has always harmonized in the most perfect manner with the character of English Genius. Our literature is that of an eminently dining nation—it is such as beseems a people accustomed in all its transactions to consider a sirloin as the *sine quâ non*—whose hypocrites cannot harangue, whose dupes cannot subscribe, whose ministers do not consult, and whose assassins scarcely dream of stabbing—elsewhere than at a dinner. The ruling passion is strong even in our superstitions—A seductive steam rises from the cauldron of a British Witch—and the ghosts of other people are contented with ruined houses, churchyards, and solitary midnight—but with us they are not scared by bells or chandeliers—they beard laughter and lackeys, and “push” supping usurpers “from their stools.”

But the last and most consummate union of the love of cooks and letters was reserved for that “little, plump, round oily man of God,” the Reverend Thomas Frognall Dibdin. His “Tour” should have been called “Daitographical” as well as “Bibliographical;” for it is at least as full of

rich dishes as of rare editions. He dallies in the same style with *dindons* and *duodecimos*—he fondles folios and fowls with equal fervour. He describes an Aldus as if it were an Omelet, an Omelet as if it were an Aldus. We hear of a “crisp fifteneer” in the one page, and of a “crisp fricassee” in the other. His admiration hesitates between Caxton and Kitchener—between Valdarfer and Very. And when, on leaving Paris, he gave a dinner at his favourite restaurateur’s to a dozen of the primest French Bibliomaniacs, an illuminated representation of old Wynken de Worde gleamed behind the chair of the Amphytrion Eruditus, and every flask of Chambertin on the festal board was flanked by “AN UNCUT EDITIO PRINCEPS.”

Yet it is perhaps in the descriptions of his visits to some of the old monasteries on the Danube, that his double enthusiasm is at the highest pitch. He arrives, *un beau matin*, within view of the Convent of MÖLK—he breakfasts leisurely at the foot of the hill on which it stands—he ascends and delivers his credentials—he is conducted by the hospitable fathers through all their venerable cloisters, and is at length received beneath the

vaulted roof of their library. With what a flow of eloquence does he retrace the beautiful illuminated MSS., the *Libri Rarissimi*, the unique etchings and wood-cuts, the peerless missals! Suddenly the clock strikes twelve, and the *Frater Bibliothecarius* whispers, "Dinner!"—Instantly springs up a new, but kindred train of recollections—the hasty walk to the refectory, the antique splendour of that noble hall, the assembled brethren, the presiding Abbot, the solemn Grace, the beautiful boar's-head, the bursting haunch, the long-necked cob-webbed bottles, the tall old glasses with arsenic ornaments within the stalk, the balmy Johannisberg, the mild Markbrunner, the heavenly Hockheimer, the friendly ring of the saluting bumpers, the joyous stave of the old chaplain, the crafty bargain about the Boccaccio negotiated *inter pocula*, the western sun staining with admonitory glories the painted window over against the successful negociator, the sudden half-sorrowful, half-ecstatic departure.—There is a life and truth about the whole affair that must send their charm into every bosom, and force, even from the man that prefers a book to a title-page, a momentary echo of,

“ I should like to dine with this Nongtong-paw.”

His animated view of what a dinner *is* at Molk, may furnish one, it is probable, with no inadequate notion of what a dinner *was*, in the good olden time, beneath the long dismantled arches of our own Sweetheart, or St Alban's. The external features of an old English monastery are still perceived in our academical *hospitia*, but, alas! a dinner there is now shorn of much of its fair proportion, and presents, at the best, but a faint and faded image of the "glories of eld."

Enough, nevertheless, of the ancient form and circumstance is still preserved, to impress, in no trivial measure, the imagination of him who, for the first time, is partaker in the feast—and it was so with our hero. The solemn bell, sounding as if some great ecclesiastical dignitary were about to be consigned to mother earth—the echoing vestibule—the wide and lofty staircase, lined with serving-men so old and demure that they might almost have been mistaken for so many pieces of grotesque statuary—the hall itself, with its high lancet windows of stained glass, and the brown obscurity of its oaken roof—the yawning chimnies with their blazing logs—the long narrow

tables—the elevated dais—the array of gowned guests—the haughty line of seniors seated in stall-like chairs, and separated by an ascent of steps from the younger inmates of the mansion—the Latin grace, chaunted at one end of the hall, and slowly re-chaunted from the other—the deep silence maintained during the repast—the bearded and mitred visages frowning from every wall—there was something so antique, so venerable, and withal so novel in the whole scene, that it was no wonder our youth felt enough of curiosity, and withal, of a certain sort of awe, to prevent him for once from being able to handle his knife and fork quite *à la Roxburgher*.

These feelings, of course, were not partaken by the rest of the company, least of all, by the senior and more elevated portion of it. The party at “The High Table” of * * *, was as usual an active, and, as it happened on this day, it was by no means a small one. Red faces grew redder and redder as the welcome toil proceeded—short fat necks were seen swelling in every vein, and ears half-hid by luxuriant periwigs could not conceal their voluptuous twinklings; vigorously plied the

elbows of those whose fronts were out of view ; the ceaseless crash of mastication waked the endless echoes of the vaulted space over-head ; and airy arches around, mimicked and magnified every gurgle of every sauce-bottle. The stateliness of the ceremonial, and the profoundness of the general silence all about, gave to what was, after all, no more than a dinner, something of the dignity of a festival—I had almost said something of the solemnity of a sacrifice. A sort of reverend zeal seemed to be gratified in the clearing of every platter, and the purple stream of a bumper descended with the majesty of a libation.

In the Under-graduates' part of the hall, the feast was, of course, less magnificent ; and among them the use of wine is altogether prohibited—a distinction, on this occasion, sufficiently galling, considering how incessantly they were passed by the manciple bearing decanters to the superior region. But the dinner itself was no sooner over than the fellows rose from their chairs, and another Latin thanksgiving having been duly chaunted, descended in solemn procession from their pride of place, and followed the guidance of the

manciple, who, strutting like a Lord Mayor's beadle, marshalled the line of march to the common room. Thither no non-graduate eye might follow the learned phalanx—there, might no profane ear catch the echo of their whispered wisdom.

The moment they were supposed to be beyond reach of ear-shot, there arose as loud a gabble as if publicans and sinners had, by a *coup-de-main*, taken absolute possession of The Temple—leaping, dancing, shouting in every direction—whistling, sparring, wagering, wrestling—a Babel of Babels!

This, however, was but for a few minutes, until the servants had removed the fragments, and were at liberty to quit the hall along with their masters. By that time they had all made up their parties for the evening—all but a few pensive and disappointed lingerers by the fire-side—and, in the midst of an universal dispersion, Chisney and Reginald were conducted to the apartments of Mr Stukely, where copious preparations had already been made for the entertainment of a numerous, but select company, of bachelors and under-graduates.

Mr Stukeley's rooms were among the most spa-

cious in the College, and being a young man of considerable fortune, he had furnished them in a style of rather more expensive elegance than is common in the place. There was no want of handsome sofas and hangings; a very pretty collection of classics occupied one end of the parlour; and over the mantle-piece were suspended some comely prints—a mezzotinto of Dr Parr in the “*μεγα θαυμα*”—the *Chapeau de Paille* for the *pendant*—and in the centre, between the Beauty and the Bluebeard, a whole-length of The Game Chicken, peeled and attitudinizing. A tasteful enough dessert graced the table, and strong rough port, “the liquor of men,” the long-established potation of High-Church, was soon circulating with rapidity, and exerting all its potent influences among these future champions of orthodoxy.

There long prevailed a notion that old battered soldiers were worth double their weight of young and inexperienced ones in the blaze of battle; yet all history was against the absurdity. Hannibal’s iron-faced Carthaginians beat the Roman veterans at Cannæ, and were afterwards demolished by recruits. At Pharsalia, it went much the same way;

and Tilly's "rough old lads," as De Foe calls them, could scarcely stand for ten minutes against the beardless and blooming warriors of the Swede. In our own day, too, both Napoleon and Wellington have confirmed *the truth*. The Austrian chivalry were checked by French *boys* at Leipsig; and Waterloo was gained by heroes who had, for the most part, never heard before, and who, thanks to their own prowess, are not likely to have any future opportunities of hearing, the music of Charles XII.

A similar, and equally ridiculous "vulgar error" about drinking, ought, without farther delay, to be exposed and exploded. From eighteen to two-and-twenty, is the prime of a man's life, so far as the bottle is concerned. There are, to be sure, many and illustrious exceptions. We do meet every now and then with a stout Septuagenarian—a hoary doctor of divinity who would as soon dream of flying as of flinching, a pillar of the church whom no doze can shake—"a reverend old man, full of years," who could, at any time, either over the pulpit or the punch-bowl, lay fifty Edinburgh Reviewers on their backs. In like

manner, among squires, and among farmers, and more frequently still, among led captains and Highland chiefs, the drinking faculty is occasionally retained at least as long as any other. But these are but the exceptions to a great general rule. Poll the island over, and I fear not to assert, that nine out of every ten men, at the lowest calculation, will give their votes in favour of the youthful toper. Perhaps in his case, as well as in the parallel one of the young soldier, the very ignorance of the danger may be in some measure the source of its repulsion. But in both cases, the chief part of the praise is due to nothing but youth, glorious YOUTH itself. Elastic spirits, light hearts, and untouched nerves, go far in either feat; and the dancing boiling blood of the raw hero, does not sustain him more triumphantly amidst the smoke of his first field, than a firm, sound, unseasoned, and unbilified stomach does the young Bachanalian at his initiatory symposium.

Accordingly, these young collegians acquitted themselves in a manner that perhaps no committee of the CAPUT, however venerable for years and erudition, could have rivalled. The old laws of

potation were enforced rigidly, and, for the most part, obeyed without a murmur. Two words of Latin cost the unfortunate person from whose lips they had slipped a bumper, and a single word of Greek incurred the same penalty ; but if the classical transgressor had exceeded these limits, he was compelled to expiate his offence by emptying a half-pint cup, fashioned in silver after the image of a fox's head ; and, finally, if he failed to do this at a single pull, that sin of sins was sconced in the same measure of salt and water. Such delinquencies, however, were rare. Steady hands filled the brimming glasses—light and happy hearts prompted toast and song—gaily, freely, carelessly, kindly did they talk, and Reginald said to himself, a thousand and a thousand times over, that he had at length found the terrestrial Elysium.

A few of the young gentlemen quitted the party when the chapel-bell rung for evening prayers, but the chairman took good care that Reginald should guess nothing of their errand. They returned when service was over, and duly drank, with perilous rapidity, as many bumpers as had

passed round the table in their absence ; and, in short, the blackstrap was plied without intermission, until the announcement of supper, which, that no time might be lost in trifles, had been served up in the adjoining apartments of one of Mr Stukely's company.

A small barrel of pickled oysters—some brawn, veined with more exquisite red and white than ever beautified a slab of Anglesea marble—and sausages, such as Oxford alone can produce [for though a Christina lectured at Pisa, no Dorothy ever cooked at Bologna]—these formed the simple repast ; but the board was adorned with such a display of massive plate as might almost have reconciled one to the supper of the Barmecide. It has been, time out of mind, the custom at Oxford, for young gentlemen, in quitting the precincts of Alma Mater, to leave with the College which has nursed them, some memorial of their gratitude and affection, in the shape of cup, tankard, or flagon. In most Colleges, but especially in the few that were less distinguished for their loyal zeal in the time of Charles I. the accumulation of such vessels has, in the course of so

many centuries, come to be immense. * * * College was one of these, and her butler had now loaded the private supper-table of an under-graduate with an array of *Doctors, Masters, and Scholars*,—for so, according to their several degrees of capacity, they are distinguished in the academical phraseology—such as might have done no dishonour to the side-board of any British Peer. Such a collection of College plate can scarcely be regarded without some interest; for the chances are, that every now and then the legend on the lid of the piece recalls the name and glory of some long-departed worthy of England; and here, as it happened, the gifts of one of the greatest of our modern heroes, and one of the greatest of our ancient poets, stood side by side upon the board—each of them—to quote Rochester, whose own huge D. D. is still the honour of Wadham—

“ So large that, fill’d with England’s potion,
 Beer-billows to the brim,—
 Vast toasts in the delicious ocean,
 Like English ships might swim.”

But although “mild ale” has often enough been celebrated as “the milk of good doctrine,” by

Tom Warton, and other bards of the Sausage School, such a beverage can never expect to be largely relished after the stomach has been saturated with the more pungent stimulants of cold port and hot chesnuts. Accordingly, Jem Brank, a pluralist, who had for thirty years enjoyed, among many other good things, the sole privilege of manufacturing Bishop for the sons of * * *, soon made his appearance with a most magnificent flagon of that never-to-be-resisted potation. Wine is mulled everywhere, but BISHOP is Oxonian, and Reginald, who had never tasted either *Pope* or *Cardinal*,* was compelled to acknowledge, without hesitation, its unrivalled claims. Mr Brank, however, did not seem to have himself any higher predilection for Bishop, than a grocer usually entertains for figs, or a parson for sermons. Being invited, according to use and wont, to seat himself at a side-table and sing a song to the juvenile company, Jem preferred, for the associate of his separate board, what old Bishop

* Port, mulled with roasted lemons, is BISHOP; Claret, similarly embellished, is CARDINAL; and Burgundy, POPE.

Andrews so happily calls “ the sprite of the but-
tery, a pot of good ale ;” and under its inspira-
tion, chaunted in a voice as rich, soft, and mellow
as his theme—

“ When the chill Sirocco blows,
And Winter tells a heavy tale,
When pyes and daws, and rooks and crows,
Do sit and curse the frosts and snows,
Then give me ale,” &c.

It may be taken for granted that the youthful
members of the party did not leave all the music
to the humble and hoary minister of their plea-
sures. Singing bars sconce ; so that old Mapes’s

“ *Mihi est propositum in tabernâ mori,*”

that ancestral canticle, which may, of itself, be suf-
ficient to shew how little Oxford life and manners
have altered within the last six hundred years,
was chaunted in full chorus, without the smallest
animadversion, from the master of the feast. It
was immediately followed by a boisterous strain,
celebrating certain very recent achievements on
Moulsey Hurst, as perhaps, in the very reverend
Archdeacon’s own day, it might have been by some

ballad of joust or tournament. The elegant Harris of Salisbury boasts, indeed, with amiable naïvete, and perhaps not without more good sense than the scoffers of the age are likely to acknowledge, that, in regard to all great essentials, the English youth are educated beneath those venerable arcades *now*, very much in the same course of study which formed the minds of their forefathers many long centuries ago. But the style of their joviality, and the sources of their merriment, have, it is probable, undergone even more slender mutation during the same lapse of time. The change in spelling has been greater than the change of language—and I have no doubt, that should old Walter de Mapes arise suddenly from the grave, and take his seat in an Oxford common room to-morrow, he would find the subjects of George the Fourth almost as able, and quite as willing, to enjoy his good things as ever were those of Henry the Second. What a delightful meeting would it be, and how annihilative of Hallam! —What capital stories would he tell of knights, and archers, and abbots, and nuns, and minstrels; and what charming stories would he not hear in

return about Captain Barclay and the Gasman—the Bishop of —, Hannah More, and Sam Rogers ! I am sure he would admit that Trafalgar and Waterloo were finer things than the acquisition of Anjou and Guienne ; and how would he stare, when, after indulging him in a long prose about the conquest of the Lordship of Ireland, we came over him with a full narrative of the late royal visit to Dublin, and the enthusiasm of the Curragh ! We should give him a Percival for his Becket, and a Bergami for his Rosamond. It is but charity to suppose, that the present occupier of his archdeaconry would be the first to acknowledge old Walter's prior claim. A handsome wig would mask all traces of the tonsure ; and in the course of a few months, Dr Mapes might rank among the brightest ornaments of *The British Critic* ; and perhaps he might be found almost as well qualified for writing a *Glossary of the old English* as Dr Nares himself.

But whatever might have been the case, had *Walterus Redivivus* been of the party, the rules of academical discipline were on the present occasion strictly enforced, and five minutes ere the

clocks of Oxford struck twelve, Mr Chisney, *nolens volens*, was expelled from * * *. His departure broke up the symposium; and Reginald, who, with the rest, had escorted him to the porch, was by this time so far gone, that, on his way back, he would have sworn *two* lamps were twinkling in Mr Barton's window.

After blowing a sufficient quantity of asafœtida smoke through the key-hole of an obnoxious tutor's apartments, and piling a cart-load of coals or two against the gates of the College-chapel, the young * * *ites at length dispersed. But Reginald Dalton, various as the occurrences of the day had been, and sophisticated as some of his faculties certainly were, did not sleep for the first time in his monastic cell, without having bestowed more sighs than one on the yet undimmed image of Ellen Hesketh.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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